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# Open Access in Croatia: CROSBİ and the Hrčak Portal of Scientific Journals

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Croatia joined the European Union as its 28th member on July 1, 2013. Its accession into the European Union means that it has to conform to various regulations that govern the European Union (EU) member states.<sup>[1]</sup> One particular policy initiative of the EU, where Croatia has been on the forefront of compliance since 1997, is that of open access. The EU Commission on Research and Innovation's section on Science in Society has defined open access in the following manner:

“Open access refers to the practice of granting free Internet access to research articles. As all research and innovation builds on earlier achievements, an efficient system for broad dissemination of and access to research data and publications can accelerate scientific progress.”<sup>[2]</sup>

This policy statement also envisions coordination of and making available the publicly funded science research at the member-state level within the European Research Area. There have been several works on awareness of Croatian libraries on the importance of open access (OA) repositories.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

However, in the United States, not much attention has been paid overseas to Croatia's early, successful implementation of open access policies. In this article, I examine two separate open-access initiatives, i.e., Hrvatska znanstvena bibliografija (Croatian scientific bibliography-CROSBİ) and Hrčak: Portal znanstvenih časopisa Republike Hrvatske (Hrčak- the central portal of Croatian scientific journals).

### **Hrvatska znanstvena bibliografija (<http://bib.irb.hr/?lang=EN>)**

The first Croatian open access initiative was launched in 1997, when Hrvatska znanstvena bibliografija (Croatian Scientific Bibliography or CROSBİ) went online. CROSBİ allows researchers to search for scientific articles and books that were published in Croatia. Its user interface also allows users to search using various keywords in the English language. See Image 1 below.



Image 1: A screen-shot of the CROSKI search interface.

Image 2 shows that the site also provides aggregate statistical data on a number of articles, books and book chapters, conference publications and other items that are annually indexed in this bibliography.



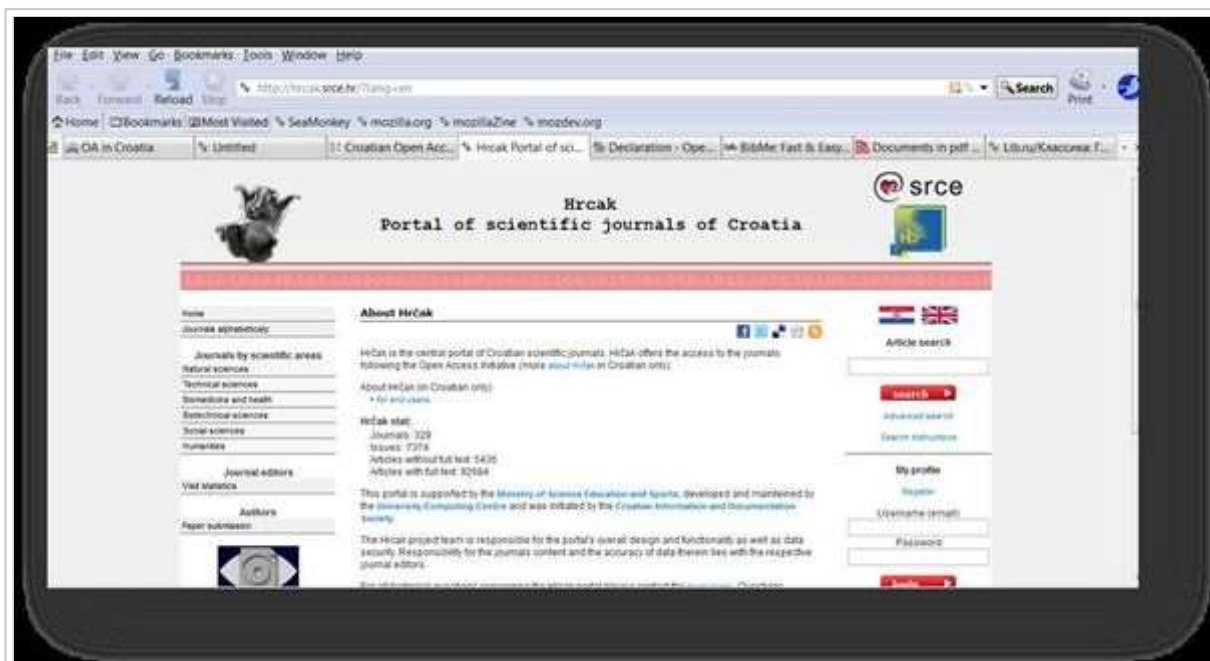
Image 2: The Statistical Data on the items indexed in CROSKI.

