

MONIKA PŁAZIAK  
Pedagogical University of Cracow

ANNA IRENA SZYMAŃSKA  
Cracow University of Economics

## **The Attractiveness of Open-Air Markets for Shopping in a Large CEE City: The Example of Kraków, Poland**

*Abstract:* This paper analyzes the condition of open-air markets in Poland, with particular emphasis on Kraków. The authors note that there are a declining number of open-air markets. The size of the markets is also shrinking and there are a decreasing number of stands. Similarly, survey respondents demonstrate less interest in open-air markets as a shopping destination and significantly increased interest in shopping centers (malls), discount stores, supermarkets, and hypermarkets. However, open-air markets have many supporters: in particular, older people appreciate open-air markets, and not only because of the availability of fresh products at a relatively low price. They also appreciate such markets as meeting places. Open-air markets in CEE cities have always played an important commercial role and been witness to the history of these cities. For this reason and also because of the important function they play as unique public spaces, they should be protected and should receive special treatment from the local authorities.

*Keywords:* open-air markets, Central-Eastern European cities (CEE cities)

### **Introduction**

Open-air markets have been a permanent element of cities in different societies and cultures. From ancient times, open-air markets have served as a public place where merchants, craftsmen, and local inhabitants of the city and its environs could meet to buy, sell, or trade local or foreign goods. Open-air markets used to be the most obvious meeting place for buyers and sellers (Slater, Tonkiss 2001; Seale 2016). Markets were often located at the very heart of cities; in some instances, it was the open-air market that contributed to the birth of a city or gave it its name.

In Europe, the open-air market trade began to lose its importance when other popular forms of trade—such as selling from shops—emerged. Trading in open-air markets was occasional, but shops operated without interruption. Shops became more popular in the seventeenth century when merchants and innkeepers settled in cities and villages; then indoor shopping took priority over open-air shopping. Shops were more luxurious and spacious, with attractive interiors and glass windows. Furthermore, they were permanent points of sale, with longer opening hours, and advertising. These features have made them, to this day, a very attractive form for selling merchandise.

In CEE cities, open-air markets played an important role for residents and small craftsmen in the period of economic and social transformation after the collapse of communism in these countries (Sik, Wallace 1999). In that period, people living in cities became generally more active. Their needs were changing along with the very rapid influx of a broad range of goods from abroad. “Trade tourism” emerged as a new mass phenomenon, with people trading all sorts of goods coming from, for example, Eastern European countries. It should be noted that only a few years later Poland became a shopping destination for Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians, who came in great numbers. At the same time, very frequent shopping trips across the western (German) border were reported. German customers demonstrated a particular sentiment for shopping in open-air markets.

Open-air markets remain visible in the Central European urban space, either in the form of permanent points of sale or occasional markets. They play an important role in cities, not only because of the availability of local, organic farm food or unique craft work but also because of the prices, which are often low. Open-air markets also have an undeniable asset— they provide a unique atmosphere, with room for bargaining, chatting, and meeting other users of the public space (Madanipour 2003; Janssens, Sezer 2013). Open-air markets reflect the special atmosphere of the local community. They are also egalitarian in the sense that they are open both to members of different local groups and to newcomers, who can influence one another (Slater, Tonkiss 2001).

In part, the role of open-air markets in cities has been taken over by the rapidly rising wave of shopping centers. These play an important commercial role and also function as common spaces (Ritzer 2010; Płaziak, Szymańska 2016; Szymańska, Płaziak 2017). However, open-air markets are more accessible; shopping centers, which are seemingly open to everyone, in practice sort their users: for example, someone who is not very smartly dressed, whose lifestyle is not dominated by consumption, may feel uncomfortable in a shopping center and choose not to go or shop there. On the other hand, the importance of open-air markets among entrepreneurs and customers is decreasing. The markets have turned into symbols, attracting crowds on special occasions such as Christmas or Easter (Płaziak, Szymańska 2017). For these reasons, it seems important to promote the open-air market trade and to encourage local authorities to care for the operation of open-air markets in order to preserve them as a permanent component of Central and Eastern European cities.

### **Open-Air Markets as a Subject of Research**

The topic of open-air markets, because of its universal nature, has been covered and analyzed by many different academic disciplines, including the social sciences, economics, geography, spatial economics, and architecture. Research into open-air markets tends to focus on the functions and role played by open-air markets in the spatial and economic structure of cities and regions (Płaziak, Szymańska 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017; Powęska 2002a; Werwicki 2001; Zuzañska-Żyśko, Sitek 2011) and particular attention is given to commercial tourism and the role of open-air markets in the transformations occurring in trans-border areas (Powęska 1995; Powęska 2002b). Trade in open-air markets has been analyzed as an element of the country’s economic system; the role of the gray zone in open-air trading is studied, as

well as the development of small enterprises, including family businesses (Ciechomski 2014; Dąbrowski 1996; Peterlik 2000; Tomalak, Wyżnikiewicz 1999; Urban, Michałowska 2013; Wojdacki 2011). The role of open-air markets in urban systems and urban planning has also been studied (Barek 2010; Gołąb-Korzeniowska 1995, 1997; Janssens, Sezer 2013). Finally, open-air markets have been analyzed as public spaces with all the phenomena pertaining to such areas (Madanipour 2003; Seale 2016; Sik, Wallace 1999).

