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Urban consumption in the postmodern reality – the analysis of changes in the background of the structure of earlier city expenses

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Abstract: The main objective of the paper is to analyse the changes in structure of city expenses. It evolves according to changes of urban development goals, which reflects the hierarchy of needs of the city users. In this context the urban consumption illustrates firstly lasting of key urban functions, resulting of the unchanged, during centuries, role of cities in settlement and economic systems and secondly opportunism the forms of satisfying some needs. The research was based on comparative studies of urban life realities expressed in the share of selected categories of budgetary expenditures in analysed cities in the period of more than 100 years. This approach gives a chance to observe currently promoted postmodern features of urban consumption. Its specificity most often can be seen through the marks of pluralistic consumer society, which relativism and relentless pursuit of novelty, make cities the places, where new products are constantly created. Costs of those aspirations and transformations are paid by local authorities, leaving a trace in the structure of city expenses.

Keywords: urban consumption, postmodernity, city development

JEL codes: R 11, H72

1. Introduction

Consumption is given a particular attention among many urban issues that are affected by socio-cultural trends. It is focused on fulfilling needs related to lifestyles, including preferences concerning locations of housing, jobs and leisure activities. These needs should inspire urban authorities while deciding upon allocation of local resources. The paper aims at presenting the

structure of city expenses, as they evolve accordingly to changes in development objectives. The objectives themselves are reflecting a hierarchy of needs fulfilled by collective consumption. The paper contains arguments based on the assumption that city's offer should constantly adapt to current political and social realities.

2. The evolution of the city users' needs

In considerations on the economic context of using settlement units, it is important to remember that a measure of space is the man who fills the world with his own acts (Bauman, 1996). The behaviors of individuals and groups decide about features of different places, while subjective feelings determine the pressure exerted on the character of area usage which should be adapted to them in all contexts. The forms of land development must answer the needs of its users and take into account social, cultural, economic or environmental aspects. Buildings, constructions, objects of small architecture, water, park, forest or agricultural areas should facilitate the achievement of people's objectives and help them to continue or even intensify their presence in the area. P. Sztompka (2002: 445) writing about the idea of the progress ascertains that "its persistence and universality come from the eternal and insurmountable gap between this what is and this what we would wish to be".

Cities have always been places combining different functions and used in the way so they could respond to the needs typical of a particular civilization development stage (Słodczyk, 2012: 11). The height, building materials, shapes, colors, finishes, decorations and other features of town facilities express the opinions and social status of their investors, builders and users. They are the evidence of their activity aimed to meet their current needs. In many cities their historical inhabitants left the remains of ancient building forming the material structure of downtowns, today being the subject of public admiration. They are simultaneously difficult to manage as a housing resource and expensive in adapting to be offered as a city service. Limitations of their usefulness result from maladjustments to current needs, because what is nowadays desirable as a city facility, seldom directly correlates with earlier decisions of towns planners. However, cities as the most dynamically developing settlement units perpetually offering agglomeration advantages, constantly attract their users, giving them a chance to acquire desirable living conditions and a favourable environment for conducting economic activity.

Urbanity as an idea has remained unchanged for centuries, though simultaneously features of cities constantly evolve¹. They change because justifications for the behaviors of cities users, facilities and ways to satisfy their needs evolve. As the history of mankind proves, seldom changes have a revolutionary character. Sometimes wars, political declarations or legal acts created new activity circumstances overnight, but they affected the same „yesterday’s” people, who were brought up under certain conditions, accustomed to places and devices, taught particular professions, and who organized procedures for the achievement of social or economic aims etc. It was not easy for them to change. Forming some new opinions or creating new ways of solving problems often demand „new” people and modifications are sometimes fully accepted only by next generations.

3. Postmodern reality

The occurrence of a novelty is, to a great extent, a result of the influence of different social-cultural trends, for example at present postmodernity ideas are becoming more and more are popularized in Polish cities. This can be connected, among other things, with the transformations of lifestyle in the rich part of the world, which resulted from as an effect of the recovery from the world wars, with the fascination of the democratically understood freedom or with technical and economic progress, making possible automation, miniaturization, informationalization and contributing to the mass production and consumption of goods and services. As Z. Bauman (2004: 903) writes „the contemporary world in many essential considerations is a continuation of the modernity”, but “the stage of history experienced today is so different from the state 50 years ago, that we would have to give it its own, separate place in the network of notions”. Characteristic features of postmodernity include²:

- The unyielding persistence in transforming the physical and social environment, involving “the creative destruction”, allowing for the formation of better things (because the new are more modern);
- The approval of the short-term identity, changing depending on the situation;

¹ A. Karwińska and A. Brzosko-Sermak (2014) write that urbanity is the effect of the urbanization, being the collection of occurrences, the set of attributes and the ways of realizing institutional functions.

