

## **The Internet and FMU Students**

The Internet is rapidly becoming a new source of education, thus stimulating interactive educational activities (Patterson/ Swanson.2000).

The aim of this paper is to learn how much the students of the Faculty of Music (FMU) make use of their opportunities of the Internet for educational and research purposes.

In order to gain an objective view of the FMU student situation concerning this issue, we distributed a questionnaire containing the following seven questions:

1. Year of study
2. Study program (department)
3. Monthly use of the Internet
4. Does the student own a computer
5. Type of Internet connection the student uses
6. For what purpose does the student use the Internet
  - e-mail
  - fun
  - various information
  - education and research
  - other
  - none
7. What does the student search for:
  - “news” groups for music
  - composers, performers, compositions (scores and recordings)
  - music news
  - contact with professors
  - materials for FMU classes
  - other
  - none

The structure of the questionnaire reflects our intention to obtain realistic information about the communicational role the Internet plays for the student population at FMU.

The survey covered the entire FMU student population and took place from 20 November to 10 December. The questionnaires were being completed during the group classes. A total of 332 students from 372 students were surveyed. Some of the students were absent out of objective reasons. What followed was the construction of a database for further analysis. When entering the data in the database, we concluded that some questionnaires are not usable because of obvious discrimination in the answers, visible through checking answers in similar questions. Thus, for instance, a student's answer stated that s/he did not use the Internet at all, while later the same student stated that s/he used an ADSL connection. Answers of this type were also common: that the student uses the Internet for e-mail only, later stating that s/he searches through educational institutions, composers, compositions and performers; in other instances, the students only answered the first two questions ("year of study" and "study program") or they didn't answer the last two questions ("or what purpose does the student use the Internet" and "hat does the student search for").

After the elimination of such questionnaires we obtained the final number of 280 questionnaires for further processing and analysis.

After the processing of data we obtained the following distribution of answers on particular questions.

The fields "year of study" and "program of study" provide a potential comparative analysis in terms of the distribution according to year and department of study, but will not be studied in this paper owing to its limited scope.

### **Monthly use of the Internet**

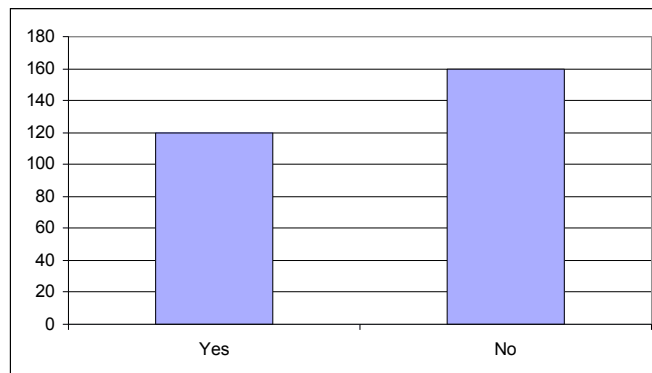
The frequency of student Internet use indicates their ability to use the Internet for more developed purposes.

Monthly use of the Internet	
days	students
0	36
1	12
2	15
3	23
4	25
5	29
6	8
7	50
14	48
21	14
30	20
<b>total</b>	<b>280</b>

The table above shows that most of the students use the Internet seven days per month, whereas 36 students do not use it at all. The days in the answers range from 0 to 30. The average value is 8.29, i.e. the FMU students use the Internet approximately 8 to 9 days per month. This proves that the average student does not use the Internet often, which is insufficient for educational advancement.

### Owning a computer

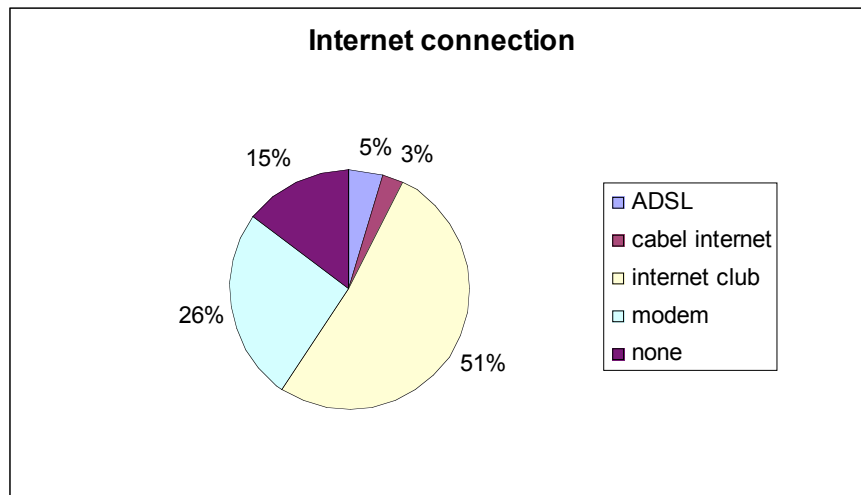
The question “Does the student own a computer” is related to the previous question. The concept of students using the Internet can be explained through the distribution of answers to this question.



## Using an Internet connection

The distribution of answers for this question is also related to the previous two questions. Furthermore, these results show how many students still use Internet clubs even though they own computers.