Research on open-air markets, as well as other locations where purchases are made, especially shopping centers, is part of a behavioral research trend which focuses on the functioning of consumers and sellers in the era of consumptionism (Aldridge 2003; Baudrillard 1998). The development of consumption into a major aspect of life (for people who consider shopping their most important form of social activity) is also highlighted (Clarke 2003). Open-air markets are presented as a permanent but limited element of social life, and as being of considerable cultural importance (Kramer 1996): for instance, the open-air market's impact on and presence in human lives as a place for spending free time, the market as a tourist attraction, or even the market as an object of inspiration for artists (Davis 1991; Makowski 2003; Wilk 2003). This trend combines all the studies on open-air markets and emphasizes the fact that places for shopping are places where social contacts can be developed and nurtured (Hardwick 2004).

Analysis of the literature on the topic points to a small number of studies devoted to the issues of the attractiveness of shopping and trading in the open-air markets of Kraków. Little research has been done on open-air marketplaces in Kraków as a whole (Dziechciarz 1992a), although there are single studies on selected markets, including studies by Tomasz Dziechciarz (1992b), Zofia Szromba-Rysowa (1993), and Monika Płaziak and Anna Szymańska (2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b). However, the topic of the role and importance of trade fairs in the spatial structure of the city is more often addressed. The work of Monika Gołąb-Korzeniowska (1995) deserves particular attention in this regard.

### Research methodology

The authors of the paper asked the following research questions:

1. Has the role of open-air markets in retail trade in Poland and in Kraków been reduced in favor of other forms of trade?
2. What is the distribution of Krakovians' shopping-place preferences by age group? Does the propensity to shop in open-air markets grow with the age of the shopper?
3. Are open-air shoppers also interested in shopping in other types of sales outlets, in particular in small local shops?
4. Will those who like open-air shopping rather show a lack of propensity to engage in other modes of shopping, for instance, Internet shopping, or shopping at a mall?
5. What are the reasons given by locals for shopping or not shopping in Kraków's open-air markets?

The statistical data for Poland and Kraków on the rate of change in the number and size (floor space/area) of stands in open-air markets in Poland and Kraków was used to answer research question no. 1.

To answer research questions nos. 2 to 5, the authors used the results of research they conducted in 2014–2015 in Kraków. For the purpose of the study, an interview questionnaire, which mainly had open or expanded questions, was employed. The study covered:

- 1) The shopping-place preferences of Kraków’s urban-space users (1,732 respondents, mostly local residents).
- 2) The attractiveness of open-air market shopping in Kraków in the opinion of urban-space users (502 respondents, mostly local residents).

The selection of respondents was non-probabilistic and a matter of accessibility. Attempts were made to survey urban-space users in different age categories and in different locations characterized by more intense pedestrian traffic. The research samples did not perfectly match the age and sex structure of Kraków residents, but, as intended by the authors, they roughly reflected the structure of the population that is typically present in the streets. Therefore, the dominant groups of respondents were young or middle-aged groups, that is, the more mobile groups, while the share of older aged respondents (60+) was smaller—this group has lower mobility when compared to its share in the age structure of Krakovians (see Table 1). There was a slight predominance of female respondents in the sample (62%). Due to the non-probabilistic selection of the samples, it is difficult to translate the research results onto the entire population of Kraków. However, because of the considerable sizes of the samples (1,732 and 502) and their matching the age and sex structure of mobile Krakovians, the study can be considered of value and as initial research that could be of use for a deeper look at the issue in the future. In the descriptions below, the authors use a simplification when they call the respondents “Kraków residents,” as the survey only encompassed the mobile users of Kraków’s urban space, with their age and sex structure.

Table 1  
Respondents’ Age Structure

Respondents of Survey 1	Age (years)						Total
	16–20	21–30	31–40	41–50	51–60	60+	
Number	234	623	347	196	171	161	1,732
Share (%)	13.5	36.0	20.0	11.3	9.9	9.3	100.0
Respondents of Survey 2	Age (years)						Total
	16–20	21–30	31–40	41–50	51–60	60+	
Number	68	116	83	95	70	70	502
Share (%)	13.5	23.1	16.5	18.9	13.9	13.9	100.0

Source: own study.

Results of the questionnaires were processed and edited by using an analysis of the percentage share of responses by age groups and shopping-place preferences; Yule’s coefficient was used to identify associated or non-associated place/type preferences.

The term “a shopping place” (i.e., a shopping center, hypermarket or supermarket, a local shop, a discount store, a wholesaler, an open-air market, an Internet store) was treated as equivalent to “modes of shopping.” In this paper, both terms are interchangeable.

### The Conditions in which Open-Air Markets Operate in Poland, with Particular Emphasis on the Transformations since the Middle of the 1990s

