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**Article**

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## SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE MARKETING OF INDIVIDUALS: THE BASE OF SUSTAINABILITY

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**Abstract**

This paper highlights the sustainable lifestyle marketing of an individual (SLMOI). The SLMOI is the activity, a set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating and maintaining the sustainable lifestyle of an individual (SLOI). The SLOI is an individual's sustainability-oriented pattern of living represented by his or her activities, interests and opinions. The SLOI refers to a sustainable pattern of life (daily activities within the family), a sustainable pattern of consumption, a sustainable pattern of work and production (as employees in organizations) and a sustainable pattern of behavior in the society and the environment they live in. The SLOI reflects an individual's choices with respect to spending time, money and energy in accordance with the sustainable pattern of life. The SLOI stands for sustainable behavioral patterns on the basis of attitudes and values. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the attitudes of the population towards sustainable lifestyles and the SLMOI (performed by different actors) and behaviors on the basis of attitudes. Using a face-to-face questionnaire interview, the study was conducted on a sample of 400 citizens of Serbia. There are three key conclusions. First, the SLMOI leads to the SLOI, and the SLOI further leads to sustainability. Second, the creation and maintenance of the SLOI is a long-term process. Third, a holistic approach is needed as well as the engagement of numerous actors in that process of creating and maintaining the SLOI.

**Keywords:** individuals, life patterns, sustainability, sustainable behaviour, sustainable lifestyle marketing.

**JEL Classification:** M14, Q56

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**Introduction**

In the literature (Gilg et al., 2005; Marchand and Walker, 2008), projects, reports of organisations and institutions (e.g. SPREAD - Social Platform Identifying Research and Policy Needs for Sustainable Lifestyles in Europe 2050; UNEP - United Nations

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Environment Programme) *the necessity and importance of sustainable lifestyles creation* clearly stands out. Marchand and Walker (2008) point out that many contemporary authors in the field of sustainability suggest that there is a clear *need for reorienting consumption patterns* and, more fundamentally, the dominant economic system based on unlimited growth in our materially finite world. Sustainability-orientated consumer research encompasses *a variety of concepts of more sustainable consumption* using a range of labels for consumers and their behavior (including green, greener, responsible, sustainable, pro-environmental, pro-social, pro-ecological, environmentally conscious, ecological conscious, frugal, altruistic, equitable, ecological, ethical, or alternative) (Wells et al., 2008; Witt, 2012). On the basis of the research into the attitude of Romanian consumers with respect to the ecological labelling of products, Dinu et al. (2012) concludes that the ecologic label acts as a passport allowing products to freely circulate on the European territory, generating a larger number of consumers for environment-friendly products.

In this paper, *individuals* are the key actors of sustainability. In general, sustainable behaviors are defined as behaviors of environmental responsibility thoroughly permeating an individual's daily activities. They also ground on the consequences of such actions and on an implication-concern basis. An individual is visibly responsible towards the environment throughout his or her actions rather than single-minded for the purpose of his or her personal utilitarian satisfaction, an action that would have the least possible impact on the environment (Wai and Bojei, 2015). Pappas (et al., 2015) points out that an individual has a critical role when the success of efforts towards achieving sustainability in diverse contexts is concerned. By first individually changing ourselves, we change humanly in a meaningful way; prior to our being able to expect a systemic community or global change, we ought to recognize the sophisticated systems within ourselves and engage them. The author focuses on embodying "Individual Sustainability", referring to it as to Sustainable Personality. Pappas defined a sustainable personality as follows: "A Sustainable Personality is characterized by attitudes and behaviors that tend to create harmony, interconnections, and relatively high levels of self-awareness in values, thoughts, and actions as well as cultivate continued individual growth in physical, emotional, social, philosophical, and intellectual abilities. A Sustainable Personality also includes a well-developed and demonstrated value system that acknowledges the importance and interconnectedness of all global geo-biological and social systems, and our appropriate place within them" (Pappas, 2012; Pappas et al., 2015, p. 324). The definition clearly highlights the individual as well as the importance and interconnectedness of the attitudes, the value system and the behaviors of an individual within all global geo-biological and social systems.

An individual plays different roles and has different activities with respect to those roles. An individual is a family member, a consumer, an employee at an organization and a member of the society. How an individual behaves greatly contributes to his or her own sustainability as well as the sustainability of his or her family, the organization he or she works at, the environment and the society. On the other hand, the family, the organization he or she works at, the environment and the society have an impact on the behavior and the pattern of life and work of an individual.

*The change of consumer behaviour is a long-term process* and it requires a *systematic and holistic approach*. The process of our moving towards sustainability and sustainable lifestyles will be gradual and simultaneously observed within the context of a holistic shift to new lifestyles, incorporating the related buying and the customary components surpassing the boundaries of conventional behavior (Gilg et al., 2005, p. 503). However, as

Witt (2012) says such everyday choices, which can be seen as important drivers of spending patterns and economic trends, are generally understood to be difficult to alter. Based on the above, *this paper focuses on the process of creating and maintaining the SLOI on the basis of the SLMOI.*

This paper aims to present the interconnectedness between the SLMOI and the SLOI and their mutual impact on sustainability. After the introductory section, the first part presents theoretical foundations in the field of sustainable lifestyles and profile of sustainability oriented consumers. In the second section, the research method is described. Research results are given in the third section. The fourth section is dedicated to discussion. The key contributions made by this paper are presented, and the contributions are related to the emphasizing of the roles of 1) individuals, on the basis of the SLOI, and 2) organizations, on the basis of the SLMOI in the process of sustainable development. In conclusion, we highlight the importance of changes of the attitudes and behaviors of all actors – from governments, organizations and families to individuals – in the long-term process of sustainable lifestyles creation. *The key conclusion refers to the SLMOI leading to the SLOI, and the SLOI leading to sustainability.*

