

Title: Croatian Academics and University Civic Mission Integration: Possibilities and Constraints

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1. Introduction

University civic mission reflects upon universities as good institutional citizens that engage in their (local) communities in multiple ways – by researching and providing solutions for significant (local) problems (usually universal problems that are manifesting locally, such as poverty, unequal health care, substandard housing, hunger, and inadequate, unequal education, etc.); by conducting research on democracy, civil society, and civic development; by educating their own students to be active and responsible citizens; by providing forums for free democratic dialogue not only for academics and students, but for (local) community members as well; by offering its various resources and educational opportunities to the local community – to sum it up, and by paraphrasing Benjamin Barber (1996), by being a 'good neighbour' that cares and supports the improvement of (civic) life in local communities.

The idea of civic mission and university engagement in local community is to embody university purpose, objectives, priorities and academic pillars, meaning teaching and research, with the needs and problems of their neighbourly (local) communities. Without undermining the importance of the institutional commitment, the most sustainable way of civic mission integration, as studies consistently show, is its integration into teaching and research and their mutual interface throughout models that induce community-engaged learning (Zlotkowski and Williams, 2003; Ostrander, 2004; Macfarlane, 2005, 2007; Zlotkowski et al., 2006; Karlsson, 2007; Laredo, 2007).

Civic mission integration therefore, implies changes in ordinary teaching and research activities that are still unrecognized within the system of evaluation and promotion of the academics (Boyer, 1990, 1996; Glassick et al. 1997; Colbeck, 1998, 2002; Checkoway, 2000, 2001; Calhoun, 2006; Ledić, 2007). For that specific reason, civic mission integration is, to such an extent, dependent on university teachers: on their attitudes towards (civic) mission of universities; their willingness to (re) define their traditional work patterns; their readiness to import models of teaching and research based on the needs and problems of the (local) community and that support students' community-engaged learning. Moreover, it depends on the elements of institutional support that could motivate academics to such a change.

Following this crucial role of the academics in the successful civic mission integration, this paper is discussing some possibilities and constraints of the civic mission integration into Croatian universities with regard to its fundamental determinants of successful integration: (I) academics' readiness to introduce change into their everyday teaching and research, (II) attitudes that academics take toward the civic mission and (III) models of institutional support that would encourage academics to integrate the civic mission in their everyday teaching and research.

Reclining on segments of Rogers's Diffusion of Innovations theory (Rogers, 1964, 2003), additional attention was given to the development of typology of Croatian academics in relation to their willingness to accept changes in their daily teaching and research (ready for a change, neutral, resist the changes). In addition to mentioned, some characteristics of the academics which, according to the research result, show a greater willingness to integrate civic mission in their academic activities, were identified. Developed typology is a useful basis, backed up by empirical data, and can contribute to the reflection of further steps in promotion of the civic mission in Croatian universities.

2. University Civic Mission

University civic mission articulates a separate system of values, principles, standards and various academic activities that encourage civic engagement in local communities and community-engaged learning. Further more, it accentuate university role in contributing to education of socially responsible and active citizens, civil society, democracy, and generally improving the quality of life in the community. In that context, the civic mission implies a

stronger integration of the university into the local community as its vital component: university should advocate and (professionally) address the needs and concerns of the community, develop collaborative relationships and projects with relevant stakeholders in the external environment (e.g. civil society organizations and initiatives, educational institutions, institutions in the field of health and social care, local and regional government), encourage the commitment of academics and students in the community and contribute to the development of socially responsible and active citizens.

To paraphrase Ernest Boyer (1996), the civic mission involves creating a special atmosphere in which academics and local communities communicate on a regular basis in a creative way, improving the quality of life for all in the community.

The impressive collection of the present-day documents, declarations and protocols indicate to the existing problems in our society and recognize the importance of the university in developing possible solutions and promoting civic engagement, with the aim of contributing to community development¹. The benefits of such 'local community focus' are manifold for all – universities, students², faculties³ and community itself. As Harkavy (2006) noted,

¹ For example, the UNESCO's World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st century states that "(...) universities should educate students to be well-informed and highly motivated people, able to think critically, to analyze the problems in society, systematically seek solutions to these problems, and then apply them, keeping in mind the importance of taking their social responsibilities." (paragraph 9). Signatories of numerous declarations emphasize the unique role and importance of higher education in the further development of democracy and the fulfillment of public purposes of education (Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University, 1998; President's Fourth of July Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education, 1999; Budapest Declaration for a Greater Europe without Dividing Lines, 1999; The Declaration on the Responsibility of Higher Education for a Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights and Responsibility, 2006; The Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education, 2006). The importance of education for active (European) citizenship recognizes, as well, the European Union, defining active citizenship, for example, as one of the eight key competences in the Key Competences For Lifelong Learning in Europe report (European Commission, 2006).