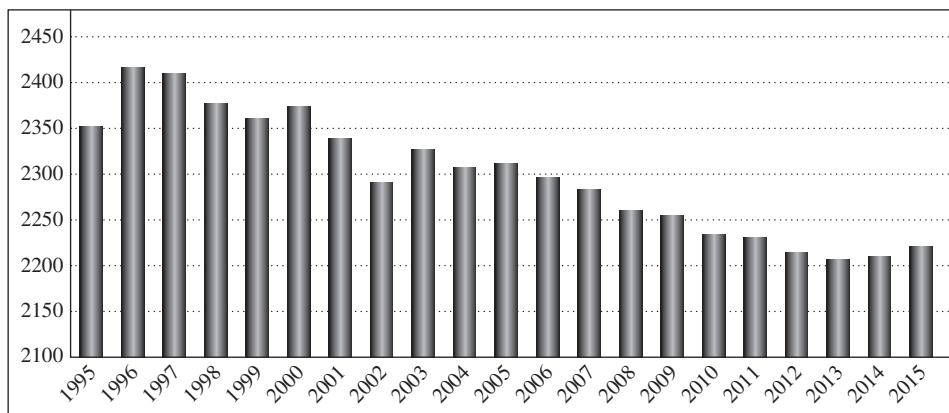
Throughout Polish history, open-air markets have been present in the country's cities and towns. In the past, they were located in the very heart of towns, that is, on the main square, on market days. Open-air markets were part of the scenery of daily life for locals and visitors, and buzzed with trade and craftsmanship. Within a city or town, an open-air market would be located near the town hall. Over the course of centuries, with the growing demand for commercial space and the representative function of the market, open-air markets would be relocated from the market square. Open-air market trade continued to flourish, though not in as prestigious locations, and open-air markets continued to help create the character of the urban space.

Currently, most open-air markets are open daily and offer a huge variety of products: farmers sell their produce and craftsmen sell their craft work. There are growing trends, though, to install roofed stalls or market halls with stands, or to set up small shops where the owners or hired shop assistants can sell goods.

In 2015, 2,222 permanent open-air markets were reported in Poland (LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland). For nearly twenty years, the number of open-air markets in Poland has been decreasing steadily, with the exception of a slight increase in 2014 and 2015 (as in [Figure 1](#)).

Figure 1

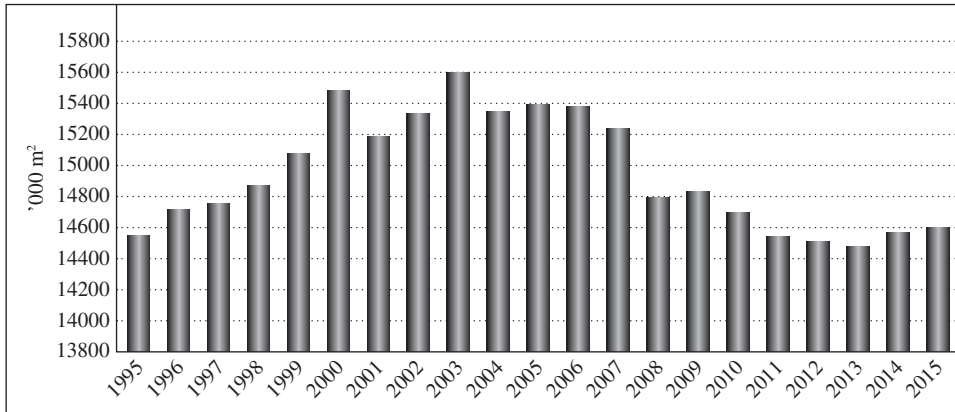
Number of Open-air Markets in Poland, 1995–2015



Source: own study based on LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland.

The floor space of open-air markets in Poland in 2015 reached nearly 14.6 million m<sup>2</sup> (LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland). In connection with the shrinking number of open-air markets, the area of the markets has also been decreasing, with the exception of a slight increase in 2014 and 2015 (as in [Figure 2](#)). In connection with the shrinking overall area of open-air markets, their sales space has been reduced. In 2005, it amounted

Figure 2

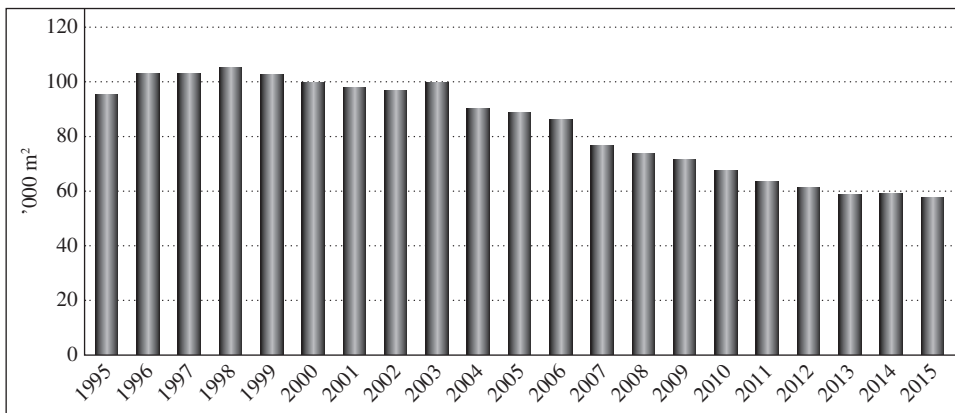
**The Total Area of Open-air Markets in Poland, 1995–2015**

Source: own study based on LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland.

to nearly 664,000 m<sup>2</sup> but has since dropped to 652,000 m<sup>2</sup> (LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland).

In particular, the phenomenon of the shrinking activity of open-air markets is indicated by the deteriorating number of permanent small retail POS in urban open-air markets opened daily, that is, frequented by daily local shoppers (a near 40% decrease in the past 20 years, as in [Figure 3](#)). The decrease in the Małopolska Region for the same period was as high as 60% (according to LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland).

Figure 3

**Permanent Retail POS in Open-air Markets in Poland, open daily, 1995–2015**

Source: own study based on LDB, Central Statistical Office of Poland.