## **1. Theoretical foundations and development hypotheses**

### **1.1. Sustainable lifestyles**

The three main types of consumers' ethical behavior have been identified in the literature by Papaoikonomou (2013), namely: 1) buycotting, which means the consumer's making choice of and purchasing certain products and services over other ones for the sake of ethical considerations. This can be exemplified by buying fair trade or sustainable products. 2) Boycotting, which means the consumer's being allowed to show his social concerns by not performing certain actions or by avoiding to buy a product. This is either the result of companies' commercializing their product but having a record of an unethical social behavior (company-oriented boycotting) or of such companies' products being unsustainable (product-oriented boycotting). And 3) ethical simplifiers, which means opting for cutting down on the levels of consumption and adopting a simpler lifestyle.

Black and Cherrier (2010) point out anti-consumption as part of living a sustainable lifestyle. They found that green consumption, whilst practiced, is not an essential part of sustainable living. Anti-consumption is an integral part of trying to live a more sustainable life and in particular, the acts of rejecting, reducing and reusing consumption are key elements to sustainable consumption.

Sustainable lifestyle includes everyday sustainable patterns of activities, interests and opinions of people. "Sustainable lifestyles are patterns of action and consumption, used by people to affiliate and differentiate themselves from other people, which: meet basic needs, provide a better quality of life, minimize the use of natural resources and emissions of waste and pollutants over the lifecycle, do not jeopardize the needs of future generations" (Bedford et al., 2004, p. ii).

In the above but also in other definitions of sustainable lifestyles, patterns of action and consumption that lead to the achievement of the objectives of sustainability are highlighted, and especially those that lead to the achievement of environmental and social objectives (table no. 1). "Sustainable consumption is related to the purchase, use and disposal of

products and services. Sustainability in lifestyles is a broader concept and includes activities such as interpersonal relationships, leisure activities, sports and education as well as, but not limited to, material consumption. Lifestyles are based on past and current consumption and production patterns and are intricately interwoven with people's everyday choices and practices" (Mont 2007 in Backhaus et al., 2011, p. 9).

**Table no. 1: Attitudes and behaviour for sustainable lifestyle - life patterns**

Some issues of sustainable lifestyle	Sustainable mindset: Attitudes and behaviour for sustainable lifestyle - life patterns
<b>Water</b>	Sustainable water - Use water more efficiently; Reduce use of water (e.g. car washing, lawn sprinklers, dish washers); Increasing awareness and behaviour change for water conservation;
<b>Food and products</b>	Learning about healthy eating habits; Cooking and managing a sustainable & healthier diet; Increasing proportion of vegetables, fruit, and grains in diet (eating a balanced diet); Choosing foods grown in season (in country of origin); Purchase locally grown produce; Reduce levels of highly processed food; Wasting less food;
<b>Health and society</b>	Growing awareness and better information on healthy diets and lifestyles (e.g. labeling); Increased availability and demand for local, ecological and seasonal food; Initiatives that promote walking, cycling and limit cigarette smoking in buildings; Increasingly successful efforts to integrate health and equity considerations into policy making and urban planning
<b>Energy</b>	Purchase energy efficient appliances and do not leave appliances in standby mode; Increasing awareness and behaviour change for energy conservation; Zero carbon - Make buildings more energy efficient and deliver all energy with renewable technologies.
<b>Transport</b>	Sustainable transportation - Encourage low carbon modes of transport to reduce emissions, reducing the need to travel; Strategic urban planning to decrease mobility needs and make sustainable modes of transport safer and accessible; Increasingly successful efforts to stimulate modal shifts toward walking, cycling or public transportation; Growth in car sharing services that show a shift away from private ownership to collaborative consumption; More efficient transportation technologies, such as electric vehicles;
<b>Jobs</b>	Sustainable jobs; Create bioregional economies that support fair employment, inclusive communities and international fair trade.
<b>Purchasing</b>	Purchasing from a local store; Purchasing products that have a reduced environmental impact; Choosing eco-products & services; Using labelling to choose most energy & water efficient products; Choosing fairly traded, eco-labelled and independently certified food, clothing, etc.; Borrowing, hiring or sourcing second-hand or recycled;
<b>Consumption</b>	Efficient consumption (wasting less), different consumption (shifts to high quality goods and services), sufficient consumption (reducing material consumption), collaborative consumption (sharing, swapping, trading, etc.)
<b>Culture and heritage</b>	Revive local identities and wisdom; support and participate in the arts
<b>Waste</b>	Extending the life of things (to minimise waste); Maintaining & repairing (instead of replacing); Recycle household waste; Dispose of toxic materials safely; Compost organic waste; Zero waste - Reduce waste, reuse where possible, and ultimately send zero waste to landfill.