² Author’s own elaboration based on: (Bauman, 2004; A. Szahaj, 2004).

- The moving away from the production paradigm for the consumption paradigm, and the replacement of self-limitation discipline and rationality with the pursue of life satisfaction through the accumulation of goods, impressions, experiences;
- The increasing differentiation of lifestyles, pluralism of opinions and outlooks on life and their privatization and subjectivization;
- The aesthetisation of life;
- The increasing tolerance for dissimilarity, adapting global trends;
- Multiculturalism as the ideology of caring about dissimilarity;
- The dominant position of media, the vision of the world created by them and the speed and changeability of cultural messages;
- The increasing responsibility of individuals, who want to create the common wealth (eg. the local community) giving up on individual interests.

The dispute of specialists concerning the practical range of the influence of postmodern postulates is continued (Wątroba: 2009), but celebrating events in media and in consumption temples (which are shopping centers), promoting attitudes of tolerance or engagement in activities of groups and local communities helping to create the common good, are more and more often considered a social standard. Postmodern cities are chaotic structures, where areas of the location of latest technologies, extensive suburbs inhabited by representatives of the new society and districts of poverty coexist (Jayne, 2006: 14). In these realities their users become members of the consumer society, but the local community context also demands responsibility and readiness for dialogue from them, because the decisions which they accept should contribute to the formation of desirable quality places for good life and economic activity.

4. Urban consumption – definition

Cities as places of concentration and exchange offer non-agricultural goods and services, thereby satisfying the needs of people based in the area of their influence. Postmodern postulates, however, encourage creators of products to make greater efforts, oriented on the incessant deliveries of attractions and improvement of the offer. Their purpose is the urban consumption, understood as the satisfaction of needs as result of using city resources (Czornik, 2012: 29). Its

subject is the city as a whole or its elements³, but first of all it is urbanity as an attribute of goods and services, in the spatial circumstances and forms of consumption acts.

The evolution of the urban consumption can be traced by analyzing city expenses structures. Changes in their features can be due to different reasons, including both timeless needs and motivations characteristic of a particular time. Comparative studies of urban life realities, expressed in the participation of selected categories of city budget expenses for the period over 100 years, give a chance to observe the nature of the contemporary urban consumption. The research problem is the changing urban development objectives, which always reflect the hierarchies of city users' needs, but in the collection of existential needs they are beyond factors verifying the local demand⁴. It is important to recognise the status of these city users' needs and municipal authorities' initiatives, which express conscious consumer decisions, first of all realized by the market consumption.

5. Consumption in pre-war Polish cities

Many papers about the reality of the Polish city in the early XX century have been written. Most of them focused on the dynamic processes of urbanization and industrialization, paying attention to the legal and social differences among the states of occupants, appearing in the living conditions of inhabitants and economic development opportunities. The needs of users of those cities well illustrated the structures of expenses in their budgets, whereas it is essential to remember about different municipal competences (e.g. Prussian cities did not finance and manage the road infrastructure, the Polish Kingdom Province was treated greatly as the area invaded by the Russian Empire and, consequently, it had to provide revenues at the lowest possible costs i.e. to minimize public investment. Data on expense structures of the budgets in selected cities is presented in Table 1.

³ T. Markowski (1997) describes the city as a mega-product which is the complicated and complex set of advantages, the consumption of which is closely connected with the place, displaying also the subsets of urban products providing their buyers with fewer advantages.

⁴ They must be satisfied with the city survival and no one can question them, though some of them occurred only because of the existing realities eg. the necessity of the construction of water-supply-infrastructure for immigrants from the country coming to work in newly created factories or restorations of the cities after war-destructions.

