

## PURCHASING PLACES OF CONSUMER GOODS IN SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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**Abstract.** The article focuses on the selection of purchasing places of main groups of consumer goods and services by the consumers from the selected European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). The source foundations for this article are constituted by the source literature and the results of field research run within the research project titled *Commerce and services in Europe – diagnosis and development perspectives* conducted from 2013 to 2015. The presented research results point to imitation of consumers' behaviours from the selected European countries with relation to the selection of shopping centres as a shopping area. In each of the analysed countries, the consumers declaring doing shopping in shopping centres constituted over 3/4 of the group of respondents. The research results also point to imitation of purchasing e-behaviours. Except for Romania, Internet shopping was declared by 2/3 of the questioned consumers. The difference among consumers from particular countries are observable, however, in the selection of a purchasing place for food, cleansing products, radio and TV equipment, household appliances as well as clothing and footwear.

**Key words:** consumer, the retail trade, the place of purchase of goods and services, quantitative research, Europe

### INTRODUCTION

The basic task of retail trade is the creation of suitable conditions for customers to purchase products. The problematic aspects of retail trade as a research field should be then considered not only at the level of the company, but also at the level of the needs of individual consumers, constituting the most significant and numerous group of customers of retail outlets. Due to competitive force which is demonstrated by this group of market entities, shopping must take place in suitable time and place, in the way consistent with their wishes and on the terms beneficial for them [Zakrzewski 1977, Czubała 2001,

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Sławińska 2008]. A large amount and diversity of needs, which may be satisfied in retail trade, contribute to the simultaneous initiation, by the companies, of different places and ways of providing products for their customers. The result of such activities is a new structure of retail trade, meeting the customers' expectations, observable in particular European countries.

The objective of the article is to concentrate on the selections of stationary and virtual purchasing places of main groups of consumption products done by the consumers from the selected European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). The research results, done for the purposes of this article, demonstrate the most preferable trade formats by the consumers [Borusiak 2008], constituting the indicators for further development of retail trade companies, as well as for the basic local government units – the organizers of retail trade networks within a given area.

## SOURCE MATERIAL AND RESEARCH METHODS

The considerations presented in this article were collected with the use of logical deduction methods, critical analysis of subject literature, and most of all the conclusions from quantitative studies<sup>1</sup>.

The quantitative research was conducted in April and May 2014<sup>2</sup>. Its objective was the identification of purchasing behaviours and opinions of the residents on the functioning of commercial and service entities in the selected European countries. The countries with diverse economic and social potential were selected for the study. There were the economic moguls as well as the representatives of less developed post-communist economies among the analysed countries. The countries of big and low human potential. "Old" and "new" members of the European Union. The countries which have already accepted their common EURO currency and the countries possessing their own currencies. The members of Shengen Area and the ones remaining out of it. As a result, we found out about places and ways of shopping for main groups of products by the questioned consumers, information about the opinions of the respondents on the structure and the functioning of retail trade and service companies in their places of residence, as well as about the Internet as a space for sale and purchase of consumer goods and services<sup>3</sup>.

The described studies were conducted among the targeted individual consumers [Kędzior 2005]. Adults, shopping for consumer goods and services have been qualified for the sample.

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<sup>1</sup> The research was conducted within a three-year project titled Trade and services in Europe – diagnosis and development perspectives, which was managed by the author. The project was financed from the funds of Ministry of Higher Education and Science to maintain a research potential in the years 2013–2015.

<sup>2</sup> The research was conducted in the following places: Brugge (in Belgium), Seinajoki (in Finland), Grenoble (in France), Berlin and Prenzlau (in Germany), Katowice urban area (in Poland), Bucarest (in Romania), Bratislava (in Slovakia) and Budapest (in Hungary).

<sup>3</sup> Only the selected results of the described research concerning Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Romania and Slovakia were presented in this article. More in: Jaciow et al. [2015], and Kucharska et al. [2015].

The technique of a distributed questionnaire was used to obtain primary information. The survey questionnaire served as a tool. It contained 32 content-related questions and 5 metrical questions. Metrical questions were predominantly formulated in the form of ordinal, bipolar and seven-degree scales. Moreover, the questions in the form of tables were used as well as dichotomous, branching logic questions. Metrical questions were subject to the research objectives and served for the identification of purchasing behaviours of the respondents as well as to collect the respondents' opinions on the functioning of commercial and services companies in their place of residence. Metrical questions enable to characterize the analysed sample (Table 1).

