Dr Dorota Celinska-Janowicz
Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (EUROREG)
University of Warsaw, Poland
d.celinska@uw.edu.pl

Shopping centres in central and secondary business districts. The Warsaw example

Contemporary changes in the economic structure of metropolitan areas, especially increased significance of the service sector for enterprises, have resulted in a distinctly greater demand for modern office space, and, in a consequence, its rising volume. Traditionally office space is concentrated in the central business district (CBS). However, increasing polycentricity of metropolitan areas (e.g. Hall, Pain 2006) results in deconcentration of jobs, especially in the business services sector, and creation of secondary business districts. Due to large concentrations of people (employees who are also consumers) business areas are important retail locations, also for large, multi-functional shopping centres. The examples are numerous: Les 4 Temps shopping centre in La Defense business district in Paris, Canary Wharf Shopping Centre in London, Donau Zentrum in the Donau City in Vienna, or Galeria Mokotow in Mokotow Business District in Warsaw.

During the economic transformation Warsaw was unquestionably the fastest-developing city in Poland. It soon became the main centre attracting foreign capital, which was manifested not only by the location of the headquarters of transnational corporations, but also by a dynamic development of higher-order services: financial and information services needed for providing them (Kukliński, 2004). Warsaw was also the fastest-developing shopping centre market in Poland, which was facilitated by such factors as a large population with relatively high incomes, but also by the relatively liberal policies of the local authorities (Smętkowski, 2009). The success of the transformation processes was confirmed by considerable interest from Polish and foreign developers who started the construction of modern shopping centres and new residential estates. Warsaw also witnessed rapid deindustrialisation processes manifested by the liquidation of manufacturing assets and gradual redevelopment of post-industrial sites to cater to other functions, especially those associated with higher-order services and retail trade.

The major morphological and functional changes that have taken place in Warsaw are discussed in many publications on the development and location of modern office space and large shopping centres in the urban space (Jałowiecki 2000; Smętkowski, 2009), on changes in the distribution of enterprises (Śleszyński 2004, 2006, 2008), including service and retail companies (Wilk, 2001, 2005; Dudek-Mańkowska 2010). Existing studies demonstrate a growing polycentricity of Warsaw's business space (cf. e.g. Smętkowski, Celińska-Janowicz, 2014). In particular, new facilities were located in the south-western parts of the city, in post-industrial areas, creating secondary business district called Mokotow Business District. At the end of 2013, the two main Warsaw business districts, i.e. the CBD (Central

Business District) and the MBD (Mokotow Business District), offered a similar space for lease in modern office buildings, ca. 1.2 million sq. m. each, which in total represented about 60% of the office space in Warsaw and 35% in the country at large (based on Warsaw Research Forum data). This means that these two areas are largely similar in terms of the volume of modern office space offered for lease. At the same time, in both business districts modern shopping centres were opened, which have a metropolitan or even a regional impact.

Due to different characteristics of the central and secondary business areas, as well as their placement in the urban spatial structure, role of the shopping centres in these two types of office space concentrations is also different. Greater prestige and better transport accessibility of the central districts (which is also associated with the location of transport hubs in the vicinity) means a higher sales threshold of retailers located in the city centre. This, in turn, is translated into greater diversity, uniqueness and exclusivity of the sales offer and the presence of international retail chains in the tenant mix of the shopping centres located in the CBD. Higher sales thresholds also imply a higher share of stores offering high-end goods. Secondary business districts have more peripheral location and thus also shopping centres located in this areas represent lower levels of the urban retail hierarchy (Garner, 1966; Berry, Garrison 1958; Berry, 1963). Retail and service network in these areas is less developed than in central part of the city and offers frequently bought convenience goods and services rather than comparison. It can be thus assumed that shopping centre located in the secondary business district plays a greater role as venue of everyday shopping for the employees of the nearby offices than shopping centre located in the CBD.

Traditionally, geographical analysis of shopping centres location and the general urban retail spatial structure have been focused on consumers place of residents. This factor has been usually included in various statistical and spatial models assessing and analysing attractiveness and retail potential of a given location. However, due to complex spatial structure of the contemporary urban areas, as well as high density of the urban transport network, this approach seems to be insufficient. Spatial shopping behaviours are also strongly affected by location of jobs. During or after work employees visit shops and service units located is the close vicinity to their offices. Large shopping potential has also a route between home and work, that large part of urban population travels usually two times a day, five days a week. Taking into account this reasoning, shopping behaviours in business areas, concentrating large number consumers, seems to be especially interesting and still not well analysed. The aim of the paper is to present result of the empirical research on shopping behaviours of office employees conducted in central and secondary business district in Warsaw, Poland.

The study was based on two types of information: tenant mix of shopping centres located in both business areas and results of the questionnaire survey conducted among employees of these areas, regarding their shopping behaviours with respect to the nearest shopping centres (located within the districts). The analysis revealed that although the offers of shopping centres in both areas are relatively similar (since they are both centres of the same type – large regional shopping centres with a cinema), employees of nearby offices use them in a different way. In the secondary business district, most of all due to smaller number of other retail and service facilities, shopping centre is much more often visited by the surveyed employees than in the central business district. Shopping behaviours in these two cases differ in regards to the type of activity undertaken in the shopping centre (including business meetings), as well as time spent in the centre and time of the day when they are usually visited.

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