



# From school benches straight to retirement? Similarities and differences in the shopping behaviour of teenagers and seniors in Bratislava, Slovakia

František KRIŽAN<sup>a\*</sup>, Kristína BILKOVÁ<sup>b</sup>, Josef KUNC<sup>c</sup>, Michala SLÁDEKOVÁ MADAJOVÁ<sup>b</sup>,  
Milan ZEMAN<sup>d</sup>, Pavol KITA<sup>e</sup>, Peter BARLÍK<sup>f</sup>

## Abstract

*The shopping behaviours of teenagers in shopping centres in Bratislava (Slovakia) is compared to those of seniors in this paper. The analysis focuses on the perception of shopping centres by teenagers and seniors in the context of time (shopping frequency), social (with whom they shop) and financial (amount of money spent) factors. The survey was conducted on random samples of 504 teenagers and 431 seniors. To test the hypotheses, group means were evaluated (Analysis of Variance models). When assessing the spatial aspects of teenagers' and seniors' shopping behaviours, a concentric zone approach was used. It can be concluded that Bratislava teenagers are not as sensitive consumers as seniors in the context of the variables assessed in the survey. Teenagers perceive shopping centres as a normal part of their consumption behaviours. Seniors perceive the shopping centres less positively and they spent a shorter time there. Also, in the case of seniors, the frequency of their visits to shopping centres increased in the context of their positive perceptions.*

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## 1. Introduction

The transformation of retailing in post-socialist countries engendered changes in consumer behaviours (Kunc et al., 2013; Spilková, 2012a, 2012b), in the context of demographic processes as well as changes in consumer mobility for services in the context of the shopping gradient (Maryáš et al., 2014).

With the 21<sup>st</sup> century, new challenges have come to retail in Slovakia in terms of the continuous creation of new types of shopping equipment (shopping centres, big boxes, online sales, mail order sales and more). Original urban types of shopping centres concentrated in the city centre are confronted with outlets combining traditional shopping methods with convenience, commercial activities and operational advantages in shopping centres. These changes

create a diverse set of shopping formats with distinctive functional characteristics, as well as their deployment in space. It can be noted that the new types of shopping formats that appeared on the market in terms of the rebirth and diversification of shopping, do not replace automatically existing shopping formats (Coleman, 2012). The coexistence of different shopping formats is part of the varied retail activities in an urban environment.

The popularity of shopping centres in Slovakia is constantly growing. According to the Shopping Centre Index (SCI), in 2016 shopping centres in Slovakia were visited by 63 million people (which translates to almost 60 customers per m<sup>2</sup> of total Gross Leasable Area (GLA) per year, with the majority of visits typically occurring in December), half a million more than the year before. Compared to 2015, shopping

<sup>a</sup> Department of Regional Geography, Protection and Planning of the Landscape, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia (\*corresponding author: F. Križan, e-mail: [frantisek.krizan@uniba.sk](mailto:frantisek.krizan@uniba.sk))

<sup>b</sup> The Institute of Geography of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia

<sup>c</sup> Department of Regional Economics and Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administration, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

<sup>d</sup> The Institute for Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia

<sup>e</sup> Department of Marketing, Faculty of Commerce, University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia

<sup>f</sup> Market Locator SK s.r.o., Bratislava, Slovakia