While the statistics describing the negative change in the number, size, or sales area of open-air markets is not alarming, the data presenting a significant decrease in the number

of permanent small retail points of sale in open-air markets is a reason for concern about the future of such businesses.

Currently, some open-air markets in Central and Eastern Europe—including open-air markets in Poland—are going through a crisis. However, others continue to prosper, sometimes changing their appearance. In particular, these are open-air markets operating in city centers. They are flocked by tourists or are near large residential settlements full of young families who desire to live in a modern, environmentally friendly style. Increasingly, open-air markets may change into organic food fairs or into fairs for organic and regional products. They become great leisure destinations not only for shoppers but also for foodies in search for tasty and healthy food, perhaps while enjoying local entertainment such as concerts or other performances. Some open-air markets are changing their form and function; they are taking on a new quality in the urban public space. At present this is not a broad-scale phenomenon affecting most open-air markets, but it may be a way to maintain and develop many of them. However, it should be noted that such a method of developing open-air markets may also carry the risk of depriving them of their unique nature. When regional products are introduced to open-air markets, with festive food-tasting and consumption, the markets often become pure tourist attractions, as the local community has no use for such offerings. These kinds of transformations of local open-air markets into standard tourist-oriented markets have not yet been noted in Polish cities. However, in large cities of Central and Eastern Europe, such cases—with the famous Great Market Hall in Budapest (Vásárcsarnok) foremost among them—have been observed.

### **The Open-Air Market Trade in Kraków: Its Main Features and How It Is Changing in the Twenty-First Century**

In 2015 in Kraków, there were 27 permanent open-air markets located on municipal or private land (see [Table 2](#)). Since 2000, the number of open-air markets and the total sales area in open-air markets in Kraków has decreased (see [Table 3](#); the data is available only for open-air markets owned by the municipality). In parallel, a growth in the number of supermarkets and hypermarkets has been observed: for instance, between 2009 and 2014, the number of supermarkets within the borders of the city of Kraków rocketed from 66 to 118, and the number of supermarkets went from 18 to 23 (*Statistical Yearbook of Krakow 2011*; *Statistical Yearbook of Krakow 2015*).

The development of large format retailing provides the major competition for open-air marketplaces. Sellers operating in open-air markets make attempts to resist the encroachment, but they do not always succeed as, according to statistics, the number of customers visiting open-air markets in Kraków is decreasing ([www.centralmarkets.eu](http://www.centralmarkets.eu)).

The Kraków authorities do seem to appreciate the role of open-air markets in developing the urban structure and creating the unique *genius loci* of a city famous for its tourist attractions. In 2013, the authorities participated in the “Central Markets: Revitalising and Promoting Traditional Markets in Central Europe” project. The aim was to revitalize, strengthen, and integrate open-air marketplaces and project partners by disseminating information, introducing innovations, and adopting measures based on international

Table 2

**Location, Size, and Ownership of Open-air Markets in Kraków in the Year 2014**

Name of the market place (optional)	Location	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Ownership—municipality/private	District
Rynek Kleparski (Stary Kleparz)	ul. św. Filipa	6,079	municipality	District I Stare Miasto
Nowy Kleparz	ul. Długa	4,348	municipality	
Plac Nowy	ul. Estery	2,855	municipality	
Krakowskie Kwaciarki	Rynek Główny	242	municipality	
Unitarg (Hala Targowa)	ul. Grzegórzecka	5,409	municipality	District II Grzegórzki
Plac Imbramowski	pl. Imbramowski	21,810	municipality	Dzielnica IV Prądnik Biały
Azory	ul. Chelmońskiego	584	municipality	
Plac Nowowiejski (“Novum Plac”)	ul. J. Lea	2,206	municipality	District V Krowodrza
Giełda Rotunda	ul. Oleandry	1,730	private	
Plac Rydla	ul. Młodej Polski i Jadwigi z Łobzowa	1,813	municipality	District VI Bronowice
Plac Targowy KPPU (Centrum Giełdowo-Handlowe Balicka)	ul. Balicka	80,602	private	
Plac Na Stawach	ul. Senatorska	3,211	municipality	District VII Zwierzyniec
Rynek Dębnicki	Rynek Dębnicki	1,599	municipality	District VIII Dębni
Targowisko Borek	ul. Orzechowa	4,802	private	District IX Łagiewniki — Borek Fałęcki
Manhattan Beskidy	ul. Białoruska	3,120	private	District XI Podgórze Duchackie
	ul. Beskidzka / Witosza	3,360	private	
Targowisko Jerzmanowskiego — Nowy Prokocim	ul. Na Kozłowie	744	municipality	District XII Bieżanów — Prokocim
	ul. E. Jerzmanowskiego	3,820	private	
Tandeta King Efekt SA Centrum — Kalicki	ul. Krzywda	22,577	private	District XIII Podgórze
	ul. Krzywda	3,584	private	
	ul. Półnanki	72,590	private	
	ul. Ch. Botewa	2,200	private	
Złoty Wiek	ul. ks. K. Jancarza i ul. Nagłowicka	2,886	municipality	District XV Mistrzejowice
Piastów	os. Piastów	4,176	municipality	
Tomex Bieńczyce (Bieńczycki Plac Targowy)	ul. Bieńczycka	22,819	private	District XVI Bieńczyce
	ul. Kocmyrzowska	4,499	private	
Bulwar (Mogilski Plac Targowy)	os. Wandy	4,193	municipality	District XVIII Nowa Huta

Source: “Raport o stanie miasta 2014,” Płaziak, Szymańska 2016b.

collaboration. The project was financed from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Within the framework of the project, in 2013 a survey of open-air marketplaces was conducted among sellers and buyers, and the first edition of the Kraków Open-Air



Table 3

**The Number and Sales Area of Kraków Open-air Markets, 2000–2014**

Specification*	Year							
	2000	2005	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of permanent open-air markets	33	18	17	17	16	16	16	16
Permanent open-air markets—area (in thousand m <sup>2</sup> )	120.9	92.6	84.6	85.2	83.9	83.3	83.3	83.3

\*Open-air markets only on land owned by municipalities.

