

FORMATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE MARKETPLACE NETWORK WITHIN THE URBAN STRUCTURE OF VILNIUS

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Abstract. Marketplaces encompass much more than a commercial function – these spaces have always been essential parts of the fabric of urban structure and living. Today, they are taking on new roles as places of cultural attraction and social interaction. At the same time, marketplaces face challenges in their physical and functional restructuring, as well as in preserving their distinctive historical and cultural characteristics. The study analyses urban plans, historical literature, and the spatial aspects of Vilnius' marketplaces, as well as their social, economic and urban contexts. Based on ideas by Lynch, Sennett and Jacobs, marketplaces are interpreted as urban nodes – strategically important locations that contribute to urban viability, social cohesion and cultural identity. The study identifies the development and decline of marketplace network in the context of historical, political and economic shifts. The marketplace network within urban structure is analysed in different periods – historical, Soviet and contemporary Vilnius. The identified characteristics of Vilnius marketplaces allow for a comprehensive analysis of their transformations over time, encompassing different stages of development. A cyclical pattern of marketplaces can be observed in the city's structure, including initiation, growth, and peak, followed by a period of crisis or stagnation, after which marketplaces are either closed or undergo major changes. The study reveals the ability of markets to maintain their historical continuity and adapt to changing conditions. It emphasises the importance of urban continuity, where tradition becomes a basis for innovation. The significance of integration of markets into contemporary urban strategies, such as "15-minute city", is highlighted to develop a viable, inclusive and sustainable city. **Keywords:** development of marketplaces, urban nodes, 15-minute city, cultural identity, historical continuity

Introduction

In contemporary urban planning, cities are seen as multi-layered structures shaped not only by physical elements, but also social and economic relations [3; 6; 18; 24]. Throughout the development of urban planning, nodes with specific functional and symbolic value [1; 20; 13] have gained a certain role. Among such nodes are urban markets, historically developed spots of exchange, meeting and collective memory. Nowadays, they are seen not only as commercial spaces, but also factors of territorial resilience and social cohesion [3; 4; 17; 20].

Over time, functions, significance of markets within the city structure have changed depending on social, economic and political circumstances. Despite the growing interest in markets as urban public spaces [29], their urban development and functional transformations of the pre-industrial and industrial city of Lithuania have still been poorly researched. There is a lack of interdisciplinary analyses integrating urban morphology, social changes, and economic aspects to assess the role of markets as urban nodes in the city's long-term development.

The relevance of this research lies in contemporary trends of urban planning, such as 15-minute city concept, promoting the proximity of functions and decentralised urban structure [16]. In this context, marketplaces become potential multifunctional nodes, which can contribute to viability and sustainability of the city.

This article aims to investigate how markets functioned in the past as urban nodes in Vilnius and to evaluate the shift of their role within urban structure. The study employs historical, urban, and comparative analysis methods, examining urban plans, scientific literature, historical facts, and spatial data. In the first part, the theoretical framework is grounded in the urban structure models of Lynch (1960), Sennett (1990), and Jacobs (1961), allowing for the conceptualization of markets as urban nodes. The second part analyzes the development and transformation of the Vilnius marketplace network in the context of political and economic events, dividing into three main periods: the historical period (from the foundation of Vilnius to 1939, including the return of Vilnius

to Lithuania, corresponding largely to the pre-industrial stage of the city), the Soviet period (1940–1990, marked by Soviet industrialization), and the contemporary period (from 1990 onwards, marked by contemporary industrialization), based on urban plans from different periods. The third part presents the characteristics of Vilnius markets, summarizing key features such as their location within the urban structure, historical development, architectural characteristics, cultural value, and the organization of activities. According to architectural historian Marija Drėmaitė, following the work of Vaskela and Norkus, the main leap in Lithuanian industry occurred between 1918 and 1940, with a shift from extensive to intensive farming and the development of a modern agricultural industry [28, 150; 19].

I. Market as an urban node and a place saturated with cultural values: Theoretical background

Different development of pre-industrial and industrial towns does not allow them to be evaluated according to the same criteria, therefore the market development in these periods is analysed separately in the article. According to Kostof, the pre-industrial town was a relatively small formation (rarely exceeding 100,000 inhabitants), with unspecialised use of land, low social and physical mobility and society divided into elite and underclass. City centre usually is dominated by government institutions, religious buildings and elite residences [4, 304]. Whereas the rise of the industrial city was accompanied by fundamental changes of urban landscape: land became a source of income, property separated from its use, and assets became means of generating leasehold [4, 194]. Industrialisation in Lithuania began in the 1870s and 1880s; by 1939, with the outbreak of World War II, its scale had increased and become significant, and from 1944 onwards it shifted into socialist industrialisation [28].