*Source: Based on Bedford et al., 2004; Gilg et al., 2005; Haq et al., 2008; Backhaus et al., 2011.*

Speaking of green consumer behaviours Gilg et al. (2005, p. 485) cites the following activities as examples of green consumption:

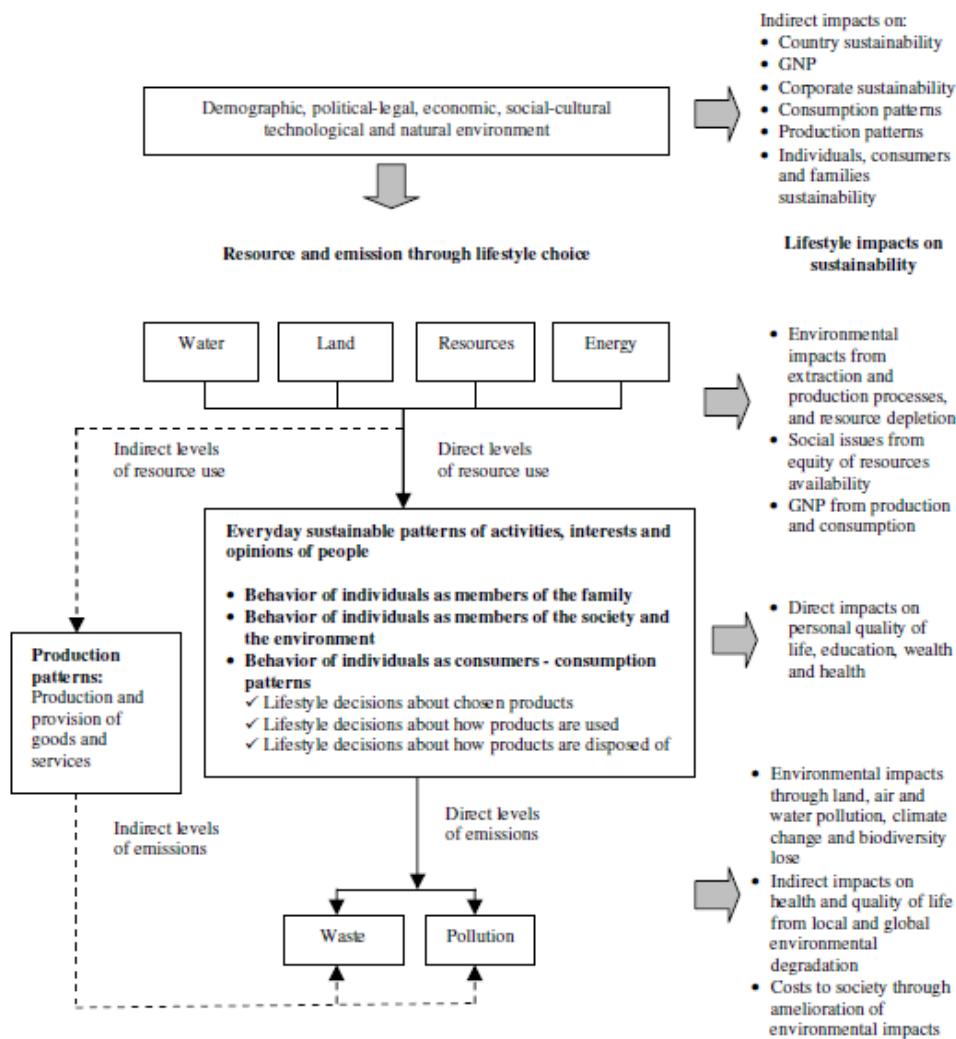
- Purchasing products, such as detergents, that have a reduced environmental impact;
- Avoiding products with aerosols;
- Purchasing recycled paper products (such as toilet tissue and writing paper);
- Buying organic produce;
- Buying locally produced foods;
- Purchasing from a local store;
- Buying fairly traded goods;
- Looking for products using less packaging;
- Using one's own bag, rather than a plastic carrier provided by a shop.

On the basis of the research into sustainable eating, the way how what people eat may have an effect on a spectrum of macro-marketing issues including sustainability, the quality of life, equity and development, food security, gender relations and market systems have been identified by Beverland (2014). His suggestion was that our concerns regarding sustainable living should be focused on our addressing our dietary habits in developed countries. This is so because there are a lot of people in the developing world who passionately try to imitate the lifestyles of the Western world, which has already initiated a number of problems related to the consumption of animal-based protein.

*Sustainable lifestyles are based not only on consumption and production patterns, but also on sustainable life patterns generally speaking.* Consumption choices of consumers are powerful decisions that make in their everyday life, but they might not see consequences and force. Consumption choices of consumers shape markets and production patterns. They have tremendous impacts on our natural resources and ecosystems as well as on our global community – contributing to issues such as climate change and human rights. Consumers through purchasing choices vote in the market, support or reject certain corporate practices. Through them consumers also send messages to decision-makers in governments, industries and companies (UNEP, 2010, p. 4). Choices and patterns of nutrition, education, socialisation, attitude towards purchasing, consumption – life in general etc. affect the overall sustainability. The bases of sustainable lifestyles are sustainable patterns of activities, interests and opinions of people which enable economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Lorek and Spangenberg (2000 cited in Bedford et al., 2004) suggest that the major consumption clusters relevant to lifestyle are: nutrition, housing, transport, social choices (education, health provision etc), financial investments, leisure activities, holiday, cleaning, personal hygiene, clothing, domestic appliances and domestic durables. Mentioned consumption clusters account for around 95 per cent of environmental impacts from household consumption, with the nutrition, housing and transport clusters accounting for 70 per cent of those impacts.