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Krakow*, 2011, 2013, 2015.

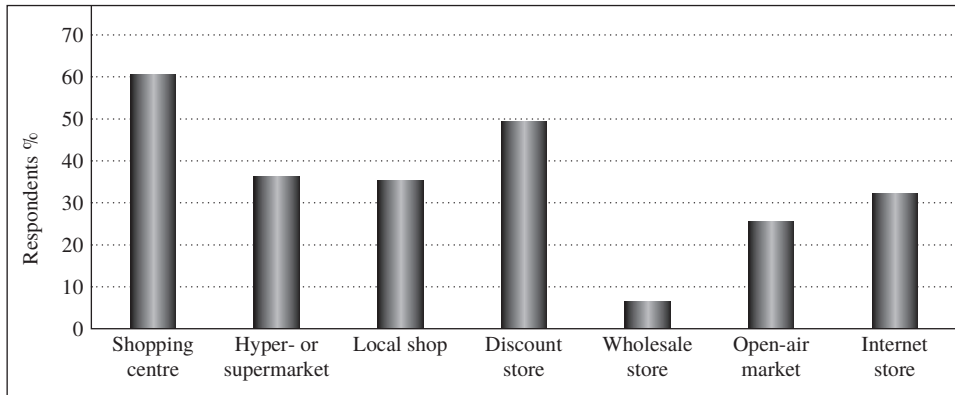
Market Festival (*Krakowskim Targiem*) was organized. The latter received very positive feedback from customers, the media, and the merchants' cooperatives that administer the open-air markets. An urban game involving open-air markets was organized and had more than 200 participants. Promotional materials for tourists from Poland and abroad were prepared, including a unique proposal for open-air market quests—sightseeing combined with solving riddles and answering questions. The project team participated in project partners' meetings in Pécs, Ústí over the Elbe, and Turin, presenting Kraków and local solutions for the promotion and management of open-air markets ([www.centralmarkets.eu](http://www.centralmarkets.eu)). Kraków joined the project primarily to promote Kraków's open-air markets among local residents and tourists. According to studies conducted during the project to analyze open-air markets, it was not necessarily the prices that were most important for market shoppers. They also cared about product quality and freshness. Shoppers in Kraków open-air markets appreciated the possibility of meeting face-to-face with the farmer from whom they were buying a product. They liked the fact that they could get to know the producer in person and have a chat. They wanted to be certain that what they paid for was indeed organic and healthy and not from a wholesale store ([www.centralmarkets.eu](http://www.centralmarkets.eu)).

In the twenty-first century, the open-air markets of Kraków are changing, as are the open-air markets in other cities of Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It seems, though, that they are changing more toward being organized retail trade outlets (with stalls/kiosks) than into other kinds of open-air markets, with festivals and celebrations. It cannot be confirmed that Kraków open-air markets are clearly being transformed into hubs of new trends related to eco-lifestyles, slow-life fashions, or a hipster approach to free time. Such attractions may be found from time to time in the open-air markets of Kraków near the city center and especially in the Stary Kleparz market. However, such offerings are centered primarily in the main city districts popular among tourists, for instance, in the Kazimierz District in Kraków, and not in locations that are strictly open-air markets.

### **Krakovians' Preferences and Motives in Choosing Shopping Options, with a Particular Emphasis on Open-Air Markets**

An analysis of the responses of 1,732 respondents about their preferred shopping location (equivalent to type of shopping) showed that shopping centers enjoyed the highest popular-

Figure 4

**Respondents\* Shopping Preferences by Type of Shopping**

\* Respondents could choose more than one preferred type of shopping location.

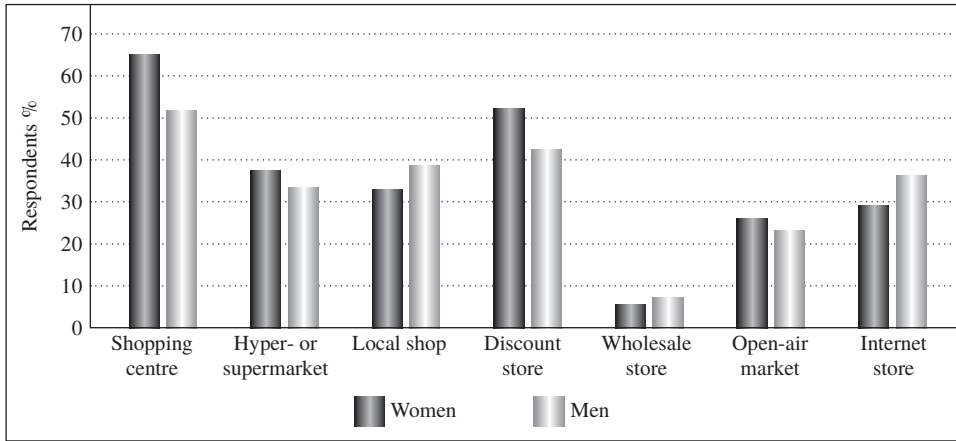
Source: own study.

ity among local residents. Shopping centers were the preferred shopping location for 61% of the respondents (as in Figure 4).