Table 1. Characteristics of the questioned consumers

Specification	Belgium ( <i>N</i> = 313)	France ( <i>N</i> = 204)	Germany ( <i>N</i> = 300)	Poland ( <i>N</i> = 300)	Romania ( <i>N</i> = 280)	Slovakia ( <i>N</i> = 321)
Sex of subjects (%)						
Woman	53.7	60.8	51.0	50.0	74.6	61.1
Men	46.3	39.2	49.0	50.0	25.4	38.9
Professional activity (%)						
Works	49.7	15.2	77.4	60.0	40.0	64.9
Does not work	50.3	84.8	22.6	40.0	60.0	35.1
Size of place of residence (%)						
To 20 k	39.3	26.0	15.0	13.7	8.2	21.2
From 21 to 50 k	22.0	13.2	15.7	15.3	7.9	19.9
From 51 to 100 k	17.6	16.7	14.0	22.7	7.1	17.8
From 101 to 500 k	20.1	30.9	11.3	48.3	10.4	17.1
Over 500 k	1.0	13.2	44.0	–	66.4	24.0
Subjective evaluation of economic position (%)						
Very bad 1	1.6	5.0	3.5	1.3	0.4	0.9
2	4.5	10.6	10.4	2.7	0.7	4.4
3	10.5	21.1	21.5	13.3	26.5	12.3
4	30.4	30.2	22.2	36.0	38.5	35.2
5	34.2	25.1	26.7	32.7	20.4	31.1
6	16.3	6.5	12.5	11.3	10.5	12.9
Very good 7	2.6	1.5	3.1	2.7	2.9	3.1
Statistics of subjects' age (years)						
Average	35.5	20.0	37.7	34.8	37.6	32.6
Mode	19	18	27	21	22	22

Source: Own research.

The intention of the researchers was to obtain a sample at the level of 300 consumers in each of the countries, where the research was conducted. However, as a result of the difficulties related to conducting the international research and the formal verification of the obtained material, the sample size in particular countries is diversified (Table 1). The obtained results should not be analysed as the results of comparative studies, but as a set of national studies.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Belgium

While analysing the declarations of the questioned Belgians related to the most frequently selected purchasing places, we may observe the differences in the selection of place depending on a purchased product (Table 2). And hence, in case of purchasing food, the respondents most frequently pointed to a discount store (23.1%) and to supermarket (21.3%). Supermarket was also the most frequent purchasing place for cleansing products by the questioned Belgians (27.4%). On the other hand, the respondents most frequently visited the specialized stores (26.1%) to purchase clothing and footwear. However, which is a bit surprising, the most frequent purchasing place to buy radio and TV equipment as well as household appliances was the Internet (30%), according to the Belgian respondents.

Table 2. The most frequent purchasing places for products – declarations of the questioned Belgians ( $N = 313$ )

Specification	Food	Cleaning products	Household appliances and audio/ /video devices	Clothes and shoes
Discount store	23.1	17.9	4.3	1.9
Convenience store/Corner shop	16.0	18.8	9.6	4.1
Specialist shop	2.0	3.2	6.1	26.1
Hypermarket	13.6	19.6	19.6	3.6
Supermarket	21.3	27.4	5.8	1.8
Local shop	7.0	4.6	14.5	25.2
Marketplace/Bazaar	16.1	3.5	10.1	11.8
Internet	0.8	4.9	30.0	25.5

Source: Own research.

A separate aspect of the initiated research was the issue of the definition of the role of shopping centres as places for shopping. Almost 80% of the questioned Belgians declared the visiting of shopping centres to purchase goods and services. The people visiting shopping centres were further asked to indicate the most frequently purchased goods and services in this type of commercial entities<sup>4</sup>. While analysing the obtained research results, we may observe that shopping centres are for Belgians the purchasing places for, most of all, such goods as: clothing and footwear (78%), cosmetics (42.4%) as well as sport and recreational equipment (32.8%). However, in case of purchasing services, the respondents go to shopping centre to the banking institutions (60.4%), food service outlets (24.4%) and beauty salons (also 24.4%) – Table 3.