Internet connection	
type of connection	students
ADSL	13
cable internet	8
internet club	145
modem	73
none	41
<i>total</i>	280



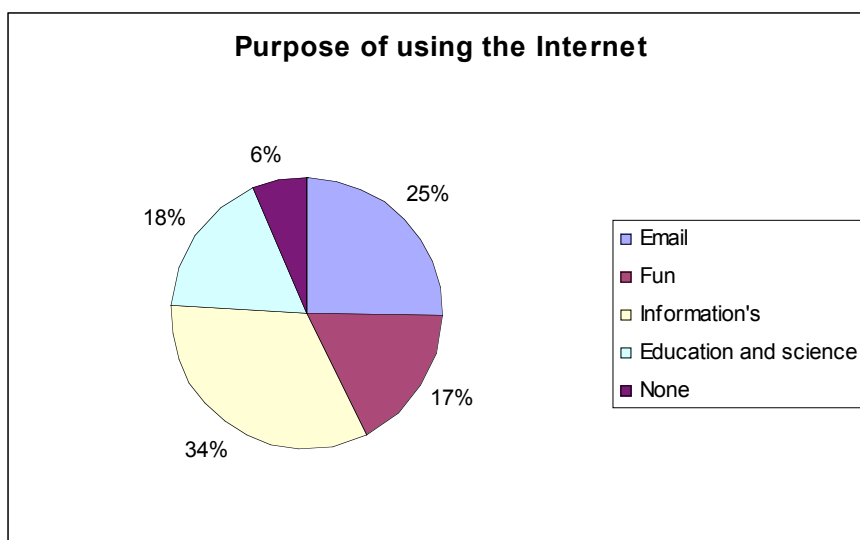
The fact that 51% of the students go to Internet clubs indicates that only some of them use the Internet for educational and research purposes. The same conclusion is supported with the information that the total number of students who have an Internet connection at home (ADSL, cable Internet or a modem) is 94, or 34%, even though the previous table shows that the number of students who own a computer is larger.

## Purpose of using the Internet

Since for this question the students were able to give more answers, we decided to divide the field of "purpose of using the Internet" into several subdivisions corresponding to the answer options. We obtained the following results:

Purpose of using the Internet				
e-mail	fun	information	education and research	none
145	100	188	103	36

This table excludes the field “other” where the students had to write the purpose of using the Internet other than the previously mentioned options. This field included answers such as: sports, song lyrics, fashion, photographs, etc.



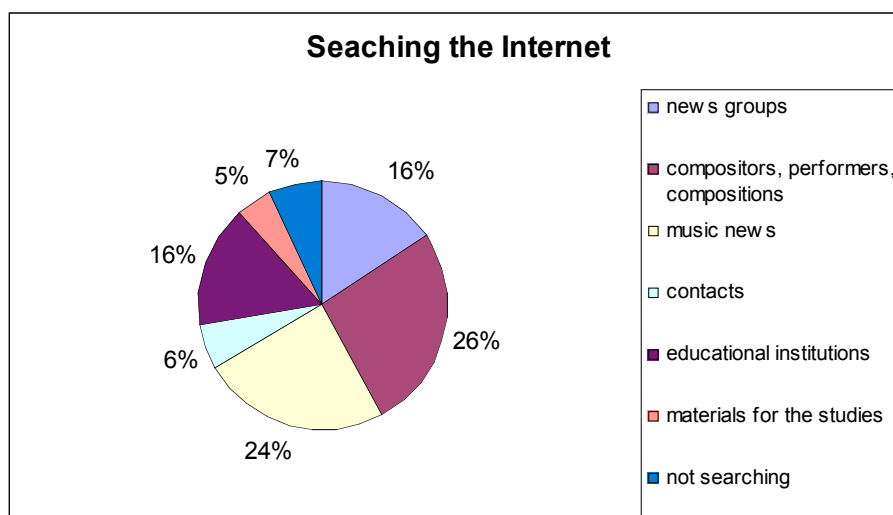
The obtained results prove that the students mostly use the Internet for obtaining various information (34%). The percentage of students who only use the Internet for e-mail is also large (25%), whereas only 18% of the students use the Internet for educational and research purposes.

### Searching the Internet

Despite the fact that we have gained the idea of how much the students use the Internet for educational and research purposes, the last question enabled us to learn in which way the students progress through the Internet. The table and graph below exclude the field “other”, as in the previous category. Here the students were to state what else they search for on the Internet. The answers were similar to the ones seen in the purposes for using the Internet: sport, MIDI files, song lyrics, fashion, video clips, news, etc.

The remaining subfields show the following results:

Searching the Internet						
'news' groups	composers, performers, compositions	music news	contact	educational institutions	study materials	none
80	134	124	30	81	24	36



It is evident that most of the students who use the Internet for education and research search for composers, performers or compositions. The ones who serach for music news follow.

### Conclusion

The distribution of data from the questionnaire gave us the initial idea for the situation at the Faculty of Music in Skopje regarding the use of the Internet by the student population. We saw the 15% of the students do not use the Internet at all, whereas the remaining and largest percentage of students – 51% - go to Internet clubs. Of the students who use the Internet, only 18% use the possibility of educational and research information, whereas most of them use the Internet for *various information* (34%) and *e-mail* (25%). Of the students who use the Internet for educational and research purposes 26% search for *composers, performers and compositions*, follow world *music news* (24%), whereas only 5% search for *study material* for FMU classes.

This asserts our initial hypothesis. Even though the Internet offers many opportunities for educational, cultural and research advancement, the FMU student population still does not use the advantages of this present and future means of global communication.

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