Some differences in the distribution of preferences as to shopping location were dependent on the respondents' sex. Note that among the respondents women had a larger number of preferred shopping locations than men: there were 251 preferred locations per 100 women against 236 locations per 100 men. Women showed a definitely higher preference for shopping in shopping centers and discount stores and a slightly greater preference for shopping in hyper- and supermarkets and at open-air markets. In contrast, men were more prone to shop on the Internet or in a local retail shop, and slightly more prone to shop in a wholesale store (as in Figure 5).

Some differences in shopping-site preferences appeared in the age categories. Note that an attractive shopping location for respondents in an age group was considered to be a location specified or included in the responses given by 50% of respondents. Shopping centers are the most popular shopping destination for respondents aged 21–50. It could be said that the older the respondents, the less prone they are to shop in shopping centers. Respondents aged 51–60 showed the highest preference for shopping in local retail shops and discount stores, while respondents aged 60+ demonstrated the highest preference for local retail stores, with open-air markets coming only slightly second in the ranking. Clearly, the older the respondents, the more prone they are to shop in open-air markets: 16–20 years of age (6.4% likelihood); 21–30 (16.5%); 31–40 (19.6%); 41–50 (34.2%); 51–60 (49.7%); and 60+ (64.0%). On the other hand, the younger the respondents, the more willing they are to shop on the Internet. This form of shopping is the most popular in the age group up to 30. Wholesale stores are the least popular out of the proposed types/forms of shopping among respondents. Wholesale stores may be less liked by respondents because of the geographical distance to be covered to reach a wholesale store, with multipack shopping (as in Figure 6).

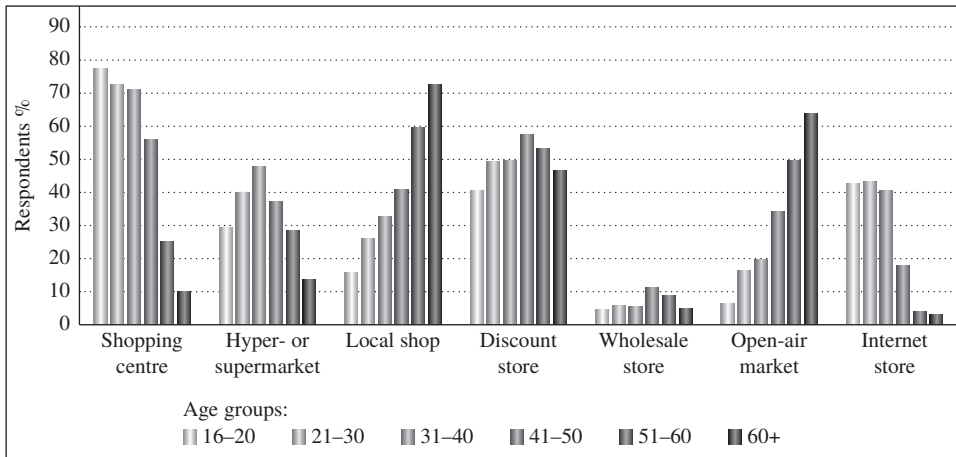
Figure 5  
**Respondents' Preferences\* as to Shopping Type by Sex**



\* Respondents could choose more than one preferred type of shopping location.

Source: own study.

Figure 6  
**Respondents' Preferences\* as to the Place of Shopping by Age**



\* Respondents could choose more than one preferred type of shopping location.

Source: own study.

Respondents selecting preferred types of shopping showed a propensity to choose (or not choose) other specific forms. The dichotomic dependencies between preferring or not preferring a certain type of shopping (answers yes or no) have been presented by statistically significant values of Yule’s factor (see Table 4). It was clearly established that respondents with a preference for shopping in shopping centers also showed a tendency to shop in hyper-

and supermarkets as well as on the Internet (values of the factor: 0.23 and 0.18). However, they were clearly not interested in shopping in open-air markets ( $-0.67$ ), in small local retail shops, ( $-0.25$ ) or in wholesale stores ( $-0.09$ ). It should also be noted that the respondents showing a preference for shopping in open-air markets were not interested in the option of shopping in shopping centers nor did they show a propensity for Internet shopping ( $-0.18$ ), while shopping in small local retail shops was one of their top choices (0.23).

Table 4

**Yule's Indicator for Preferred Forms of Shopping Chosen by Respondents**

Shopping place (type)*	Shopping center	Hyper- or supermarket	Local shop	Discount store	Wholesale store	Open-air market	Internet store
Shopping center		0.23	$-0.25$	$-0.03$	$-0.09$	$-0.67$	0.18
Hyper- or supermarket	0.23		$-0.04$	0.11	0.01	$-0.04$	0.03
Local shop	$-0.25$	$-0.04$		0.04	0.04	0.23	$-0.18$
Discount store	$-0.03$	0.11	0.04		0.02	0.07	$-0.03$
Wholesale store	$-0.09$	0.01	0.04	0.02		0.05	0.00
Open-air market	$-0.67$	$-0.04$	0.23	0.07	0.05		$-0.18$
Internet store	0.18	0.03	$-0.18$	$-0.03$	0.00	$-0.18$	

\* Respondents could indicate any number of preferred types of shopping locations on the list.