<sup>4</sup> The respondents in all analysed countries were selecting from a list of 14 groups of goods and 14 groups of services, being able as well to indicate other kinds than the ones mentioned by the researchers.

Table 3. The most frequently purchased goods and services in shopping centres – declarations of the questioned Belgians

Goods ( <i>N</i> = 250)	%	Services ( <i>N</i> = 217)	%
Clothes, shoes	78.0	Banking	60.4
Cosmetics	42.4	Cosmetic	24.4
Sports and recreational products	32.8	Gastronomy	24.4
Groceries	28.0	Optics	12.4
Housing equipment	20.8	Information technology	10.1

Source: Own research.

The Internet is the purchasing place gaining popularity year by year [Raport strategiczny 2015]. According to declarations of the Belgian respondents, almost 3/4 of them declare online shopping. The Internet space should not be treated, however, as a homogenous one. It is, however, the area of many commercial formats such as, e.g. online auctions, Internet shops, group shopping services or the producers' websites [Sobczyk 2010]. That is why the respondents, declaring online shopping, were asked about the most frequent purchasing "places" of selected groups of products online – Table 4.

Table 4. The most frequent purchasing places of products online – declarations of the questioned Belgians

Specification	Clothes and shoes ( <i>N</i> = 171)	Household appliances and audio/ video devices ( <i>N</i> = 139)	Cleaning products ( <i>N</i> = 42)	Food ( <i>N</i> = 54)	Books and multimedia ( <i>N</i> = 165)	Sports and tourism ( <i>N</i> = 125)	Computers and software ( <i>N</i> = 152)	Health and beauty ( <i>N</i> = 77)
	%							
On Internet auctions	8.2	3.6	7.1	3.7	4.8	5.6	3.3	2.6
In Internet shops	62.0	48.9	45.2	63.0	60.0	36.0	49.3	48.1
I use price comparison engines that redi- rect me to the store	9.9	24.5	26.2	13.0	15.2	28.8	19.1	14.3
I use group purchase services	0.6	2.9	4.8	3.7	3.6	4.8	2.6	–
On the producer's website	19.3	20.1	16.7	16.7	16.4	24.8	25.7	35.1

Source: Own research.

Analysing data presented in Table 4, we may observe that the questioned Belgians do shopping in online shops regardless of the kind of a purchased product. The respondents relatively frequently also use the price comparison websites transferring them to the most preferable purchasing places and the producers' websites.

## France

The questioned French respondents look for a comfortable purchase in shops and hypermarkets (respectively 32.1 and 30.1% of respondents) – Table 5. The diversity of the purchasing places is more visible in case of cleansing products. The questioned French respondents purchase them mainly in hypermarkets (36.9%), but also in convenience stores (21%) and discount stores (20%). On the other hand, the lowest diversity of the purchasing places occurs in case of radio and TV equipment. Almost 3/4 of the respondents declared shopping for such goods only in specialized stores. Specialized stores are also most frequently selected purchasing places of clothing and footwear (almost 70%) by the respondents Table 5.

Table 5. The most frequent purchasing places of products – declarations of the questioned French respondents ( $N = 204$ )

Specification	Food	Cleaning products	Household appliances and audio/video devices	Clothes and shoes
	%			
Discount store	19.9	20.0	–	–
Convenience store/Corner shop	32.1	21.0	1.0	–
Specialist shop	–	3.1	72.6	69.7
Hypermarket	30.1	36.9	15.2	1.5
Supermarket	14.3	16.9	1.0	1.0
Local shop	2.6	0.5	–	–
Marketplace/Bazaar	1.0	0.5	0.5	4.5
Internet	–	1.0	9.6	23.4

Source: Own research.

Shopping centres are a very important commercial format for the respondents from France. Visiting such kind of retail trade entities was declared by almost 90% of the respondents. The French respondents visit shopping centres to purchase such goods as household equipment (80.8%), books (52%) and food products (42.9%). Hairstyling, banking and gastronomic services comprise the most frequently purchased services in shopping centres (respectively 38.1, 33.3 and 31.7% of the respondents) – Table 6.