Despite the fact that individual Croatian governmental and civic institutions have been greatly involved in the implementation of open access initiatives, the coordinated Open Access policy of Croatia outlined in the report was entitled, "Science and Technology Policy of the Republic of Croatia 2006-2010."<sup>[5]</sup> The OA policy has been further supplanted by the Croatian Declaration of Open Access, as of October of 2012. The declaration conforms with the EU Declaration on Open Access in the following manner:

“...the purpose of which is to sensitize everyone who participates in creation, publishing, use, and preservation of scientific information in Croatia. In our declaration we are stressing the fundamental importance of scientific information, the necessity of it being available to everyone, and obligation of its permanent preservation. Open Access means unrestricted, free, and undisturbed online access to digital scientific information that allows scientific information to be read, stored, distributed, searched, reached, indexed and/or used in any other legal way. Unrestricted in this context means free of any restrictions and terms imposed upon its access and use. For the purpose of having unrestricted access to the information, it is necessary to guarantee anonymity to the information users.”<sup>[6]</sup>

### **Hrčak: Portal znanstvenih časopisa Republike Hrvatske** (<http://hrcak.srce.hr/>)

The emphasis on scientific information in the open access context doesn't mean that the journals from the Humanities and Social Sciences are not indexed in Croatian open access databases. For example, as of May 2013 the Hrčak portal of scientific journals of Croatia hosted 333 journal titles with 91,737 full-text articles, including dozens of journals in the Humanities and Social Science fields.



*Image 3: The landing page of Hrčak: Croatian open access portal for science journals.*

This portal was set up in 2006 to provide access to scientific journals published in Croatia for both national and international audiences. The journals that are indexed in this portal are also harvested by Google Scholar and BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine).<sup>[7]</sup> The objectives of Hrčak at the time of its envisioning were to create a one-stop common portal that also provided a single platform for metadata storage and free access to full-text articles.<sup>[8]</sup> This portal's creation was sponsored by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. The data on the portal are maintained by the University Computing Center (<http://www.srce.unizg.hr/>) in Zagreb.

The portal's bilingual (Croatian and English) landing page has a simple Google-like search box. There is an advanced search option that allows users to search articles using keywords in author, title, abstract, publisher and journal fields. The advanced search option allows this portal's users to limit their searches in nineteen European languages including English, French and Spanish.

The images below show screenshots of the Croatian Economic Survey (<http://hrcak.srce.hr/croatian-economic-survey>) as it is hosted on Hrčak. The portal provides full-text access to the Croatian Economic Survey. At the time of writing this article, the journal issues were available in pdf format beginning in 1994 and running through 2013. In some cases, journal articles are available in both html and pdf formats.



Image 4: Croatian Economic Survey on Hrčak.