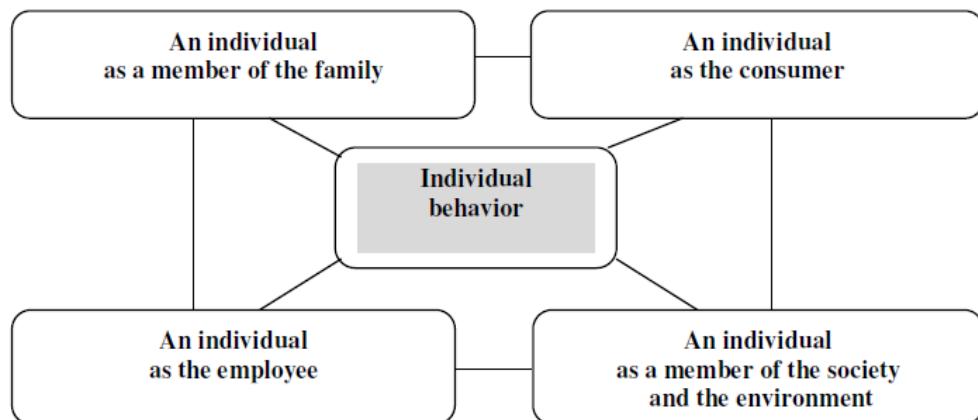
On the basis of a certain lifestyle, people make purchasing decisions, decisions about using and disposal of products; how and how much they will use water, energy etc. and it all affects sustainability (figure no. 1).



**Figure no. 1: Resource flows and sustainability impacts for lifestyle choice**

Source: Based on Bedford et al., p. 12

The literature mainly puts a stress on the consumer lifestyle. As a consumer, an individual greatly contributes to sustainability by the way he or she behaves. An *individual*, however, has other roles, too (figure no. 2). An individual is a family member, a member of the organization (he or she works at), a member of the society (he or she lives in). All these have an impact on how an individual behaves.



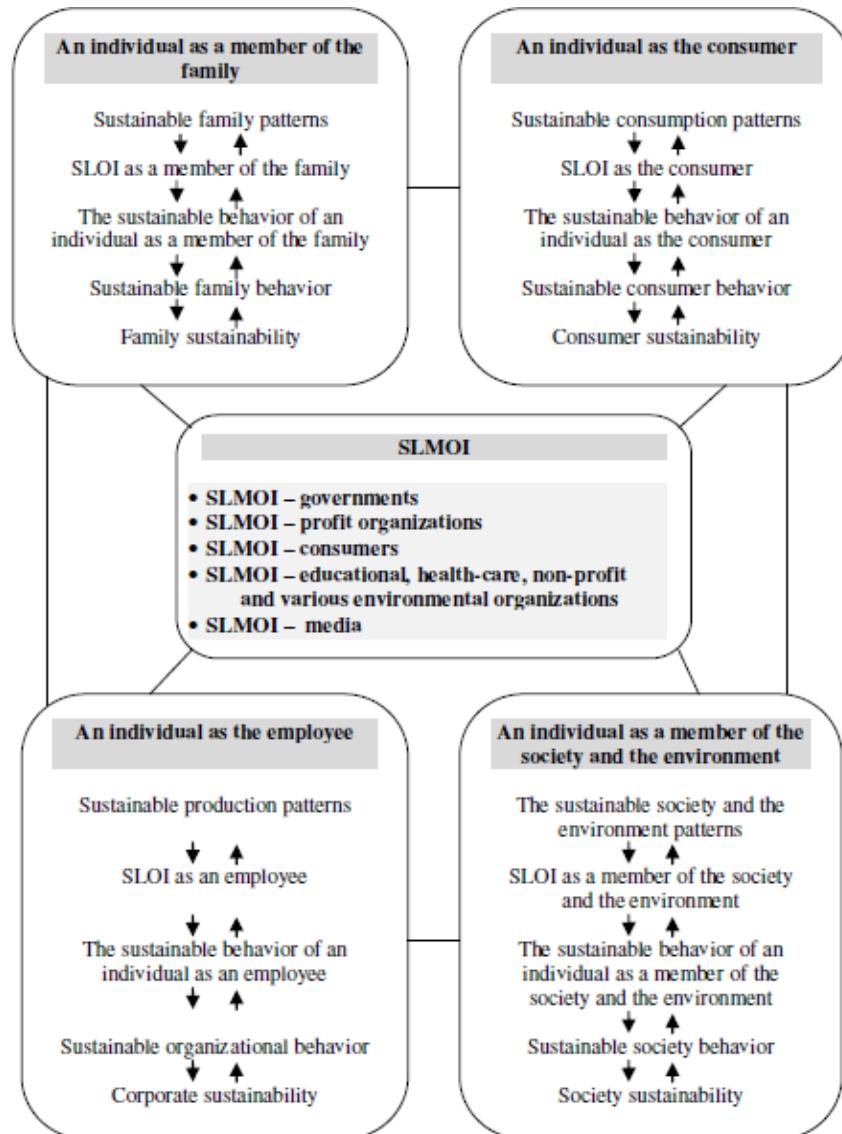
**Figure no. 2: An individual in different roles and contexts**

Consumer behavior is important, but it is not the most important. An individual has certain attitudes to physical activity and, on the basis of those attitudes, he or she behaves in a certain way (e.g. walks). An individual has certain attitudes to the social media and makes a decision on whether he or she will spend time on social networks or not. *Parents* are those who transfer attitudes, beliefs and values to children. An individual is a member of *the organization* he or she works at. With his or her knowledge and attitudes, an individual can have an influence on the sustainable behavior of organizations. An individual is a member of *the society* he or she lives in. By performing his or her certain activities, an individual can influence the sustainability of the society. In this paper, the significance of the **sustainable lifestyle of an individual (SLOI)** is highlighted. The SLOI stands for the *sustainable pattern of the behavior of an individual in the family, the process of product purchase and consumption, at work (at the organization he or she works) and the society and the environment he or she lives and works.*

*The SLOI includes:*

- *the sustainable behavior of an individual as a member of the family* – which is in compliance with the sustainable family behavior,
- *the sustainable behavior of an individual as a consumer* – sustainable consumer behavior,
- *the sustainable behavior of an individual as an employee* – which is in compliance with sustainable organizational behavior,
- *the sustainable behavior of an individual as a member of the society and the environment* – which is in compliance with the sustainable behavior of the society.