Table 6. The most frequently purchased goods and services in shopping centres – declarations of the questioned French respondents

Goods ( $N = 177$ )	%	Services ( $N = 126$ )	%
Household appliances	80.8	Hairdressing	38.1
Books	52.0	Banking	33.3
Groceries	42.9	Gastronomy	31.7
Household chemicals	37.3	Photographic	27.8
Tools	33.3	Fitness	15.9

Source: Own research.

Although the Internet was not indicated in the formerly described research results of the questioned French consumers as the most frequent purchasing place, it deserves a lot of consideration. Over 3/4 of the questioned French respondents declared that they do shopping online. Regardless of the product purchased online, the French respondents most frequently select Internet shops. The exceptions are sport and tourist items, which are purchased most frequently via price comparison websites, transferring subsequently to the shops with the most attractive offers for the respondents – Table 7.

Table 7. The most frequent purchasing places of products online – declarations of the questioned French respondents

Specification	Clothes and shoes ( <i>N</i> = 129)	Household appliances and audio/ video devices ( <i>N</i> = 101)	Cleaning products ( <i>N</i> = 47)	Food ( <i>N</i> = 49)	Books and multimedia ( <i>N</i> = 83)	Sports and tourism ( <i>N</i> = 78)	Computers and software ( <i>N</i> = 78)	Health and beauty ( <i>N</i> = 66)
	%							
On Internet auctions	30.2	17.8	17.0	10.2	21.7	14.1	14.1	10.6
In Internet shops	48.8	40.6	34.0	42.9	48.2	21.8	32.1	36.4
I use price comparison engines that redirect me to the store	2.3	18.8	14.9	6.1	13.3	35.9	21.8	9.1
I use group purchase services	3.1	1.0	4.3	12.2	2.4	7.7	1.3	10.6
On the producer's website	15.5	21.8	29.8	28.6	14.5	20.5	30.8	33.3

Source: Own research.

## Germany

According to the German respondents, they most frequently go to discount stores to purchase food and cleansing products (respectively 52.1 and 37.4% of the respondents). Specialized stores are, on the other hand, the most frequently selected place to purchase clothing and footwear (70.2%) and radio and TV equipment as well as household appliances (59.2%) – Table 8.

Over 3/4 of the questioned consumers from Germany declare the use of shopping centres as places to purchase goods and services. This kind of commercial entities is visited by the German respondents mostly to purchase clothing and footwear and food products (respectively 58.8 and 54% of the respondents). Shopping centres are also the frequent purchasing place of banking services (47.1%) and gastronomic services (45.5%) for many respondents – Table 9.

Table 8. The most frequent purchasing places of products – declarations of the questioned Germans ( $N = 300$ )

Specification	Food	Cleaning products	Household appliances and audio/video devices	Clothes and shoes
			%	
Discount store	52.1	37.4	9.4	6.4
Convenience store/ /Corner shop	4.2	7.3	2.9	5.7
Specialist shop	4.9	27.6	59.2	70.2
Hypermarket	12.8	13.6	10.8	2.1
Supermarket	16.7	12.2	1.4	0.7
Local shop	5.2	1.4	–	1.1
Marketplace/ /Bazaar	4.2	0.3	2.5	1.4
Internet	–	–	13.7	12.4

Source: Own research.

Table 9. The most frequently purchased goods and services in shopping centres – declarations of the questioned Germans

Goods ( $N = 226$ )	%	Services ( $N = 189$ )	%
Clothes, shoes	58.8	Banking	47.1
Groceries	54.0	Gastronomy	45.5
Books	38.9	Cultural	21.7
Cosmetics	34.5	Cosmetic	16.4
Sports and recreational products	23.5	Fitness	16.4

Source: Own research.

According to the obtained declarations, slightly over 60% of the questioned Germans do online shopping. The respondents from Germany select most online auctions and price comparison websites most frequently when they want to purchase radio and TV equipment as well as household appliances. Price comparison websites are also most frequently selected during the purchase of such goods as books and multimedia, computer equipment, sport and tourist items and health and beauty products. On the other hand, online shops as purchasing places online are most frequently selected in case of purchasing clothing and footwear, food and cleansing products – Table 10.