² The results of previous studies suggest a positive change in the development of critical thinking of students, their analytical skills, comprehension and greater commitment to academic work (Eyler, 2000; Astin and Vogelgesang, 2003), indicate the personal and moral growth and development of students (Eyler and Giles, 1999; Moely et al., 2002), the development of leadership skills, communication, sense of social responsibility, a better understanding of racial and cultural issues (Howard-Hamilton, 2000; Root et al., 2000), commitment to the community (Eyler and Giles, 1999; Moely, Mercer et al. 2002; Eyler et al., 2003; Gallini and Moely, 2003; Reinke, 2003), the perception of the usefulness of the academic content and satisfaction with courses and studies in general; greater likelihood of staying in a formal system of education (Eyler et al., 2001; Mundy and Eyler, 2002). Astin et al. (2000) emphasize that this kind of work results in much better students' connection to the academic discipline. Highlighting the understanding of the basic theoretical assumptions and concepts, students also emphasize the revealing strong connection between course content and daily life (Tannenbaum i Berrett, 2005).

³ Zlotkowski (1998) points out that this kind of work presents a challenge for academics in terms of analysis and understanding of community within the context of their own discipline, confirming their role in the development of values such as social responsibility of students and allows them to share with the community their role of the one who teaches. Academics point out that such a relationship allows them to understand students better as individuals and as students and encourages them to further develop their teaching skills thus respecting constructivist principles of teaching and learning, and design a new, more appropriate methods of teaching.

continuous interaction is facilitated through work in an easily accessible local setting. Relationships of trust, so essential for effective partnerships and effective learning, are also built through day-to-day work on problems and issues of mutual concern. In addition, the local community also provides a convenient setting in which a number of a community problem solving courses based in different disciplines can work together on a complex problem to produce substantive results. Such work in a university's local community, since it facilitates interaction across schools and disciplines, can create interdisciplinary learning opportunities. And finally, the local community is a real world site in which community members and academics can pragmatically determine whether the work is making a real difference, whether both the neighborhood and the institution are better as a result of joint efforts (Harkavy, 2006).

Accepting the paradigm of the civic mission means to accept the education of professionals and socially responsible citizens who will be able to critically judge, to participate actively in public debates and to engage in various issues of the common good, as one of the fundamental tasks of the university. In that context, the commitment of academics in the community, their public work, a collaboration with representatives from the community and especially their contribution to the development of students as responsible members of the society, is seen as their responsibility and duty to which they should be devoted more seriously. For this reason, Altman (1996) strongly advocated the idea that higher education included in their programs the knowledge that leads to the social responsibility. Moreover, Zlotkowski and colleagues (2006) contributed to the idea by encouraging academics to commit to integration of socially responsive knowledge. As society becomes more complex, the need for students to build an educational environment that will help them understand the social problems, but also realize the responsibility they carry as members of the community, becomes just as important, if not more important than educating (successful) experts.

However, what worries a growing number of authors who advocate change of traditional patterns of teaching and research is the possible (unfairly) association of the civic mission with the moral obligation of academics, and moral development of students as well. Proponents argue for stronger integration of civic engagement activities in teaching and research, because of their potential to help (I) students in their better and deeper understanding of their chosen profession and professional and civic roles they have, and (II)

Moreover, they often have opportunities for expanding their academic activities, which stresses the interdisciplinary opportunities and empower even their publishing (Zlotkowski, 1995; Pribbenow, 2005).

universities and community cohesion and their joint efforts to provide solutions to the needs and concerns of different social groups in the community (Boyer, 1996; Harkavy and Benson, 1998; Thomas, 2000; Checkoway, 2000, 2001; Gamson, 2001; Ramaley, 2001; Ostrander, 2004; Harkavy, 2006; Karlsson, 2007; Ćulum and Ledić, 2010).

Although there are various examples of initiatives that university undertake on their way to integrate the civic mission (e.g. establishing university centers that provide support for the design and implementation of civic activities in the community, develop adequate models of remuneration and evaluation of civic commitment of academics and students, devising special courses and establishing new study programs based on education for active citizenship, etc.), collaboration of academics and their students in various educational programs and research projects that induce community-engaged learning is, however, the most advocated. Thus, we are witnessing the spread of the academic service-learning model and community based research. These models are not, of course, the only way to integrate the principles of civic missions, but they are certainly among those who are the most studied and that are, at least for now, still the most argued in this context.

Most academics and experts agree that the goal of student's engagement in the community is to educate them so that in the future, they can be responsible and active citizens, involved in all aspects of everyday life in the community in which they live and work. It is therefore important to observe the civic mission of universities in the context of the civic society and democracy in local, regional and national framework, especially keeping in mind the tradition of the university and the development of specific characteristics of the local communities in which it operates.