An individual's behavior depends on the family he or she lives in, the organization he or she works at, the environment and the society he or she lives in. On the other hand, an individual can influence the behavior of the family he or she lives in, the organization he or she works at, the environment and the society he or she lives in. *For the total sustainability, sustainable patterns of the behavior of all the actors are needed. Sustainability marketing (Rakic and Rakic, 2015) and the sustainable lifestyle marketing of an individual (SLMOI) can have an influence on the attitudes of actors to sustainable behavior and sustainable patterns.* (figure no. 3)



**Figure no. 3: The complementary effect of the SLMOI of different actors as the base of the SLOI and sustainability**

The SLMOI is directed towards the presentation, creation and maintenance of the SLOI. On the basis of the definition of marketing of the American Marketing Association (AMA, 2013), the definition of the SLMOI has been derived. **The SLMOI is the activity, a set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating and maintaining the SLOI.**

Governments, profit organizations; consumers; educational, health-care, non-profit and various environmental organizations and the media are responsible for the SLMOI.

*Organizations* can:

- Do business in compliance with the sustainable production patterns, and
- Make consumers and the public familiar with sustainable business.

*Consumers* can:

- In the process of purchasing and consuming, consumers can behave according to sustainable consumer patterns,
  - via WOM communications, the digital media and particularly the user-generated (consumer-generated) media, consumers can create, share and comment on the content of the sustainable patterns of behavior.

Apart from their respective responsibility for sustainable *business, educational, health-care, non-profit and various environmental organizations and the media* are also responsible for communicating the SLOI.

## **1.2. Profile of sustainability oriented consumers**

Despite the controversy about their uses, *socio-demographic variables* (age, gender, income, education etc.) can still be useful in understanding and predicting pro environmental behaviours. General Environmental Responsiveness (GER) has a positive relationship with *age*, suggesting that older people have a broader knowledge of environmental responsibility (Wells et al., 2011). On the other hand, the results obtained by the author in the research show that the younger consumer is more environmentally conscious (Chen & Peng, 2012; Straughan and Roberts, 1999). Straughan and Roberts (1999) say that age has been explored by a number of researchers and the general belief is that younger individuals are likely to be more sensitive to environmental issues. Numerous papers and studies confirm that *females* are more concerned than men about the environment in relation to household behaviours (Bucic et al., 2012; Kalamas, Cleveland and Laroche, 2013; Rezai et al., 2012; Straughan and Roberts, 1999; Subhani et al., 2012; Wells et al., 2011). But, as is the case with age-based green research, the results of gender-based investigations are still far from conclusive (Straughan and Roberts, 1999). Environmental sensitivity has a positive relationship with *income* (Bucic et al., 2012; Rezai et al., 2012; Straughan and Roberts, 1999). GER also has a positive relationship with education, so that more educated people are more socially responsible. The education of individuals has a positive influence on individuals' socially responsible behavior (Chen & Peng, 2012). Consumer environmental attitudes and knowledge are two of the most commonly cited influences on behaviour (Wells et al., 2011). There is evidently a great deal of people's awareness, concern and consciousness when the environment is concerned, and they are the harbingers of our adopting a behavior that is environment-friendly (Wai and Bojei, 2015). The consumer's ecology-related behavior positively influences, and does so to a significant extent, the consumer's environmental consciousness (Ahmad et al., 2012). Ahmad's (et al., 2012) study points out the fact that one's age, income and education stand for determinant factors of environment-related behavior. For that reason, starting in primary school, the consumer must educate him- or herself both formally and informally on the basic ecological principles.

Based on these findings and the theoretical frameworks, we propose the following *hypothesis*:

H1. The younger the consumers, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are.

H2. The higher the consumers' incomes, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are.

H3. The more educated the consumers are, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are.

H4. The more activities are performed by the SLMOI (different actors, such as profit organizations, the government; educational, health-care, non-profit and various environmental organizations, the media), the more positive attitudes to a sustainable lifestyle are.

H5. The more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are the greater effect on sustainable behaviour they have.

## **2. Method**

The starting point for the research of attitudes towards sustainable lifestyles and behaviours on the basis of attitudes is represented by framework: resource flows and sustainability impacts for lifestyle choice (see figure no. 1). Questionnaire consisted of a set of attitude statements and questions related to decisions about purchasing, using and disposal of products; using water, energy and other resources. 5-point Likert-type scale was used (strongly agree = 5, strongly disagree = 1). In the survey, we used personal interviewing. In the survey, we used personal interviewing.