Table 1. Percentage of selected categories of city budget expenses in pre-war years⁵

Expenditure	Sosnowiec	Częstochowa	Będzin	Łódź	Warszawa	Opole	Tarnowskie Góry
year	1909	1909	1909	1909	1909	1911	1924
Maintenance of the municipality administration	36.17	27.68	30.97	37.01	25.34	21.28	30.12
Maintenance of the buildings/ municipality property	6.42	11.23	8.34	6.84	2.0	–	4.96
Construction and public traffic	–	–	–	–	–	–	42.85
Maintenance of the street, squares, gardens	15.28	17.24	23.91	10.57	–	–	31.51
Street lighting	12.60	10.57	17.74	7.41	2.66	–	5.13
Pavements, bridges, channels	1.94	5.31	–	2.07	–	–	0.13
Avenues, urban gardens	0.18	0.30	–	0.08	–	–	–
Schools and scholarships	–	4.98	1.05	5.31	4.01	7.9	6.20
Primary school	–	2.06	1.05	3.06	–	5.84	4.45
High school	–	4.92	–	2.26	–	2.6	1.75
Schools, hospitals	–	–	–	–	16.2	–	–
Hospitals	0.08	0.06	0.04	1.69	–	–	–
Medical service/ Municipal Health-insurance	1.22	0.45	2.13	0.30	–	0.01	1.34
Maintenance of the police, the arrest, the medical management	–	–	–	–	4.30	–	–
Police and The Fire – Brigade	–	–	–	–	3.18 equipment	1.71 police	9.09
Department of poor and poor ill /spitalhouses, the social assistance	–	0.09	–	1.34	–	2.32	4.58

Source: Author's own elaboration based on: Grabski, 1913; Urząd Miasta Tarnowskie Góry, 1924; Oppeln, 1926.

The character of the legal environment of cities does not allow for precise comparisons. It can be observed that the main type of budget expenses in researched cities were maintenance costs of municipality administration, however, this category of expenses does not directly deal with the subjects of urban consumption, though it describes the costs of creating and maintaining the

⁵ Data in tables can not sum (have got less or more than 100%) because they are selected to illustrate chosen kinds of expenditures, which consist of different components (some components are reckoned in a few kinds of expenditures)

attractiveness of consumption forms eg. modern services for city users. The expenses on the maintenance of schools were important, though the proportions between supporting primary and secondary schools (mainly vocational) differed. In the growing and prospering cities of the Polish Kingdom Province (the leader was Lodz), investment was made in improving quality of life through developing municipal facilities which had already worked in cities under the Prussian annexation. More in-depth reflections on urban consumption in those cities require more data, but this article quotes only selected indicators, necessary to create the context for comparisons and descriptions of the character of contemporary city features.

6. The fulfilment of needs of socialist city users

After the Second World War the scale of destruction in Polish cities was so large that the first efforts of municipal authorities concentrated on the restoration of damaged districts or creating new buildings (Ślódczyk, 2012: 418-419). This process had absorbed many resources for two decades. In the following years the nature of the socialist system made it difficult for people to express their needs and satisfaction, especially in terms of market consumption. However, socialistic authorities made sure (for different reasons, mostly propaganda-related or political) that public offers were created, though in most cases they did not fully satisfy the needs of socialist city users, but easily found consumers among people coming from the countryside. The scale of neglect in housing, road infrastructure or business environment was accurately identified only by the investments made after 1990.

In those times, in socialist territorial units authority was exercised by the national councils of communes, cities, districts of cities, administrative districts and provinces, which⁶:

- were bodies of state authorities and basic social self-government bodies of working people and they expressed their will;
- as the territorial bodies of state power, they managed the entire local social-economic development and influenced all administration units and their economy, initiating and controlling their activity;

⁶ Act on changes in the national council as of 22 November 1973 (Act on national councils as of 25 January 1958), Journal of Acts, 1973 No 47, item 276 (Act rescinded on 1 July 1984)

- as the basic self-government bodies, they managed the self-fulfillment of local needs, based on grass-root initiatives;
- they managed economic, social and cultural activity, relating the local needs to nation-wide tasks and improving the fulfillment of local people's needs and versatile area development;
- they aimed at the growth and modernization of productions and services and the provision of economic and social-cultural complex development of their areas, in the coherent, socialist system, wherein all resources and possibilities, both existing and potential, should be used for the further development of the country.