3. University Civic Mission – The Important Role of the Academics

By encouraging a debate on the integration of civic mission in academic activities and possibilities for the development of educational and research programs that would be based on the needs and problems of the community and encourage community service-learning, the awareness of the importance that academics play in the successful integration of the civic mission aspects and education of socially responsible and active citizens is increasing⁴.

⁴ Discussing the responsibilities of universities and academics to educate socially responsible and active citizens Wellman (2000) points to the frequent assumption that the learning skills of active citizenship is a collateral effect of the study and the years spent at the university, a product of the fusion of students with other students, academics, program of study and other activities on the university. Education of socially responsible and active citizen, as Wellman (2000) states, is the responsibility of everybody, but in fact nobody's job.

Specifically, the integration of the civic mission in the university implies, among other things, the close association of academics with the community, and requires a series of changes that academics should take in their daily teaching and research. The cooperation between academics and various external associates is encouraged in the public and nonprofit sectors, with lower levels of education, with health and social care institutions and local-community activists, expecting the academic knowledge to directly improve the living conditions of the local communities and to impact the development of democracy and civic society.

Nowadays, the integration of the civic mission at the university means, primarily, to transform the existing academic activities and actions, rather than develop new ones. Specifically, the present academic overload with multiple roles that academics perceive (Rice, Sorcinelli and Austin, 2000), as well as a high level of stress, fear and discontent because of the expected results of excellence in all areas they address (O'Meara and Braskamp, 2005) have prompted many authors to advocate for integrative paradigm of academic roles and stronger connecting of teaching and research activities, which would be based on the needs of the community (Boyer, 1996; Berberet, 1999; Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007; Karlsson, 2007).

Boyer (1996) gave a powerful seal in arguing for the integration of the civic mission in core academic activities calling for the *scholarship of engagement* and explaining: " (...) our universities and colleges remain one of the greatest hopes for intellectual and civic progresses in this country. For this hope to be fulfilled, the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to the scholarship of engagement. The scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the university to existing problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers, and to our cities (...) I am firmly convinced that we do not need new programs, but a higher purpose, a stronger sense of mission (...)" (Boyer, 1996, 19-20).

Since the integration of the civic mission in academic activities involves transforming teaching and research, it is clear that its success, to such an extent, depends on the academics. After all, they run research projects, manage the curricula and teach the courses that can help prepare students for their own civic roles.

Argued changes in teaching in the context of the civic mission, put academics in front of new challenges in terms of thinking on educational goals (Checkoway, 2001; Harkavy, 2006), the transformation of the curriculum (Nussbaum, 1997; Ostrander, 2004) and on the planning and implementation of teaching in way to encourage education of socially responsible and active citizens. Parallel with the changes in teaching, changes in research are argued as well. Although less than the academic service-learning model, the literature more often advocates a community-based research (community-based participatory research), as a contribution to applied research and with a long-term aim of putting the expertise of academics and students (as future professionals) in the service of responding to the perceived needs and problems of the local community (Strand, 2000; Stoecker, 2003; Strand et al., 2003).

An important aspect of the changes in teaching and research, in the context of the civic mission, refers to the development of cooperation with representatives of (local) communities and their involvement in planning, carrying-out and evaluating the teaching and research activities. The success of the implementation of these models of teaching and research, therefore, implies the openness of academics to (not)tested models of teaching and research and their willingness to cooperation and intense teamwork in a triangle teacher-student-representative of the local community.

As many authors agree, the integration of teaching and research and the contribution of academics in education of socially responsible and active citizens requires academics' long-term commitment. If they opt for this kind of a change, they are expected to be open for cooperation with the community, establishing and managing collaborative (research) projects, designing unconventional curriculum, devising fieldwork, fostering teamwork, adequate documentation of their work, especially of students and their progress, then the interdisciplinarity of the work, etc. Bearing in mind that academics rarely have adequate institutional and administrative support for implementing such changes in their daily teaching and reserach, and that the results of such activities are rarely (if at all) adequately valued in terms of academics promotion, it is clear why it appeals to the perseverance and dedication of academics. Specifically, involvement in these activities, for which, it seems, academics are not formally employed, responsible or even evaluated, could endanger important dimensions of their (scientific and professional) academic achievement, as has been evidenced by previous research (Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007, Macfarlane, 2007; Karlson, 2007; Ćulum and Ledić, 2010).