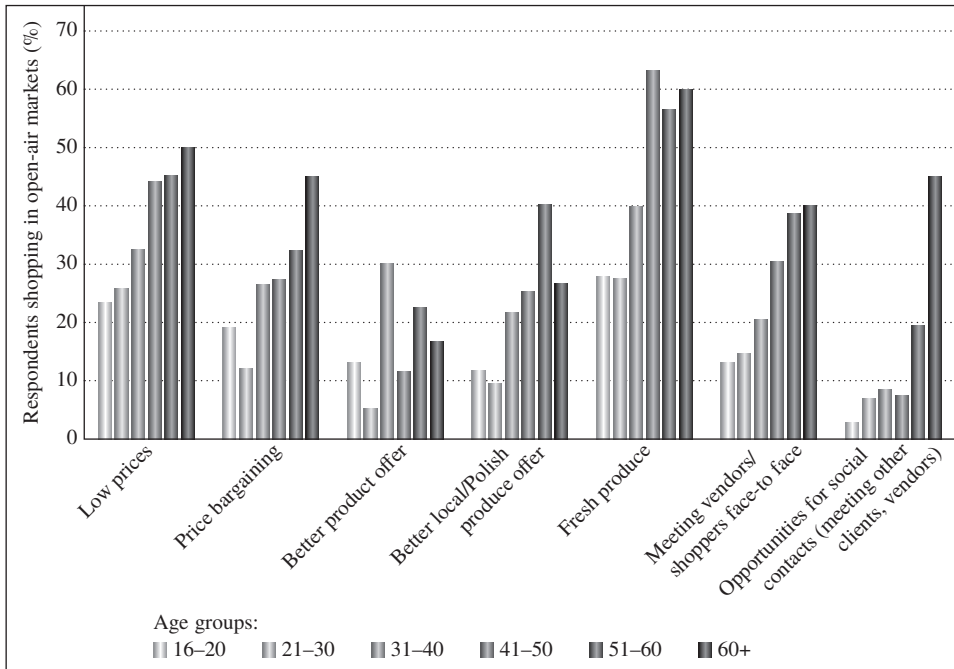
\*\* Yule's indicator values significant at 0.001 are shaded.

A separate survey of 502 respondents showed that nearly 66% of them shop solely in open-air markets. When asked their reasons for shopping in open-air markets, the respondents typically argued that open-air markets offered more fresh products (more than 68% of respondents), lower prices (55%), and face-to-face contact with sellers (nearly 38%). Consumers appreciate the high quality of fruit, vegetable, and other food products sold in open-air markets. They also emphasize the importance of meeting sellers face to face so they can learn about the origin of a product and, on some occasions, bargain on the final price.

Access to fresh products in open-air markets is appreciated by respondents from all age groups but, in particular, by shoppers 40+ (this aspect was recognized as important by approximately 60% of respondents). Similarly, all age groups argued that they were attracted to open-air markets by their relatively low prices and here the importance of the argument grew with the respondents' age. Members of older age groups are more attracted than younger shoppers by the possibility of bargaining when shopping in open-air markets and emphasize the social reasons for shopping there, such as chatting with the sellers, shop assistants, and other customers, and meeting friends and neighbors (as in Figure 7).

Slightly more than 34% of respondents declared that they did not go to open-air markets. Typically, they shopped in supermarkets, which they considered a one-stop shop for all the products they needed (nearly 74% of the respondents *not* going to open-air markets), have no time for shopping in open-air markets (42%), or prefer local retail shops in the neighborhood (nearly 34%). Above all, these respondents appreciate comfort and time efficiency.

Figure 7

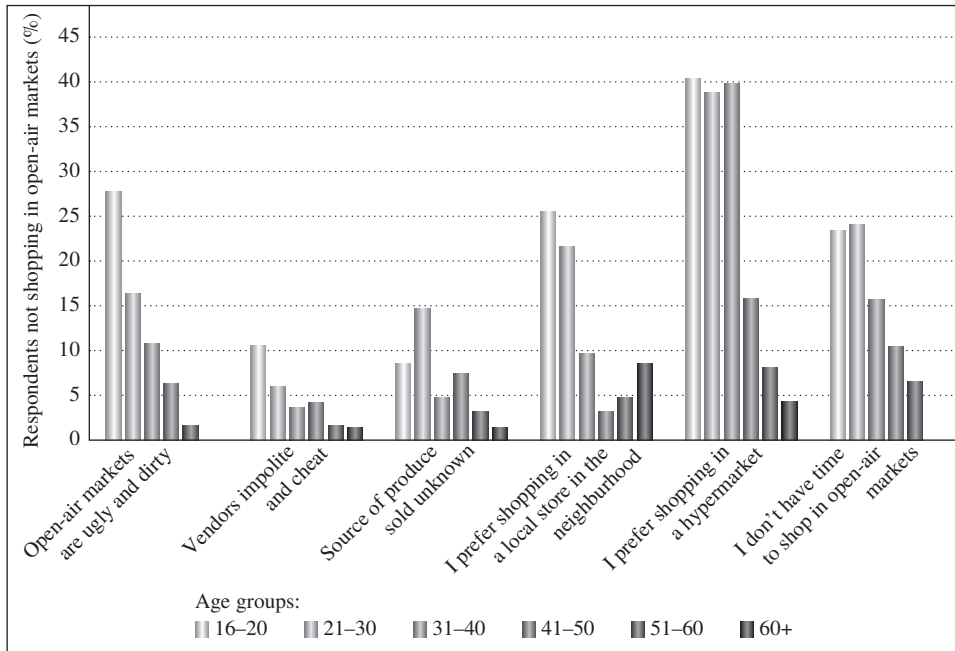
**Respondents' Reasons for Shopping in Open-air Markets, by Age Categories**

Source: own study.