The reality of those declarations left much to be desired, but the fact was that socialistic authorities tried to create the municipal substitute, which had not existed in the pre-war world and which does not exist in today's reality, as an intermediary form in adjusting the possibility of creation public offers to the consumption of territorial unit users. The expenditures of territorial budgets and selected cities are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Percentage of selected categories of socialistic cities budgets expenditures

Expenditure	Cities total	Territorial budgets		Będzin		Częstochowa		Sosnowiec	
year	1950	1960	1970	1968	1973	1968	1973	1968	1973
Municipality administration/ territorial administration	15.42	5.88	4.39	2.72	—	2.57	—	2.51	—
Municipality property, enterprises and service of bonds	8.48	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enterprises and other socialized economic units	—	20.68	19.44	39.66	15.33	27.22	16.22	33.82	13.35
Organizing of housing	14.64	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Roads, streets, squares	5.73	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Education	13.00	3.1	4.4	19.23	12.80	24.01	19.57	19.26	17.80
Culture and art	1.22			—	0.66	—	1.79	—	0.74
Public health care	5.27		25.12	38.13	54.63	43.84	37.76	43.97	41.31
Social assistance	8.96			—	0.37	—	0.13	—	0.37
Physical education, sport and tourism and recreation	—			—	0.37	—	0.13	—	0.37
Investments and overhauls	0.13	32.64	26.22	30.13	16.20	22.34	24.54	31.74	26.43

Source: Author's own elaboration based on: Historia Polski w liczbach. 2006; Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1968; Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1974.

In different circumstances, the influence of external actors and phenomena stimulated or stopped the size and intensity of urban consumption. The socialist reality eliminated private property, so funds spent on the fulfillment of needs had to embrace all spheres. The problem affected not only basic, but also higher-order needs. Too little funding and insufficient other resources usually did not even allow for the fulfillment of existential needs, but propaganda activities happened, targeted at improving of the image of cities and their authorities (e.g. the Spodek Arena in Katowice⁷). In comparison to pre-war years, the cost of maintaining the administration significantly decreased, but the presented data include other tasks. The differences can be observed in terms of costs of maintenance of social infrastructure, especially educational and healthcare service, which are much higher due to declared goodwill of the socialist reality to the fulfillment of those needs from public resources. Socialistic budgets composed a new category of expenses on the maintenance of enterprises and other socialized economic units, which was not part of urban consumption. Compared with contemporary circumstances, only part of those expenses could be today allocated to public offers, spent on supporting activities of private firms.

7. Consumption in Polish cities in the face of postmodernity challenges

Cities in the reality of the postmodern world are still areas of the traditional consumption of offers which require the concentration of supply, but they also become places of fulfilling new needs, reflecting changes in attitudes. In the opinion poll among Silesian Voivodeship managers of county towns in 2010⁸, questioned about general trends in spatial changes in towns, 46% respondents pointed out modernization with elements of tradition, 38% of them indicated modernization, while only 15% chose the preservation of tradition. In the same survey, the respondents also pointed out external inspirations of changes, such as modern energy technologies (16%), the phenomenon of urban sprawl (14%), pressures of creating welfare ghettos (11%) and municipal investments, 50% of which were the investments in technical infrastructure. Simultaneously, the opinion polls among the residents of selected cities⁹, they

⁷ Built thanks to the efforts of J. Ziętek in 1971, it cost about PLN 800 m.

⁸ Done as part of research project: "Management of urban spatial resources in postmodern world. Case study of district towns in Silesian Voivodeship". The result of the research in book edited by Czornik, 2012.

⁹ Second part of the research project quoted above .