Therefore, Kendall (1990) is right when he states that academics play a central role in the promotion and integration of civic mission and they are the only key that can, in the long run, enable universities the commitment to community service. Specifically, the success of the development of the university civic mission and wider use of models that encourage dedication to teaching and research depends precisely on them and their decision on whether they want to 'spend their time' on these activities. The decision is related to their attitudes toward the values and the principles of the civic missions and, not least important, to their willingness to change and reflect the teaching and research activities that would be based on the needs and problems of the community and encourage community-engaged learning and students' civic development.

4. Croatian Academics and University Civic Mission – Research Methodology

Accepting civic mission principles and their integration into teaching and research requires persistence, patience and long-term commitment of academics, especially if the *alma mater* university does not show the institutional commitment to the civic mission. That kind of commitment cannot be expected unless academics express the willingness to accept the changes in their everyday work and if their attitudes are consistent with those changes that are, at the same time, required by the civic mission integration (Hassingier and Pinkerton, 1986; Kendall, 1990; McKay and Rozee, 2004; Zlotkowski et al., 2006).

Due to the lack of interest in Croatian research community for the concept of the civic mission, there is a very little data on what our universities have done in terms of civic mission. Moreover, in the university environment in which the civic mission is not institutionalised, promoted and evaluated, as in the case with Croatian universities (Ćulum and Ledić, 2010), it seems that Croatian academic community has the scope to take a stand towards civic mission depending on personal perception of its importance, and of civility and responsibility for (local) community. Thus, the attitudes of academics towards the civic mission and social responsibility for the (local) communities become even more important to analyze, and raise the main research question: from whom in the Croatian academic community we can expect commitment to the university civic mission, and under what conditions?

Starting from the crucial role that academics play in the successful civic mission integration, this paper is analyzing some possibilities and constraints of the civic mission integration into Croatian universities with regard to its fundamental determinants of successful integration: (I) willingness of university teachers to introduce changes into their daily teaching and research, (II) attitudes and dispositions that valued academics take toward the civic mission and (III) institutional support mechanisms that would encourage them to integrate the civic mission in their everyday teaching and research .

In addition to mentioned, employing a factor analysis, typology of Croatian academics in relation to their their attitudes towards civic mission and their innovativeness, operationalised as their willingness to accept changes in their daily teaching and research (ready for a change, neutral, resist the changes) was developed. Since it has been supported with the empirical data, this typology can serve as a significant contributor in placing up further steps of civic mission promotion among Craotain academics.

The study represents quantitative research approach. Empirical data were collected by a questionnaire method on a representative sample of 570 examinees, academics from all seven Croatian public universities, whereby the network/Internet questionnaire, designed particularly for this research purpose, was used.

5. Research Results and their implications on possibilities and constraints for civic mission integration at Croatian Universities

5.1. Who is (More) Ready for Introducing Change into Teaching and Research?

As has been discussed earlier in the paper, civic mission integration in academic activities brings significant changes for academics and numerous challenges in planning, implementing and evaluating teaching and research that foster academic service-learning. It is important, therefore, that academics expressed a willingness to change their daily teaching and research (Kendall, 1990).

In the present study, academics' willingness to accept change has been examined in accordance with the Diffusion of Innovations theory (Rogers, 1962). In this particular study, the innovativeness stands for academics' willingness to accept changes and new ideas in their daily teaching and research. The construct of innovation/willingness to accept changes and new

ideas in daily teaching and research was operationalized through twenty one variables. Using a scale from 1 (never applies to me) to 5 (always applies to me), respondents had to mark how a certain argument applies to them and their behavior in everyday teaching and research.

As a result, three groups according to the factor of innovation⁵ were determined, among the respondents: 14.2% are those who accept the changes in teaching and research (innovators and early adopters), 33.7% are neutral (early majority) and 46.8% resist change (late majority and laggards), also called conservatives⁶.

Personal characteristics and interactions among the groups presented above explain the "domino effect" present in the process of diffusion of innovations. Rogers's analysis suggests that the spread of a particular innovation, or acceptance of the changes and implementation of new ideas, depends on a very small group of members of a system, or on the so called "The Tipping Point" (Rogers, 1971/2003; Gladwell, 2002). Simply put, the success of innovations depends on the early adopters (so called change agents) acceptance and their influence and ability to play an important role in encouraging other groups to its acceptance, especially late majority. Thus, the power of persuasion into the benefits of a particular innovation and the need for its implementation should not, as Rogers says, "be spent" on those who resist change. Instead, support should be provided to those who are really prone to changes and new ideas, and who are considered to be trusted by a majority of their colleagues. Given that this group of people is crucial to the successful implementation of innovation, Rogers (1983/2003) claims that the organisational efforts in achieving the change should be focused on identifying groups of academics who will impel a specific change and facilitate its implementation.