In nearly all age categories, the respondents not shopping in open-air markets preferred to shop in hypermarkets (with the oldest age group being the only exception—this group declared a slightly higher preference for shopping in small neighborhood retail shops). This proves that hypermarkets clearly compete with open-air markets. Both types of shopping place offer a variety of goods and competitive prices on an area of similar or comparable size. It would seem that because of their aesthetics and additional attractions, hypermarkets are winning, in particular among consumers of the younger generation. The younger the age of respondents not shopping in open-air markets, the more negative the attitude they display to open-air markets. Nearly 30% of respondents aged 20 and below who do not shop in open-air markets claimed that their decision was due to the dirtiness and unappealing aesthetics of such markets. 10% claimed they avoided open-air markets because they felt the shopkeepers/sellers cheated and were impolite. Members of the oldest age group who do not shop in open-air markets have at the same time a relatively positive opinion of them (as in Figure 8).

The answers given by the respondents focused on their preferences in regard to shopping in open-air markets in Kraków and their evaluations of the markets as shopping locations, without differentiating the markets' nature and location in the urban space. The next stage of the research will involve an in-depth analysis of the preferences of urban-space users depending on the location of open-air markets in the urban space, the accessibility

Figure 8

**Respondents' Reasons for Not Shopping in Open-air Markets, by Age Categories**

Source: own study.

of the markets from the viewpoint of residents and other users, and the specificity of each market. Initial research in this area has been already conducted, using the example of the Kraków district Nowa Huta, where open-air markets have been classified as local community markets (Wandy, Kalinowe, Piastów and Złotego Wieku residential settlements), farmers' markets (Bieńczyce), and bazaars (Tomex), depending on their different conditions for commercial activity (Płaziak, Szymańska 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017).

### Summary and Recommendations

The role of open-air markets in retail trade both in Kraków and in Poland in general is dwindling. The trend is evidenced by the decreasing number and areas of open-air markets, but first and foremost by their decreasing number of permanent retail points of sale. Similarly, the questionnaire survey showed that customers have significantly greater interest in shopping venues other than open-air markets. Shopping centers are at the top of the popularity ranking, followed by discount stores, hyper- or supermarkets, and local retail shops.

The propensity for shopping in open-air markets as well as in small local retail stores grows with the age of the customer. The popularity of shopping in shopping centers and on the Internet is increasing in the lower age groups.

Some interdependencies were found. Shoppers with a preference for shopping centers also liked going to hyper- and supermarkets and Internet shopping. However, they showed no propensity to shop in open-air markets, in small local retail shops, or wholesale stores. Note that respondents with open-air market preferences more often tend to prefer small shops. However, they do not show a propensity for shopping in shopping centers or on the Internet.

For open-air market shoppers, the availability of fresh produce, low prices, and meeting sellers face to face were the most common reasons for their choice. Typically, shoppers avoiding open-air markets claim that they simply prefer to shop in a shopping center or in a local retail shop and that they do not have time for shopping in open-air markets.

Open-air markets should receive particular attention from the city authorities as places reflecting the history of the city and as special public places—the venue for authentic meetings between users of the urban space. It is important that these places are not solely turned into relics of the past, or come to life only as Christmas or Easter markets. They have huge potential for some social groups, in particular for the elderly, who appreciate slow shopping in the neighborhood, where they can bump into people they know among the shoppers and shopkeepers, and encounter people of different ages who are following the popular slow-life trend. It is important that the local authorities adopt appropriate policies that will attract entrepreneurs and farmers to such locations for business purposes.

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*Biographical Notes:*

Monika Płaziak, (Ph.D.), assistant professor in the Department of Entrepreneurship and Spatial Management, Institute of Geography, Pedagogical University of Cracow. The member of the Polish Geographical Society. PhD in a field of socio-economic geography was held at the Institute of Geography and Spatial Management, Jagiellonian University, Cracow. Author's research works refer to the level and quality of life, with particular reference to small and medium-sized towns in Poland, and issues of functional changes in housing estates and city centres in Poland. Her research interests include also entrepreneurship and innovation of young people and entrepreneurial activities on the open air markets.

## ORCID iD

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7455-504X>

E-mail: [monika.plaziak@up.krakow.pl](mailto:monika.plaziak@up.krakow.pl)

Anna Irena Szymańska, (Ph.D.), assistant professor in the Department of Trade and Market Institutions, Collegium of Management Sciences and Quality, Cracow University of Economics. Her research interests are related to the issue of consumer needs, preferences and market behavior, collaborative consumption and other forms of access-based consumption, new trends in consumption and their implications for business strategies, as well as issues in the area of entrepreneurship and innovation with particular emphasis on the SME sector and circular economy.

## ORCID iD

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1973-2696>

E-mail: [szymansa@uek.krakow.pl](mailto:szymansa@uek.krakow.pl)