Starting attitude and behaviour statements are:

- Decisions about chosen products can affect sustainability.
- When making decision about purchasing I always choose products which positively affect sustainability.
- Decisions about how products are used can affect sustainability.
- When making decision about using a product I always choose the way (of using a product) which positively affects sustainability.
- Decisions about how products are disposed can affect sustainability.
- When making decision about product disposal I always choose the way (of product disposal) which positively affects sustainability.
- Decisions about the way and the degree of utilisation of water, land, energy and other resources can affect sustainability.
- When making decision about using water, land, energy and other resources I always choose the way (water, land, energy and other resources) which positively affects sustainability.

- The SLMOI activities carried out by different actors affect my decisions on the purchase, use and disposal of products; my use of water, energy and other resources.

The respondents who answered disagree or strongly disagree, were additionally asked an open question – why?

The survey was conducted on the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Convenience sample included 400 individuals between 16 and 74 years. Respondents, according to their age, were divided into the following groups: 16-34 (20%), 35-54 (32%), 55-74 (48%). According to sex, the sample consisted of 51% of women and 49% of men. According to educational level, the respondents were grouped using EUROSTAT classification: 0-2 basic, lower secondary education (preschool education; primary education or first phase of the primary education – first to fifth grade; lower high education – 6th to 9th grade); 3-4 higher secondary education (high school; - 1st to 4th grade; post secondary but not tertiary education – first degree studies); 5-6 tertiary education (higher education, Master studies and PhD studies). In the sample, 25% of respondents had lower than secondary education, 50% had secondary education and 25% had tertiary education. According to employment status, the respondents were divided into following groups: employed (30%), unemployed (25%), students (5%), other but unemployed (40%). According to income of the households where they live, the respondents were divided into following groups: up to 300 euro (65%), 300-600 euro (20%), over 600 euro (15%).

### 3. Results

The results of the research show that 27% agree, and 16% strongly agree that *decisions about chosen products can affect sustainability*.

Looking at the *age* of respondents, the younger the residents are, the stronger their attitudes about the affect of chosen products on sustainability are, i.e. 19% (in the age group 16-34), 15% (35-54) and 9% (55-74) agree and strongly agree that decisions about chosen products can affect sustainability. The results of the research confirm H1: The younger the consumers, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are. It is a similar situation with income and education.

According to *income* of the households where they live, the higher income the respondents have, the attitudes towards the influence of chosen products on sustainability are stronger: up to 300 euro (4%), 300-600 euro (16%), over 600 euro (23%) agree and strongly agree that decisions about chosen products can affect sustainability. The results of the research confirm H2: The higher the consumers' incomes, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are.

According to *educational level*, the more educated the respondents, the stronger their attitudes towards the influence of chosen products on sustainability are, i.e. 2% (in the group of respondents with lower than secondary education), 9% (in the group with secondary education) and 32% (in the group with tertiary education) agree and strongly agree that decisions about chosen products can affect sustainability. The results of the research confirm H3: The more educated the consumers are, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are.

Organizations have increasingly been publishing their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or Sustainability Reports (Albu et al., 2013) and present their activities in the field of CSR and sustainability. In order to prove H4, the respondents were first asked whether they had noticed some *marketing activities of the organizations related to the sustainable lifestyle of individuals*. Then, the respondents whose answer to the question asked was affirmative (i.e. those who had noticed the marketing activities of the organizations related to sustainable lifestyle) were asked two additional questions: 1) which marketing activities they had noticed and 2) how those marketing activities had influenced their attitudes and behavior. *From the aspect of the product categories*, the respondents noticed the marketing activities of the organizations in the fields of healthy food (63%), organic food (47%), physical activities (39%) and hybrid automobiles (28%). *From the aspect of the types of organizations*, the respondents noticed the following:

- presenting numerous organizations (different actors, such as profit organizations, the government; educational, health-care, non-profit and various environmental organizations, the media) as socially responsible ones (on the basis of aid provided for certain groups of people and the local community; recycling etc.);
- the promotion of the producers and distributors of healthy and organic food;
- the promotion of the producers and distributors of products and services in the field of the physical activity;
- government campaigns oriented towards abandoning smoking, health checks, the prevention of diseases etc.;
- educational organizations that, in various manners, attribute ever greater significance to researching into sustainability (from teaching units, via subjects to the establishment of faculties);
- health-care organizations' campaigns presenting behavior patterns with the aim to prevent diseases;
- promotional activities of non-profit and various environmental organizations, and
- the media contents dedicated to sustainability.

The research results show that 34% of the respondents agree and 29% strongly agree that *the marketing activities of the organizations related to the sustainable lifestyle of individuals* have an impact on the creation, maintenance and further transfer of positive attitudes of a sustainable lifestyle. The results of the research confirm H4: The more activities are performed by the SLMOI (different actors, such as profit organizations, the government; educational, health-care, non-profit and various environmental organizations, the media), the more positive attitudes to a sustainable lifestyle are.

However, positive attitudes towards the influence of chosen products on sustainability are not followed by the similar *behaviour*. The research results are not in accordance with H5: The more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are the greater effect on sustainable behaviour they have. That is, only 25% of respondents always choose products which positively affect sustainability. To the additional question *why they do not buy products which positively affect sustainability*, the majority (87%) respond that they do not have enough income. Other reasons are: high price of sustainable products (82%),

insufficient knowledge of the influence of products on sustainability (as much as 57%), unavailability of products in retail stores (23%). It is interesting that *income is pointed out as the key reason for the differences between the attitudes and behaviour*. The respondents say that they know the organic food is incomparably better, but also more expensive so they cannot afford it. Also, as a similar example, the respondents point out electric automobiles.