primarily indicated the need for the construction of parking spaces (25%), parks and squares (17%), cultural facilities (15%), sports and recreational facilities (11%) and shopping centers (11%). Such a distribution of needs (almost 80% of all needs only in five types of activities) shows the evolution in the opinions and attitudes of city users toward the realization of postmodernity postulates. The exception is the preference of constructions of parking spaces, which can be included in modernistic activities. A postmodern project would rather be their liquidation in favour of expanding public space and encouraging the use of public transport and bicycles. The new postulates have, however, have been reaching Polish cities for over a decade. They are now beginning to translate into positive activities, usually easier than other ideas, because in many cases, they have targets compatible with policies of local development, which is supported with the EU funds. At the same time, some cities feel obligated to make up for socialist neglect, simultaneously trying “to skip” a few stages of social development (which passed by Polish cities) and to create the modern offer according to existing needs. That intentions are successful only partially, because city users sometimes “have not grown up” to proposed products (eg. complex offers of waste sorting). The awareness of the needs is formed to a certain extent by marketing activities, but economic realities disenchant, because users cannot afford such consumer behaviors, which are typical of users in Western European or North American cities. Our cities cannot spend large sums on fulfilling cultural and recreational needs or improve the image, if inhabitants prefer the efficient public transport or modernizations of the sewers. This may be proved by a recent event, i.e. the May-referendum in Cracow, in which inhabitants finally rejected the idea of applying for the organization of winter Olympics and, instead, supported the proposal to build the underground metropolitan railway, bicycle paths and video monitoring system. Table 3 presents the reality in selected cities in 2012, illustrating the features of urban consumption by the structure of expenses. For each of the cities two or three types of expenses with the largest share are indicated. This is justified by the fact that education expenses usually rank first, but this component of urban consumption is funded with state subsidies. It may show the attractiveness of the city offer, but not necessarily the preferences of city users and authorities, which only act as intermediaries in performing the constitutional obligation.

Table 3. Percentage of selected categories of city budget expenditures in 2012

Expenditures	Sosnowiec	Częstochowa	Będzin	Łódź	Warszawa	Tarnowskie Góry	Opole	Towns
Production and supply in electricity, gas and water	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.09
Transport and communication	9.80	18.04	13.05	19.71	35.40	7.79	9.38	20.03
Housing economy	4.27	1.65	12.93	10.42	10.12	3.89	4.60	5.88
Public administration	7.43	6.27	7.99	6.73	7.06	11.17	8.41	7.06
Public safety and fire protection	1.91	2.49	1.12	2.49	1.96	0.72	3.35	2.02
Education	39.92	37.04	27.75	25.27	18.87	34.72	36.03	29.95
Health care	2.89	2.23	0.57	1.22	1.51	0.78	1.31	1.27
Social assistance	14.20	14.41	12.70	12.88	5.37	15.24	9.65	11.71
Other task in sphere of social policy	1.24	1.15	1.11	1.40	0.91	0.98	2.50	1.27
Educational care	1.67	3.81	1.46	2.44	2.36	1.28	3.17	2.53
Municipal economy and environmental protection	6.24	3.46	9.19	5.09	2.21	15.06	6.19	5.21
Culture and national heritage	3.16	3.07	7.53	5.64	3.04	4.44	3.28	3.89
Physical education	4.77	4.18	3.13	1.25	0.96	1.14	6.69	3.12
Total w mln zł	728.14	938.82	191.59	3322.65	12612.68	165.5	570.58	81584.42

Source: Author's own elaboration based on: (bank danych lokalnych stat.gov.pl)

Except for educational activity, today's Polish cities spend their funds first of all on the projects aimed at the construction and modernization of transport and communication. The need to communicate is characteristic of the global world and can be one of postmodernity postulates, but at the same time its basic motive has an older, modernist and industrial source. Pre-war cities also

spent significant sums on these aims, but then the roads and railway were built, today more frequently they are modernized¹⁰. The important part of a city budget also comprises expenses on social welfare, which is not the especially adequate to postmodernity ideas, but rather associated with the creation of a new (after socialism) structure of the society, in which many people cannot find their place on the labor market. Significant expenses of the city of Będzin on housing can be explained similarly. Investments in the municipal economy and environmental protection in the city of Tarnowskie Góry are “catching up” with the civilization, but they are also postmodern oriented on the improvement of living conditions and the quality of natural environment.

Generally, the structures of expenses show that researched cities are aiming at the full participation in achievements of urban civilization, but they still struggle with historical heritage. This makes it difficult for them to support the building of their modern society, mainly because of the necessity to allocate resources to the creation of material bases for well-functioning. Comparing eg. healthcare expenses which in pre-war selected cities amounted to approx. 0.01 to about 12 percent, under the socialist regime the same expenses together with social welfare accounted for even over the half of all budget expenses, nowadays (in the reality of the National Health Fund) they do not exceed 3%, which shows not only the evolution of needs, but also the changes of political and legal solutions which define the conditions for their fulfillment. However, this situation does not prove the contemporary understanding of the importance of healthcare needs, neither does it reveal the degree of acceptance for new socio-cultural trends by city users. To note this, it would be better to pay attention to the share of expenses on physical education in city budgets.