The development of cities is most clearly revealed in urban plans, which show not only physical changes but also social and economic transformations. With this in mind, this article examines urban plans from different periods and the marketplace network reflected in them, assessing the

transformation of markets through urban, social, economic and political perspectives.

According to Lynch's approach (1960), markets are analysed as urban nodes – strategic locations of the city, where certain functions and physical elements are concentrated. Such nodes are formed, for example, at crossroads or enclosed squares. Sennett (1990) notices that in contemporary urban regions it has been increasingly meaningful to talk about nodes rather than centres or suburbs, reflecting the changing notion of urban structure and disappearance of linguistic system to describe the value of environment: "the centre is full of historical and visual meanings, while the node is deliberately neutral" [4, 268]. Considering the character of market operation, it can be stated that markets function as urban nodes, both in central and peripheral areas, where they contribute to the social cohesion and territorial resilience.

The layout of a market square is largely determined by the city's plan and street network, and in some cases, widened streets functioned as trading areas. Several factors influence the size and layout of a square: first, the city's economic capacity – in medieval towns, the main square often became the dominant commercial space due to its central location, associated with building density, land value, and accessibility; second, hierarchical status, determining whether it serves the entire city or only part of it; and third, specialization, where certain squares or streets focus on specific goods or services, forming a trade network. While shaping the physical structure of a square, these factors determine its role as a vibrant urban node, connecting community, social life, and the economy.

Such approach is in line with contemporary trends of urban planning, especially the 15-minute city concept. The term "15-minute city" (*la ville du quart d'heure*, in French) was suggested in 2016 by Moreno. He defined this concept as a new model of contemporary city, where a single centre has been replaced by several centres or nodes, equipped with all facilities necessary for modern life [16]. In contemporary 15-minute cities, marketplaces function as vibrant urban nodes, providing not only food and everyday goods but also fostering community interaction, social cohesion, and cultural activities. In this way, markets are integrated into the city's history and economic structure, contributing to local economic resilience and making the city more adaptable to social and economic changes.

Nodes also significantly contribute to urban viability, which is understood as an ability to remain and function over time [4, 437]. According to the Scottish Government (1998), town centre viability depends on the number of people visiting it at different times and in different places, while maintaining viability refers to the ability of the centre to attract investment for its maintenance, development and adaptation to changing needs [4, 442]. In industrial cities, viability becomes an issue for both, centres and district cores.

Nodes can become significant only when they accommodate certain clearly defined activities based on social or functional attraction [20, 20]. Starting with the mid-twenty century, urban planning has been dominated by solutions that impaired the relations among different parts of the city. Shopping areas have been separated from residential ones, suburbs planned as isolated housing areas, city centres have lost their residential function and become abandoned by night. It has been mistakenly assumed that repetition of identical urban units could allow for the formation of their interrelations, but all this has failed to ensure a coherent urban structure [20, 113].

Such functional segregation of urban parts has caused several major problems: firstly, it made the relations between

different functions economically costly; secondly, reduced opportunities for the development of network modules without any clear physical structure or specific location [20, 176]. Nodes failing to get integrated into a wider urban network can become parasitic – using urban infrastructure without contributing to its functional integrity. Therefore, as Jacobs (1961) and Lozano (1990) stated, it is necessary to strive for the spatial integration of other functions into the residential structures linking them as closely as possible to the residential environment [20, 108].

Marketplaces reflect the social lifestyle of their community, embody social and cultural values and contribute to the formation of cultural identity [5]. Combining traditions inherited from the past with contemporary urban and rural practices, their activities should be considered a form of intangible cultural heritage [30]. But due to urban development and loss of traditional functions, marketplaces have been losing their character, identity and significance as bearers of intangible heritage, which used to convey local residents' traditional behaviour and lifestyles. It is therefore important to preserve their regional and ethnic identity [26, 119].