Considering the fact that the majority of respondents pointed out high price as a problem, they were presented the opportunities which led to a lower price of products (shifts towards efficient and collaborative consumption etc.) and they were asked additional questions – Why do not you redirect yourself towards efficient and collaborative consumption? Why do not you use public transport instead of your own car? Why do not you decrease the consumption of water? The most common responses were: hard to change habits, life and consumption patterns (89%); insufficient knowledge about the effects on sustainability (57%). As much as 43% of respondents responded with another question – why would I use public transport instead of my own car? This tells about the insufficient awareness of the influence of population on sustainability.

Avita (et al., 2015) has conducted an exploration of the relative importance of the price for an individual making decisions on sustainable food. The results obtained reveal that to define the consumer's willingness to pay for sustainable food the relevant role of the price must be taken into account; for that reason, the organic- and integrated-food market may be forced to more adequately adjust the price so as to reach the wide-ranging consumer.

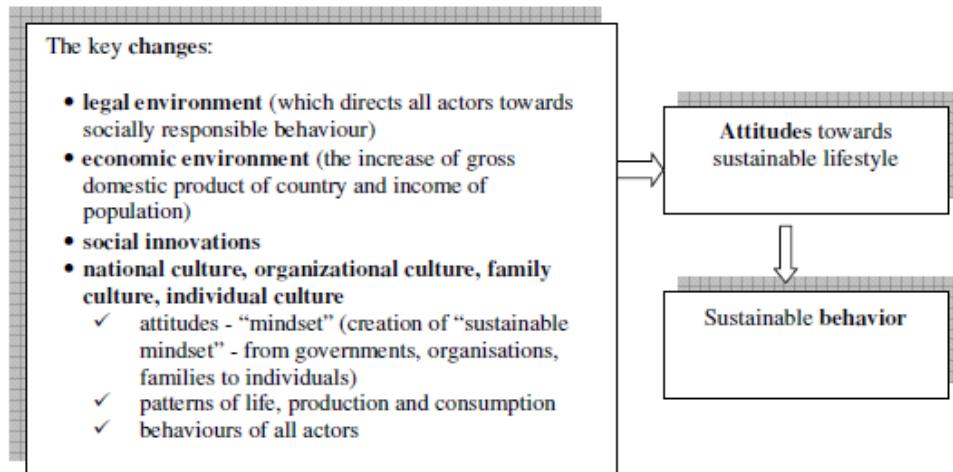
The responses related to attitudes and behaviours about the way of products' using and disposal, as well as about the way and the degree of using water, land, energy and other resources are similar to the above mentioned responses about the choice of products.

#### **4. Discussion**

On the basis of the results of the research, it can be concluded that *the four starting hypothesis are confirmed, but not the fifth one*. The younger the consumers, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are. The higher the consumers' incomes, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are. The more educated the consumers are, the more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle are. The more activities are performed by the SLMOI (different actors, such as profit organizations, the government; educational, health-care, non-profit and various environmental organizations, the media), the more positive attitudes to a sustainable lifestyle are. However, more positive attitudes towards sustainable lifestyle do not always mean their stronger influence on sustainable behaviour. Of course, a logical question can be put – why and when? The key answer is – income. The fifth hypothesis is confirmed only in the segment of the respondents with higher income. So, people can be aware of the significance and importance of choosing products, the way of using and disposing products; as well as of the way and the degree of using water, land, energy and other resources, but often people do not have income high enough for socially responsible behaviour. An additional problem is the lack of availability in distribution channels. Particular problems are “rooted” life and consumption patterns and insufficient knowledge about the influence on sustainability.

In order to change everything and direct it towards sustainability, *a long-term process of creation of sustainable lifestyles is needed*. The key changes are: economic environment

(the increase of gross domestic product of country and income of population), legal environment (which directs all actors towards socially responsible behaviour), attitudes - "mindset" and behaviours of all actors (creation of "sustainable mindset" - from governments, organisations to families and individuals), patterns of life and consumption. The above mentioned changes lead to sustainable lifestyles of all actors (figure no. 4).



**Figure no. 4: The key changes in the process of creation of SLOI**

Subsidies and supportive policies should also be offered by governments for the purpose of strengthening the industrial sector in effectively promoting green products. In that way, the non-green preferential segment's preferences towards such green products, which is subject to bargain-baseinent in fixing the price of the green product (Biswas and Roy, 2015).

*Social innovations* are needed. There is an increase in the number of the movements, initiatives, entrepreneurs and new business models whose goal is to enable sustainability in how we consume products and services, how we live and move. The following examples include:

- Shifting to efficient consumption (wasting less), different consumption (shifting to high-quality goods and services), and sufficient consumption (reducing material consumption) – they are a demonstration of opportunities regarding how to sustainably utilize products and services.
- Collaborative consumption (sharing, swapping, trading, etc.) discloses shifting in preferences away from ownership of goods to "access" to goods and services and from behaving as the passive consumer to becoming the co-producers of goods and services (e.g. urban farming; growing one's own food).
- Change in household behavior so as to conserve energy and invest in energy efficiency signals, one's increasing awareness and readiness to move on to more sustainable ways of living.

- Cities and municipalities appear to be supportive of modal shifts in transportation towards walking, cycling and public transit and new technologies, too, such as electric vehicles.
- The community and the city action show successful participatory approaches to sustainable, long-term living and the mobility options such as ecotowns, sustainable city initiatives and Transition Towns.
- Promising synergies keep coming to surface for health, equity and well-being by re-examining the way we live, eat and move.
- The co-creation strategy, in which those affected by a development (e.g. investors, firms, governments, citizens) interact, share, learn and develop technologies, products, concepts, services, or neighborhoods in a way that enables them to have the value created for all (Backhaus et al., 2011).

