Civic activism online: Making young people dormant or more active in real life?

# Details

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Internet usage, practices and engagement

## Sample

1023 participants aged between 13 and 18 years.
Average age of the respondents was 15.7.
Approximately 200 respondents from each of the five countries within the Balkan region participated in the
survey.

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Other

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Enhancing civic activism of young people via new media (e.g. social networking sites) has potential to make them more attentive to social problems around them and more active in real life

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

Citizens can be active in their community through a diverse set of actions in real life or on online platforms. Since the emergence of the Internet, there has been continual debate about the impact of online activism on real-life activism: whilst some claim that “clictivism” creates the false sense of making a difference, and undermines real life activities, others say it actually fosters it. We therefore explored the relationship between online and offline activism, covering a range of engagement levels in eight different domains. Every offline activity had its online counterpart. The results draw from a probability sample of 1023 participants from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B), Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo aged between 13 and 18 years. A unidimensional model fit the data better than a two dimensional model, suggesting that one factor underlies both online and offline forms of civic action. Our data demonstrate that online and offline activisms are not independent constructs, and that offline activism does not constrain online activism and vice versa. The two combine in a new, so called “hybrid activism”,
comprised of very different forms of offline and online actions.

# Outcome

"Among the youth in the Balkans, 88.6% reported to have taken part in at least one offline action (N=906), compared to 75.6% who reported to have taken part in at least one online action (N= 773). Despite the fact that our sample comprised of adolescents, the heaviest Internet users of all demographic groups, offline activism was still more present than online activism. This relatively surprising result could be due to the fact that we employed a rough measure of activism, and did not measure its frequency. As expected, soft activism was more frequent then hard activism" (Milosevic Djordjevic Zezelj, 2017, p. 114)
"A unidimensional model fit the data better than a two dimensional model, suggesting that one factor underlies both online and offline forms of civic action. Our data demonstrate that online and offline activisms are not independent constructs, and that offline activism does not constrain online activism and vice versa. The two combine in a new, so called “hybrid activism”, comprised of very different forms of offline and online actions" (Milosevic Djordjevic Zezelj, 2017, p. 113)