The intention to implement postmodernity postulates as a motivation for urban consumption is best illustrated with significant expenses on activating a local community and personal development by the participation in culture. Unfortunately, the budgets of pre-war cities did not contain this category of expenses, as they probably did not constitute a large proportion in a city budget, and their specific tasks were classified under other categories (e.g. charity institution or total administration cost). In comparison to socialist cities, budget expenses on culture and art (today: culture and national heritage) have increased significantly: from average

¹⁰ It is important to remember that flag investments of last years which are highways, are not municipal investments and although they pass through many cities and improve their attractiveness, they cannot be directly related with urban consumption (in the understanding of its definition that it is the creation of the consumption offer based on urban resources).

1.22% in all towns in 1950 to eg. 7.53% in the city of Będzin in 2012. At the same time, however, the city of Opole spent more than PLN 18.7 million, the city of Lodz – PLN 187.5 million, and Warsaw – almost PLN 383 million. Moreover, Polish city budgets do not distinguish the expenses on social initiatives, but identifying them with funds for supporting NGOs activities is an oversimplification.

8. Conclusion

The collection of basic city users' needs, defined by the percentage of different categories of expenses, invites the reflection on the persistence of main city functions and funds spent on them. A significant part of them stems from timeless features of cities, connected with the nature of urbanized areas, being the important local factors of progress. In the 20th century Polish cities, however, witnessed a change in specific preferences, first of all in connection with the political reality. Now at the beginning of the 21st century, the main contribution of postmodernity postulates to the features of Polish cities seems to be an inspiration to shift the resources toward the creation of the better quality of city facilities and living environment. In everyday reality, inhabitants are mostly interested in road and social infrastructure, housing policies or social welfare, etc., but in the society which is getting richer the admiration for shopping centers full of products is slowly being replaced by the reflection on the quality of goods and services or collective values. City users still enjoy motorways and emphasise the need to build the underground, but more and more often they already know that it is not enough. This is not the return to slogans of socializing workers from beginning of the 20th century, because nowadays the conditions of production and consumption have evolved, and expectations of businessmen regarding the business environment, the commercial real estate market or economic policies have also changed. There are new socio-cultural trends, which reach the society through free media, and The infringement of the right to information and communication can be defined as a threat to the freedom of a lifestyle choice. The awareness of the necessity to fulfill cultural needs significantly equalizes the aspirations to participate in achievements of technical progress (e.g. smart city) or results of democratized societies development (e.g. good governance). All of them complete city offers, which are the essence of urban consumption and the abundance of their

forms becomes a determinant of postmodernity¹¹. It is notable, however, that in the most distant historical context, it was always like that and in terms of their functions Polish cities only return to an appropriate place among territorial units.

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¹¹ S. Miles and M. Miles (2004: 171) even suggest that consumption is nowadays the opportunity for cities, which seem to be “a space where anything is possible and where anybody can aspire to anything”.

***Konsumpcja miejska w realiach świata ponowoczesnego.
Analiza zmian na tle struktury wcześniejszych wydatków miejskich***

Streszczenie

Głównym celem artykułu jest prezentacja zmian struktury wydatków miast, która ewoluuje wraz ze zmianami celów rozwojowych miast, będących odbiciem hierarchii potrzeb ich użytkowników. W tym kontekście konsumpcja miejska obrazuje zarówno trwałość głównych funkcji miejskich, wynikającą z niezmiennej od wieków roli miast w systemie osadniczym i gospodarczym, jak i koniunkturalność form zaspokajania niektórych potrzeb. Badania oparto na studiach porównawczych realiów życia miejskiego wyrażonych w udziale wybranych kategorii wydatków w budżetach opisywanych miast w okresie ponad 100 lat, co daje szansę na zaobserwowanie aktualnie promowanych ponowoczesnych cech konsumpcji miejskiej. Jej specyfika najczęściej postrzegana jest przez cechy pluralistycznego społeczeństwa konsumenckiego, którego relatywizm poglądów i nieustające dążenie do nowości czynią miasta miejscami nieustająco kształtującymi własne produkty. Koszty tych dążeń i przeobrażeń ponoszone są przez władze miejskie, znajdując swój zapis w budżetach miast.

Słowa kluczowe: konsumpcja miejska, ponowoczesność, rozwój miejski