In order to enable the development of context-customized instrument packages applying a spectrum of tools (such as regulatory, economic, information) to make an influence on various stakeholders and target groups, systemic and holistic approaches through a multi-stakeholder involvement are required (Backhaus et al., 2011).

### **Conclusions**

This article contributes to the extant literature by emphasizing the impact of the SLMOI on the SLOI, the interconnectedness of the SLMOI and the SLOI, and their mutual impact on sustainability. Playing different roles (as a member of the family, an employee, a consumer and a member of the society and the environment) an individual may have an impact on sustainability by expressing his/her attitudes and by his/her behavior. By conducting marketing activities, organizations may have an impact on an individual's sustainable behavior. These are the *key conclusions*. *First, the SLOI is the goal of the SLMOI, and sustainability is the SLOI's goal.* *Second, a long-term process* of sustainable lifestyles creation is needed. *Third, a holistic approach* is necessary – numerous actors – from governments, organizations, families to individuals have to take part in the process of creation of sustainable attitudes - "mindset" and behaviours.

A long-term process of sustainable lifestyles creation is needed, as well as the engagement of numerous actors, because the changes of economic and legal environment, life patterns, attitudes and behaviour of people are necessary. The basis is made of changes in the economic environment, i.e. the increase of the gross domestic product of country and the income of population. Legal environment by laws and regulations forces all actors to behave in a socially responsible manner. Informed, educated, younger and the customers who have enough purchasing power, are more oriented towards sustainable lifestyles. It is necessary to educate the population in order to change existing unsustainable patterns of behaviour, and to make them realise and accept sustainable lifestyles. It is necessary to create opportunities that citizens can get income and increase purchasing power.

Observed from the point of view of the protection of the consumer, Popescu et al. (2010) deems education for healthy consumption to be a suitable answer capable of generating a long-lasting change in the present pattern, striving to a more generous consumption, if it is

observed from an intergenerational perspective, which is also capable of sustaining a high quality of life of coexisting generations that also succeed one another.

*The practical implications* of this paper reflect in that the study results recommend a change in the existing patterns of behavior, starting the process of creating and maintaining the SLOI on the basis of the SLMOI of different actors and actors' activities in the long-term process of the creation of sustainable lifestyles. The foundations of the patterns of a sustainable behavior lie in education, income, positive attitudes towards a sustainable lifestyle and the SLMOI of different actors. On the basis of the above mentioned it can be concluded that *education of population* is needed so that they accept sustainable lifestyles. Also, *the change of existing patterns of behaviour* is needed as well as *the increase of income of the population*. The following **activities of actors in the long-term process of creation of sustainable lifestyles** stand out:

- **Governments** through laws and regulations create legal environment which directs organisations and population towards sustainable behaviour.
- Governments create conditions for the increase of GDP of country, profit of companies and income of population. Population with low income has only one aim: survival. It further means that it is necessary to create conditions and opportunities for organisations in order to increase their revenues and profit, and population to increase its income.
- **Education, health, non-profit and various environmental organisations** through their daily activities and additional campaigns educate people about sustainable lifestyle. For some daily activities of individuals, income is not the only problem, but ignorance – for example, some individuals do not know the proper diet. Improper diet leads to numerous diseases and other individual, family and social problems. Awareness of investment (larger) of income into sustainable and not into materialistic lifestyle is necessary. UNEP (2000) emphasises the importance of education for sustainable consumption. Education is one of the most powerful tools to support individuals in making the right and more responsible choices while meeting their needs and aspirations. ESC is essential to empower individuals and social groups with appropriate information on the impacts of their daily choices as consumers, as well as for workable solutions and alternatives. ESC aims at providing knowledge, values and skills to enable individuals and social groups to become actors of change towards more sustainable consumption behaviors (UNEP, 2010, p. 4, 11).
- **Media** transmit messages about sustainable lifestyle every day. Media have great power and can significantly contribute to the creation of sustainable culture. "If television could transform the entire planet into a global materialistic consumer culture within just 50 years, it could also be used to efficiently promote alternative non-materialistic lifestyles and sustainable consumption." (Huesemann and Huesemann 2008: p. 815).
- The change of attitudes and behaviours of **organisations** - sustainable production and consumption (of organisations).
- The change of attitudes and behaviours of **population** – sustainable lifestyle of population - everyday sustainable activities of population – from rational usage of water, energy and other resources; over ways of food preparation and consumption; the choice using and disposal of products; to recreational, sport and many more other daily activities.

Although the findings yield valuable insights into sustainability, there are *some limitations and suggestions for future research*. First, the research has been done in a single country. Future researches might be conducted in a larger number of countries in different contexts. That would also enable the carrying out of a comparative analysis of the impacts of the SLMOI, the SLOI and sustainability on and between each other in different contexts. Second, a general impact of the SLMOI on the SLOI has been researched into. Future researches might be focused on certain types of organizations, i.e. on the measuring and ranking of the impact of the SLMOI of different types of organizations as well as their integrated impact on the SLOI and sustainability. Third, the attitudes of the population towards sustainable lifestyles and the SLMOI (performed by different actors) and behaviors on the basis of attitudes have been researched into. Future researches might be oriented towards measuring the contributions of individuals in different roles (as a member of the family, an employee, a consumer and a member of the society and the environment).

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