⁵ Rogers (1962/2003) makes a significant contribution to the development and popularization of the Diffusion of innovations theory by development of a group of members of a particular social system on the basis of their innovation, where innovation is explained as willingness to accept new ideas relatively earlier than other members of the same social system. The distribution of these groups in the population, according to Rogers (1962/2003), follows the principle of normal distribution so that the proposed five groups occurs according to the following distribution: innovators (2.5%), early adopters (13.5%), early majority (34 %), late majority (34%) and laggards (16%). For a detailed analysis of all five categories according to three variables: (i) socioeconomic status, (ii) personal values, and (iii) communication skills, it is recommended to read Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (Fifth Edition). New York: Free Press (p. 287-299).

⁶ Although Rogers developed his theory by creating a system of five categories in relation to the innovation factor (willingness to accept new ideas), he himself also points to some of the common characteristics of individual groups and the possibility of their conjugation for the purpose of better interpretability of data (Rogers, 1971/2003). The combination of the innovators and early adopters in general indicates the proportion of individuals who could be 'change agents' developing the momentum needed to assure the adoption of changes in the next category, the early majority. On the other hand, the late majority and laggards, show the greatest degree of resistance to new ideas and changes. They need to retain the *status quo* position and providing resistance to change, make the system more inert and thus hamper the integration of new ideas and change. Some other researchers (Lozano, 2006) decided to merge the categories in their research as well.

Additionally, it is necessary to provide those academics with an adequate institutional support to ensure full potential in their role of change agents.

Study results show that innovators and early adopters in Croatian academic community are predominantly associate and tenure professors (75,3%), and academics ranging from 31 to 50 years of age (59,5%). They are rarely found among the youngest academics up to the age of 31 (7,4%). More than a third of academics in the group late majority and laggards are teaching assistants and junior researchers and more than half of them are the younger respondents, up to the 40 years of age (56.2%). The youngest age group, up to 31 years of age consists of 62,9% of late majority and laggards – result show how this age group of youngest academics is the least willing to accept new ideas and changes in their (daily) teaching and research activities.

Distribution of the groups according to the factor of innovation makes the age group of 41 to 50 years of age the most open to the changes in teaching and research, since there is an equal proportion of early majority and late majority and laggards. On the other hand, the analysis of all three groups according to the factor of innovation / willingness to accept changes and new ideas in the different age groups, suggests that the youngest age group (31 years and under) makes 62.9 % of those from the group late majority and laggards, compared to just 6.7 % of innovators and early adopters. This means that among the youngest respondents there are almost ten times as many in the group late majority and laggards (which resist changes and new ideas) compared to the innovators and early adopters, and two times more compared to the early majority.

Although respondents from this age group (31 years and under) are in the associate status, in most cases working as teaching assistants and junior researchers whose daily teaching and research is in the interdependence with their senior colleagues and supervisors with whom they work, what worries is the domination of late majority and laggards thus describing the youngest associates at the university as the least likely to introduce innovations in teaching and research. Comparison of the age groups according to the factor of innovation / willingness to accept change, indicates that the members of this age group are the least open to experimenting with new approaches in the work and changes in the classroom, they are not willing to make changes in the work earlier than other colleagues and associates, and ultimately, they are at least willing to continuously monitor and apply new trends in teaching

and research. Although in some aspects, this age group also points to a lower degree of sensibility toward the concept of the civic mission, which will be discussed later in the paper - they assess the civic mission and the importance of commitment to the common good of the community less important than all other age groups. Moreover, they estimate addition to salary significantly greater motivational factor that would encourage them to integrate their mission into the regular academic activities.

5.2. Academics' Reflection on the Civic Mission

Besides the willingness of academics to introduce changes and new ideas into their daily teaching and research, the integration of civic mission depends on the consistency of their attitudes with the system of values and principles that articulate the concept of the civic mission. Hence their willingness to integrate their mission into the core academic activities has been examined in relation to their attitudes towards different aspects of civic mission⁷:

- appreciation of the civic mission and its principles as an important purpose of higher education,
- attitudes toward civic commitment
- appreciation of the responsibilities of universities and academics in encouraging civic commitment of students and education of socially responsible and active citizens
- commitment to the educational objectives that seek to educate socially responsible and active citizens
- attitudes towards the integration of the civic mission in the regular and elective courses and research projects.

Attitudes denote that most academics in Croatia, regardless of the institution they work at recognize civic mission and its principles as an important purpose of higher education. In doing so, academics from social sciences and humanities as well as arts, estimate the civic mission with the highest central value (M=4.5). Moreover, it was noted that the civic mission gets significantly higher marks from the women. It is important to point out that the civic mission gets significantly lower marks from the youngest age group, up to the 31 years of age. This group of junior academics identifies itself significantly more with other two missions presented in the questionnaire - the education of experts and university research mission.