Table 10. The most frequent purchasing places online – declarations of the questioned Germans

Specification	Clothes and shoes (N = 101)	Household appliances and audio/ video devices (N = 96)	Cleaning products (N = 49)	Food (N = 44)	Books and multimedia (N = 116)	Sports and tourism (N = 72)	Computers and software (N = 86)	Health and beauty (N = 67)
	%							
On Internet auctions	28.7	29.2	18.4	15.9	17.2	13.9	17.4	10.4
In Internet shops	35.6	27.1	26.5	29.5	37.9	27.8	32.6	23.9
I use price comparison engines that redirect me to the store	11.9	29.2	20.4	25.0	39.7	31.9	33.7	26.9
I use group purchase services	3.0	4.2	16.3	18.2	2.6	11.1	2.4	23.9
On the producer's website	20.8	10.4	18.4	11.4	2.6	15.3	14.0	14.9

Source: Own research.

## Poland

Discount stores (59.1%) and hypermarkets (20.1%) are the most frequent purchasing place of food for the questioned Poles. Hypermarkets are also the most frequent purchasing place of cleansing products (42.1%). On the other hand, such goods as radio and TV equipment or clothing and footwear are most frequently purchased in specialized stores (respectively 65.8 and 57.2% of the respondents) – Table 11.

Table 11. The most frequent purchasing places of products – declarations of the questioned Poles (N = 300)

Specification	Food	Cleaning products	Household appliances and audio/video devices	Clothes and shoes
	%			
Discount store	59.1	27.0	1.0	0.4
Convenience store/ /Corner shop	6.0	11.6	1.0	1.1
Specialist shop	1.7	10.2	65.4	57.2
Hypermarket	20.1	42.1	11.4	4.9
Supermarket	3.4	3.5	0.7	2.1
Local shop	8.1	4.2	1.4	2.8
Marketplace/Bazaar	1.3	0.7	2.1	13.8
Internet	0.3	0.7	17.0	17.7

Source: Own research.

Analysing the research results on the visiting of shopping centres by Poles, we may assume that it is done by 8 out of 10 questioned consumers from Poland. They go to shopping centres mostly to purchase clothes and shoes (68%), food products (64.8%) and cosmetics (49.6%). Shopping centres in Poland are a frequent purchasing place of such services as gastronomic ones, services related to culture and banking services (declarations respectively: 64.6, 35 and 28.3% of the respondents) – Table 12.

Table 12. The most frequently purchased goods and services in shopping centres – declarations of the questioned Poles

Goods ( <i>N</i> = 250)	%	Services ( <i>N</i> = 226)	%
Clothes, shoes	68.0	Gastronomy	64.6
Groceries	64.8	Cultural	35.0
Cosmetics	49.6	Banking	28.3
Household chemicals	34.8	Hairdressing	16.8
Housing equipment	33.2	Laundry	15.0

Source: Own research.

In Poland 7 out of 10 citizens declare shopping online. Their purchasing behaviours are not too diversified. If Poles decide to do some online shopping, they do it most frequently in online shops, regardless of the kind of a purchased product. Sport and tourist items are the exception. They are more frequently purchased on the websites of group shopping services – Table 13.

Table 13. The most frequent purchasing places online – declarations of the questioned Poles

Specification	Clothes and shoes ( <i>N</i> = 161)	Household appliances and audio/video devices ( <i>N</i> = 176)	Cleaning products ( <i>N</i> = 94)	Food ( <i>N</i> = 80)	Books and multimedia ( <i>N</i> = 159)	Sports and tourism ( <i>N</i> = 138)	Computers and software ( <i>N</i> = 147)	Health and beauty ( <i>N</i> = 110)
On Internet auctions	39.1	21.6	12.8	8.8	26.4	21.7	20.4	16.4
In Internet shops	39.8	34.1	31.9	37.5	41.5	21.7	32.0	37.3
I use price comparison engines that redirect me to the store	8.1	32.9	22.3	25.0	18.9	21.0	23.8	17.3
I use group purchase services	3.1	2.3	14.9	12.5	4.4	22.5	2.7	14.5
On the producer's website	9.9	9.1	18.1	16.3	8.8	13.0	21.1	14.5

Source: Own research.