**Hrčak**  
Portal znanstvenih časopisa Republike Hrvatske

**Croatian Economic Survey, No.15**  
Datum izdavanja: Travanj 2013.

Sadržaj	Puni tekst
Can Consumer Confidence Data Predict Real Variables? Evidence from Croatia (str. 5-24)	Engleski pdf 240 KB
Marija Kuzmanovic, Peter Sanjny Izvorni znanstveni članak	
Socio-Economic Determinants of Health in Croatia: Insights from Four Cross-Sectional Surveys (str. 25-60)	Engleski pdf 302 KB
Ivan Čipin, Šime Šimčić Izvorni znanstveni članak	
Evaluating Additionality of an Innovation Subsidy Program Targeted at SMEs: An Exploratory Study (str. 61-88)	Engleski pdf 266 KB
Senja Račar, Jean-Damien Arlot Izvorni znanstveni članak	
Mind the Gap: Citizens' and Companies' Views of Business Culture in Croatia (str. 89-114)	Engleski pdf 246 KB
Jelena Budak, Edo Rajh, Paul Shubbs Izvorni znanstveni članak	
Dale T. Mortensen and Christopher A. Pissarides; Konstantinos Tatsiramos and Klaus F. Zimmermann, eds.: Job Matching, Wage Dispersion, and Unemployment (str. 115-124)	Engleski pdf 129 KB
Iva Torić Recenzija, Prilog	
Igor Guardanocchi: Pension Reforms in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe: From Post-Socialist Transition to the Global Financial Crisis (str. 125-134)	Engleski pdf 100 KB
Ivana Vukorepa Recenzija, Prilog	

Pojeda: 384 \*

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trazi

Napredno pretraživanje  
Upite za pretraživanje

**Moj profil**

Registracija novih korisnika  
Korisnička oznaka (email)

Lozinka

prijava

Zaboravili ste lozinku?!

Početna stranica  
Abecedni popis časopisa  
Časopisi po područjima  
Prirodne znanosti  
Tehničke znanosti  
Biomedicina i zdravstvo  
Biotehničke znanosti  
Društvene znanosti  
Humanističke znanosti  
Uredništva  
Posećenost časopisa  
Prijava novog časopisa  
Autori  
Prijava radova

BASE

Image 5: Articles from the Croatian Economic Survey.

Besides providing free full text access, two other overlooked features of this portal include the ability for a user to register and create a custom list of journals of interest, and the option to view search statistics for these journals. These statistics can be used to infer the various modes of accessing scientific information created in Croatia.



Image 6: The statistical data on individual visits to journals that are indexed in Hrčak.

Both the CROSBİ and Hrčak demonstrate the effectiveness of Croatian open access policy initiatives. Whereas the official statement on open access in Croatia became public in October 2012, the projects that supported these initiatives came to fruition at a much earlier date. Although the success of these two open access projects may not point to a generalized conclusion about the development of open access in the Croatian context, their success clearly indicates a promising future for open access policy initiatives in Croatia.

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1. ↑ This article was written in May, 2013. At the time of writing this article, Croatia wasn't the member of the European Union. I acknowledge valuable comments by Dr. Michael St.Clair of German department of UC Berkeley that helped in the process of improving my article.



2. ↑ "Science in Society Home Page-Research." *European Commission: Research & Innovation*. European Union, n.d. Web. 4 May 2013. <[ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1294&lang=1](http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1294&lang=1)>.
3. ↑ Grgic, Ivana Hebrang, and Ana Barbaric. "The Future Of Open Access In Croatia: A Survey Of Academic And Research Libraries." *Library Review* 60.2 (2011): 155-160. Library Literature & Information Science Full Text (H.W. Wilson). Web. 6 May 2013.
4. ↑ Schmidt, Birgit, and Iryna Kuchma. *Implementing Open Access Mandates in Europe: Openaire Study on the Development of Open Access Repository Communities in Europe*. Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2012. Internet resource.
5. ↑ "Erawatch Science and Technology Policy of the Republic of Croatia 2006-2010." *Erawatch*. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 May 2013. <[http://erawatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/erawatch/opencms/information/country\\_pages/hr/policydocument/policydoc\\_mig\\_0006](http://erawatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/erawatch/opencms/information/country_pages/hr/policydocument/policydoc_mig_0006)>.
6. ↑ "Declaration - Open Access - otvoreni pristup znanstvenim informacijama." *Fakultet elektrotehnike i računarstva - FER e-Campus* v1. N.p., 24 Oct. 2012. Web. 4 May 2013. <<http://www.fer.unizg.hr/oa2012/declaration>>.
7. ↑ Stojanovski, Jadranka, Jelka Petrak, and Bojan Macan. "The Croatian national open access journal platform." *Learned Publishing*, vol. 22, no.4, October 2009, pp. 263-273. <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/alpsp/lp/2009/00000022/00000004/art00002>
8. ↑ Ibid.

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