⁷ The analysis included a comparison of the results on the type of institution, discipline, academic status, age, gender, and membership in working groups, professional associations and/or civil society organizations in the local community.

Croatian academics express positive attitudes towards civic engagement and respect the responsibility of universities and academics in promoting the civic engagement of students and education of socially responsible and active citizens. A significant proportion of academics believe that commitment to the general good of the community should be a fundamental personal and dominant value in the society (86.4 %) and that the anomalies in the society can be reduced via active participation of citizens in public life (76.4 %). Regardless of the responsibility of the power holders, they believe that the citizens should further strive to resolve the issues in the community (69.5%) and in this regard they recognise the importance of the academic community: 81% of them believe that academics should be a model and an exemplar of socially responsible and active citizens who are expected to regularly be involved in public debate (68%) and have special contributions to the community development (67.9%). Academics express positive attitudes toward a possible influence of volunteering and philanthropic activities in addressing the needs and problems of the community, which is important given that the integration of academic service-learning model assumes, among other things, the development of similar (volunteering) community initiatives in collaboration with academics, students and associates in the community.

More than two thirds of academics (71.3%) supports the important role of universities in fostering civic commitment and empowering citizens to get active in the community. Moreover, they find more important to educate students to be socially responsible and to be active citizens but to teach them the basics of scientific disciplines (67.2%). While 40.6 % of academics feel that it is not too late to encourage education for active citizenship in the university and that academics need to transmit the contents and values that transcend the domain of their profession (62%), more than half of academics feel that education for active citizenship should still be implemented at lower levels of education, because it is too late to deal with it at the university level. Although strongly oriented toward the civic mission as the primary mission of the university, half of academics felt that the activities that contribute to the realization of the civic mission should not be part of the criteria of their advancement. With regard to Croatian academics who can hardly be expected to stimulate debate about the (re) definition of the criteria for academic promotion or advocating for the introduction of specific criteria to track the integration of the civic mission, such an attitude can have a significant impact on the perception of the importance of these activities in the academic community.

The concept of civic mission seems to be weakly associated with the contribution of universities to local community development. Educational goals which are indicators of the civic mission of universities and associated with the stimulation of the community-engaged learning and students' civic commitment ((I) encouraging students to critically observe and analyze current social issues, (II) development of knowledge and skills for identifying problems in their local communities and contributing to their resolution, and (III) to motivate students on developing knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for acting upon the common good), compared with other educational goals⁸, are estimated as less important in everyday teaching and research. Educational objectives associated with the development of motivation and the knowledge and skills of students to solve problems in their local communities are estimated as the least significant. Academics working in the field of social sciences and humanities as well as in arts, estimate the educational goals that serve as indicators of the civic mission, more significant than academics in other disciplines. Similarly, women estimate most of the educational goals to have greater relevance to their daily work than men do, especially three goals (mentioned above) that served as indicators of university civic mission⁹.

Study results indicate a positive academics' attitude toward encouragement of the students' civic engagement, but it also points at certain limitations in the context of integration of the civic mission in regular activities. Most academics were inclined to promote civic commitment of students in regular educational programs and research projects (63.8%). They believe that student organizations can not be the sole factor in the promotion of active citizenship and encouraging civic commitment of students and, ultimately, more than half of them states that encouraging civic commitment of students does not hamper their development as future professionals (57.7%). In doing so, the academics from social sciences and humanities and arts as well, estimate the integration of the civic mission in regular

⁸ Some of other educational goals identified in the questionnaire were: encouraging the development of knowledge and skills needed for the labor market, encouraging the development of knowledge and skills relevant for the advancement in particular discipline, encouraging the development of knowledge and skills relevant for students' future work in the chosen profession.

⁹ $p < 0,001$; $t > 2,59$ in all three cases.

activities as more significant than academics from other disciplines do¹⁰. Same thing happens with women, compared to men¹¹.

Assessing the possibility of promoting community-engaged learning and civic engagement in teaching and research activities, academics prefer elective and specifically designed courses, which can have major implications on promotion of the mission in our universities. Specifically, the process of the integration of the civic mission, as already highlighted in the paper, encourages the introduction of experiential academic service-learning model in regular or existing teaching and research programs. The opinion of the majority of the respondents on the impossibility of promoting community engagement through teaching regular courses, as reported in this study, indicates the importance of the promotion of this model for the purpose of enabling academics to get a better understanding of the concepts and possibilities of integrating teaching, research and student engagement in the community. Bearing in mind that the civic mission in Croatian universities is a neglected concept, this finding could be a powerful incentive for designing elective courses that would encourage community service-learning, with the aim of promoting the concept of the civic mission.