## Romania

In accordance with the obtained research results, the Romanian consumers purchase food most frequently in discount stores (48.4%), they purchase cleansing products in convenience stores (34.1%), and radio and TV equipment as well as clothing and footwear are purchased by them in specialized stores (respectively 43.6 and 52.8% of the respondents) – Table 14.

Table 14. The most frequent purchasing places of products – declarations of the questioned Romanians ( $N = 280$ )

Specification	Food	Cleaning products	Household appliances and audio/video devices	Clothes and shoes
	%			
Discount store	48.4	15.5	1.9	1.1
Convenience store/ /Corner shop	14.2	34.1	23.9	4.5
Specialist shop	–	4.2	43.6	52.8
Hypermarket	15.4	27.7	22.7	9.4
Supermarket	20.1	10.6	1.1	3.4
Local shop	0.8	4.9	0.8	7.9
Marketplace/Bazaar	1.2	2.7	–	5.3
Internet	–	0.4	6.1	15.5

Source: Own research.

Shopping centres constitute a very important purchasing place of goods and services for the questioned consumers from Romania. According to the collected declarations, almost all respondents (97.7%) were visiting shopping centres. The questioned Romanians were most frequently going to shopping centres to purchase food products (83.8%), furniture and flat equipment (75.7%) and cosmetics (72.8%). As for the purchase of services, these were mostly gastronomic services (61.5%), cosmetic services (52%) and watchmaker services (30.2%) – Table 15.

Table 15. The most frequently purchased goods and services in shopping centres – declarations of the questioned Romanians

Goods ( $N = 272$ )	%	Services ( $N = 252$ )	%
Groceries	83.8	Gastronomy	61.5
Housing equipment	75.7	Cosmetics	52.0
Cosmetics	72.8	Watchmaker's	30.2
School supplies	59.6	Laundry	28.2
Clothes, shoes	56.6	Banking	25.4

Source: Own research.

If we may say about the universality of the visiting of shopping centres by the respondents, however we may not say that about their online shopping. Online shopping was declared only by 43.7% of the respondents from Romania. Regardless of the kind

of a purchased product online, the respondents pointed to the online shops as the most frequent purchasing place. Only in case of sport and tourist goods, price comparison websites are equally popular among the respondents – Table 16.

Table 16. The most frequent purchasing places of products online – declarations of the questioned Romanians

Specification	Clothes & shoes (N = 97)	Household appliances and audio/ video devices (N = 85)	Cleaning products (N = 44)	Food (N = 46)	Books and multimedia (N = 92)	Sports and tourism (N = 60)	Computers and software (N = 83)	Health and beauty (N = 49)
	%							
On Internet auctions	10.3	16.5	9.1	6.5	25.0	18.3	22.9	4.1
In Internet shops	49.5	37.6	34.1	30.4	31.5	25.0	30.3	36.7
I use price comparison engines that redirect me to the store	7.2	17.6	20.5	23.9	10.9	25.0	21.7	12.2
I use group purchase services	8.2	9.4	18.2	9.9	18.5	16.7	8.4	16.3
On the producer's website	24.7	18.8	18.2	28.3	14.1	15.0	16.9	30.6

Source: Own research.

## Slovakia

Discount stores (33.7%) and hypermarkets (32.2%) are regarded as the most frequent purchasing places of food in Slovakia, according to the questioned consumers from this country. Hypermarkets are also the most frequent purchasing place of cleansing products (41.5%). However, such groups of goods as radio and TV equipment as well as household appliances, clothing and footwear, according to the respondents' declarations, are most frequently purchased in specialized stores – Table 17.

Shopping centres are visited by nearly 9 out of 10 questioned Slovaks (88.2%). It is an important purchasing place for the respondents. While going to shopping centres, the questioned Slovaks were purchasing mostly clothing and footwear (81.9%) and food products (72.1%), they also used gastronomic services (67.5%) and banking services (63.5%) – Table 18.

Exactly 78% of the questioned Slovaks do online shopping. Regardless of the kind of product, online shops are the most frequent purchasing place. Home and computer equipment are the exception, which is most frequently purchase thanks to price comparison websites, transferring to the most convenient offer for the purchaser – Table 19.