5.3. Incentives: Institutional Support as Motivation for Civic Mission Integration

Integrating the civic mission in academic activities leads to the modification of the traditional work patterns and habits of the academics. It is important however that possible institutional (re)sources for supporting academics who engage into community service-learning teaching and research activities, should be organized to follow the academics' professional development opportunities and their (real) possibility of introducing changes in teaching and research (Zlotkowski, 2000). The study presented in the paper examined the motivational potential of eleven factors, mainly related to the possibility of providing administrative, logical, institutional support for academics.

In assessing the potential motivational factors that encourage them to integrate the civic mission in everyday teaching and research work, the highest proportion of academics emphasizes the interest of students (78.2%). This factor is followed by the provided administrative support and infrastructure (73.8%), flexible workload and evaluation of various

¹⁰ $p=0,014$; $t>1,96$ (in relation to natural sciences in both cases), $p<0,001$; $t>2,59$ (in relation to technical and medical/biomedical/biotechnical sciences in both cases).

¹¹ $p<0,001$; $t>2,59$ in both cases.

academic activities (64.9%), financial support for the costs of designed activities (66%) and providing training opportunities (62.6%). The above listed factors make five most important motivators.

The results of this research support previous studies (Hammond, 1994; Abes et al., 2002), given that the largest share of the respondents, 78.2% of them, states that students' interest would motivate them the most to integrate the civic mission into everyday teaching and research (M=4.0). Slightly lower proportion of academics, 73.8% of them, stresses the importance of administrative support and infrastructure, which puts this motivational factor in second place (M=3.9). High ranking of these factors is in the accordance with the results of international studies that indicate how academics need additional administrative support due to the complexity of the process of planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of community-engaged teaching and research activities that often involves a large number of stakeholders outside the university whose work should also be monitored (Ward, 1996; Rice and Stacey, 1997; Abes et al., 2002). A significant proportion of respondents, 64.9% of them, stated that flexible workload and evaluation of the different academic opportunities would motivate them to integrate the civic mission, which puts this motivating factor in third place (M=3,7).¹²

The importance of financial support for the costs of the designed activities points out 66% of the respondents (M=3.7), training opportunities 62.6% of them (M=3.7), and the interest of colleagues and their support for the work 60.6% (M=3.5). Morton and Tropp (1996) pointed out the importance of professional training and support of colleagues back in the 1990s, and their importance have been recognized as important motivators in recent international studies as well (Abes et al., 2002; Harwood et al., 2005). The results of their research show that academics are ready to engage in the proces of the community service-learning model if their appreciated colleagues do it too. Moreover, the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills is also of a great importance. Professional training programs are an important motivator, not only because they allow the academics exploring and better understanding of the

¹² In situations of high teaching loads, academics do not have enough time to study and analyze the appropriate application of models that promote community-engaged learning (Harwood et al., 2005, Hammond, 1994; Ward, 1996) because it takes away time that could, according to the current system of academics' promotion, should be invested in a "major" academic activities (Morton and Tropp, 1996). This challenge has been evidently recognized among Croatian academics, as well – results show that integrating academics' contributions to the community development in the criteria of their promotion and advancement, would serve as an incentive to integrate civic mission into everyday teaching and research for half of the respondents (51.4%).

community service-learning concept, but because participating in such educational programs often results in creation of an academic community that share values, interests and similar principles of working with students in wanting to educate socially responsible and active citizens (Abes et al., 2002; Harwood et al., 2005). Creating such a *think tank* community, academics can share ideas and experiences, reflect on the improvement of existing models, build networks and create new opportunities for cooperation. Such support is particularly important given that academics are often faced with the challenges of implementation of such activities due to the lack of time and especially because of the insufficient administrative and financial support in developing activities that encourage civic engagement (Stanton, 1994; Driscoll et al., 1996; Ward, 1996; Abes et al., 2002). Abes et al. (2002) have pointed out the importance of having a support, especially for the younger colleagues. Connecting with peers who are at different stages of an academic career has proven to be a successful model of mutual tutoring and strengthening interdisciplinarity.

Slightly more than half of the respondents would be motivated to integrate the civic mission if contributions to the community would be included as a criterion for their promotion (51.4%). While the burgeoning literature strongly favors (re)defining of the current criteria for the promotion of the academics who contribute to the community development and education of socially responsible and active citizens (Boyer, 1990; Blackburn and Lawrence, 1995; Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007; Driscoll, 2007 ; Ledić, 2007), and while studies indicate that the still system of promotion in the academia is the biggest obstacle in the motivation of university teachers to integrate the civic mission (Hammond, 1994; Stanton, 1994; Morton and Tropp, 1996; Ward, 1996), it is interesting to note that recent studies, although rare, are arguing the opposite.