Table 17. The most frequent purchasing places of products – declarations of the questioned Slovaks (N = 321)

Specification	Food	Cleaning products	Household appliances and audio/video devices	Clothes and shoes
	%			
Discount store	33.7	12.7	1.4	2.2
Convenience store/ /Corner shop	5.2	10.3	2.5	2.9
Specialist shop	1.1	17.6	67.0	64.6
Hypermarket	32.2	41.5	5.7	4.4
Supermarket	21.3	11.6	2.5	2.6
Local shop	6.4	5.3	0.7	1.8
Marketplace/Bazaar	–	0.4	1.1	4.4
Internet	–	0.7	19.1	17.2

Source: Own research.

Table 18. The most frequently purchased goods and services in shopping centres – declarations of the questioned Slovaks

Goods (N = 287)	%	Services (N = 277)	%
Clothes, shoes	81.9	Gastronomy	67.5
Groceries	72.1	Banking	63.5
Cosmetics	55.4	Cultural	42.6
Household chemicals	53.7	Cosmetics	22.4
Books	46.0	Fitness	22.4

Source: Own research.

Table 19. The most frequently purchased products online – declarations of the questioned Slovaks

Specification	Clothes and shoes (N = 192)	Household appliances and audio/video devices (N = 211)	Cleaning products (N = 140)	Food (N = 139)	Books and multimedia (N = 199)	Sports and tourism (N = 160)	Computers and software (N = 171)	Health and beauty (N = 163)
	%							
On Internet auctions	17.7	7.6	9.3	7.2	9.5	5.6	7.0	6.1
In Internet shops	44.8	34.6	36.4	32.4	44.7	42.5	29.8	35.0
I use price comparison engines that redirect me to the store	12.5	41.3	25.7	18.7	21.6	23.1	37.4	17.2
I use group purchase services	5.2	2.4	6.4	21.6	6.5	10.0	2.4	19.6
On the producer's website	19.8	14.2	22.1	20.1	17.6	18.7	23.4	22.1

Source: Own research.

## CONCLUSIONS

The demonstrated research results, although they are not representative, may constitute an assumption to discuss the similarities and differences in purchasing behaviours of the consumers from different European countries.

The obtained research results indicate the imitation of the purchasing behaviours of the consumers from the analysed countries. The purchases of clothing and food are done in specialized stores, radio and TV equipment as well as household appliances are purchased in specialized stores as well (except for France), food is purchased in food discounts (except for France), and cleansing products in hypermarkets (except for Belgium, Germany and Romania). Shopping centres are an important purchasing place of goods and services. Doing shopping in these commercial formats was declared by 3/4 of the respondents in each of the analysed countries. More and more consumers transfer their shopping to the Internet. Except for the respondents from Romania, online shopping was declared by at least 2/3 of the respondents.

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## MIEJSCA ZAKUPU DÓBR KONSUMPCYJNYCH W WYBRANYCH KRAJACH EUROPY

**Streszczenie.** Artykuł zwraca uwagę na wybory miejsc zakupu głównych grup dóbr i usług konsumpcyjnych przez konsumentów z wybranych krajów Europy (Belgii, Francji, Niemiec, Polski, Rumunii i Słowacji). Podstawy źródłowe opracowania stanowi literatura przedmiotu oraz wyniki badań bezpośrednich przeprowadzonych w ramach projektu badawczego pt. *Handel i usługi w Europie – diagnoza i perspektywy rozwoju* zrealizowanego w latach 2013–2015. Przedstawione wyniki badań wskazują na upodabnianie się zachowań konsumentów z badanych krajów Europy odnośnie wyboru centrów handlowych jako miejsca dokonywanych zakupów. W każdym z badanych krajów, konsumenci deklarujący

dokonywanie zakupów w centrach handlowych stanowili ponad 3/4 ogółu respondentów. Wyniki badań wskazują także na upodobnianie się e-zachowań nabywczych. Z wyjątkiem Rumunii, dokonywanie zakupów przez Internet deklarowało minimum 2/3 badanych konsumentów. Różnice między konsumentami z poszczególnych krajów widoczne są natomiast w wyborach miejsca zakupu żywności, środków czystości, sprzętu RTV i AGD oraz odzieży i obuwia.

**Słowa kluczowe:** konsument, handel detaliczny, miejsca zakupu dóbr i usług, badania ilościowe, Europa

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