The results of this study also show that Croatian academics do not recognize the system of the academic promotion as the most important motivator. Although half of the respondents would be motivated to integrate the civic mission if contributions to the community would be included as a formal criterion for promotion, this is a factor, due to its score, in seventh place. Abes et al. (2002) got similar results in their study, so we can say that the finding of this study differs significantly from the dominant position in the current academic debate and the existing literature. These findings, obviously, do not imply that (re)defining the criteria of promotion should stop being advocated, but that it is clearly less important factor in the decision of academic on the integration of civic mission, unlike, for example, institutional

support, training opportunities and financial support. Bearing in mind that Croatian academics estimated personal influence on the design and adoption of key academic policies insignificant, especially at the university level (Rončević and Rafajac, 2010), it can be said that they estimate the possibilities of personal impact on changing the criteria of evaluation of scientific and educational advancement just the same, meaning low. It is therefore more optimal, in this case, to point out to those ways of the integration of community service-learning that can support and enhance research and teaching activities that are already valued in the current system of promotion, rather than putting the emphasis on the change and encourage university teachers to advocate (re) definition of these criteria.

In the context of the motivation for the civic mission integration in academic activities, defining the tasks of the civic mission as fundamental aspects of the mission of university (49.9%) and the involvement of the tasks of the civic mission in the basic legal acts of universities and colleges (47.6%) are estimated as less important. Although this finding positions these two factors on the eighth and ninth place, it is in compliance with the thesis of numerous authors who are stating that the university civic mission must be recognized at the highest governing and managing structures, and its principles integrated into relevant legal and organizational regulations and strategic guidance in order to send a clear message to the academics, and other members of the academic and the general public about its importance (Boyer, 1990; Blackburn and Lawrence, 1995; Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007). Addition to salary (39.3%) and symbolic evaluation and rewarding (33.1%) have the smallest motivational potential for the civic mission integration. Junior academics find administrative support, financial support and salary supplements as more important motivational factors than their senior colleagues¹³. Women estimate all aspects of (institutional) support more significant than men do.¹⁴

6. Final remarks

On their way to the civic mission integration into the regular academic activities, academics should be guided by the principles of social responsibility of universities and their personal

¹³ $p < 0,05$; $t > 1,96$ in relation to all other age groups for administrative support; $p = 0,005$; $t > 1,96$ in relation to all other age groups for financial support; $p < 0,001$; $t > 2,59$ in relation to all other age groups for salary supplements.

¹⁴ $p < 0,001$; $t > 2,59$ in eight, out of eleven variables. Abes et al. (2002) study indicated a greater willingness of women for the community service-learning integration in everyday teaching and research activities, if they are provided with adequate administrative and logistical support.

and public responsibility to the community in which they live and work as well. It is important that academics recognize the (local) community as a place of learning that can provide sufficient educational opportunities to their students. In cooperation with relevant stakeholders in the community academics should commit themselves to the analysis of the needs and problems of the community and to the planning, developing and implementing activities that can contribute to finding solutions. Together with their students academics should be involved in the dynamic and dialectical process. When designing activities that support students' community-engaged learning and their civic engagement, academics should take into account their students' personalities to provide them with qualitative educational opportunities for professional and personal development. This way of cooperation should act as an example to students for their future work and civic roles and strengthen their sense of responsibility toward the community. Integrating the civic mission implies that students are educated in an environment that is aware of its responsibility toward the members of other representatives of the community in which all members are making efforts aimed at improving the quality of life in the community and bring positive change.

Results of this study indicate some specific characteristics of Croatian academics whose attitudes are close to the above described elements of the civic mission: (I) academics working in humanities and social sciences as well as in arts, women, associate and tenured professors and those academics aged from 41 to 50 year seem to be more willing to accept changes and new ideas, and to integrate the university civic mission in their teaching and research activities. Thus, they can be placed in the group of potential change agents or "engaged base of university teachers." On the other hand, the least likely to bring change in daily teaching and research, with a reported less sensitivity toward the concept of the civic mission, are the youngest respondents up to 31 years of age in the associate status (teaching assistants and junior researchers). This finding should be kept in mind as a significant barrier to the integration of the civic mission, given that it is unlikely that this group will be the change agents, conveyors of the civic mission concept. To the contrary - the result of the study, according to which the youngest age group is consist of 62.6 % late majority and laggards (in the recent literature called conservatives), implies that it is the youngest academics who would resisted changes and new ideas in their teaching and research the most.

Nevertheless, the conducted study, bearing in mind the stated (positive) attitudes toward the concept of the civic mission, and with respect to the assessment of individual potential

motivational factor for the civic mission integration, identifies some available development opportunities for the university civic mission at Croatian universities, for which recommendations have been already made.

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