Formed back in the Middle Ages, historical nuclei of contemporary cities are extremely important as monuments of material and spiritual culture of European nations [23, 140]. Historical marketplaces stand out by their strong *genius loci* based on unique local identity, which is shaped not only by the physical structure, but also historical, cultural and social experiences. Historical significance provides a place with the semantic depth thus consolidating its uniqueness in the urban fabric. The *genius loci* characteristic to a marketplace is essential for the discourse of urban regeneration and cultural preservation, because it is a core component in users' experience – for tradespeople, local community and tourists alike [29, 3]. The *genius loci* may decline, however, with the loss of heritage and its associated identity. Even small changes in the marketplace buildings or environment may essentially change its character, turning it into a replica of markets of different geographical regions and weakening its sense of local belonging. The *genius loci* of traditional markets consists of historical background, cultural diversity, sensory experiences and live interactions in community spaces. It is a place that exists not only on the physical level, but also via strong emotional and cultural connections [26, 121]. Market activities in squares gradually evolved into covered marketplaces, reflecting new social and economic needs. The first of these emerged in the 19th century, and by the early 20th century, some open markets were turned into trading complexes with permanent structures. These changes illustrate how marketplaces adapted to social, economic, and 20th-century cultural needs, while retaining their vitality, community functions, and integration into the urban network. Therefore, historic marketplaces should be seen not only as heritage sites, but also as living urban nodes, where urban identity, cultural continuity and needs of contemporary life are intertwined – their conservation and sustainable integration into the urban fabric becomes an essential condition for sustainable and viable urban development.

II. Development of Vilnius city markets

This chapter examines the development and transformations of Vilnius markets in the urban structure from the earliest historical periods up to the present day. The first section analyses the development of markets in the historical period (up to 1939) in the context of political and economic events. In the second section, by applying diagrams of selected periods

(the 2nd half of the 15th century, 16th century, 1859, 1906, 1942 and 1993), it is revealed how the location of markets and their incorporation into the urban structure have changed. Plans have been selected according to the historically significant urban turning-points and dating of available cartographic sources. They mark the important milestones in the transformation process of urban fabric:

- 2nd half of the 15th c. – formation of the main squares and first marketplaces in Vilnius;
- 16th c. – construction of the defence wall with gates; marketplaces located in the core of the city and its entrance points;
- 1859 – deconstruction of the defence walls and the extension of marketplace network to the peripheral districts;
- 1906 – decentralisation of markets, modernisation of the entire urban spatial structure;
- 1942 – outset of the soviet industrialisation; incorporation of suburbs, significant social and economic changes;
- 1993 – shift to the neo-liberal market economy; new functions of markets and their new relation with the urban structure; restoration of Lithuanian independence.

The third section analyses the situation of markets in contemporary urban structure of Vilnius, as for 2024; continuity, transformations and viability of Vilnius markets are evaluated in the present urban environment.

1. Development of marketplace network in the context of political and economic events until 1939

Establishment and closure of Vilnius historical marketplaces are closely connected to important political and economic changes in the city (Fig. 1).

Emergence and flourishing of markets (1430–1600)

In 1430–1500, important city formation processes took place in Vilnius. After the Magdeburg Law was granted in 1387, the development of Vilnius self-governance, trade regulation system and network of crafts started. Only the citizens of Magdeburg towns were considered to be townspeople; not all towns that received privileges of markets and fairs had Magdeburg rights [22, 128; 14]. This created conditions for more intense economic life and growth of urban lifestyles.

The first known market (without any official name) emerged in the Town Hall Square in 1432. The square became the main trading place for townspeople, where mundane economic life was concentrated. In 1797, the governance of the Russian Empire established a special Supervisory Commission to control the social and economic life in Vilnius. It initiated the relocation of main markets from the central parts to the peripheral city districts [2, 44]. The Town Hall market was removed in 1845, when the czarist city authorities decided to establish a theatre in the town hall [2, 45]. Nowadays, the square has a representative function as a cultural and public space in the city.

The period 1531–1600 represents the peak of the first cycle, during which early markets grew into a developed urban marketplace network. This period is distinguished for the active trade development and growth of marketplace network in Vilnius. Back then, the first specialised trade locations outside the central city square began to emerge. While Vilnius was the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL), its economic ties with Hanseatic cities intensified, production and consumption of agricultural products increased. Among the newly established markets were Fish market (near St. Paraskeva Orthodox Church), where fish was sold, Užupis Market, which, as depicted in the 1889 picture by V. Slendzinskis, was a poor space for trade mostly in firewood, switches and brooms [7, 358], and Cattle Market. Emergence of these markets shows that trade in the city was becoming increasingly specialised, with different goods being sold in separate, especially designated places. This indicates the growing scale of trade and increasingly complex economic structure of the city. In the early 19th century, these markets were gradually closed: in 1802, as the Russian Emperor Alexander I was about to visit Vilnius, the city authorities began to clean up the city centre. By the decision of the Supervisory Commission, the Fish Market was moved from its former location near St. Paraskeva Church to the suburb of Užupis [2, 45]. In 1810, the Užupis and Cattle Markets were closed as well – due to the changing economic system and organization of trade in the city. Today, public cultural spaces have been formed in these locations: a square near St. Paraskeva Church, occasionally hosting craft fairs, on the site of the Fish Market; Užupis Square with famous Angel's

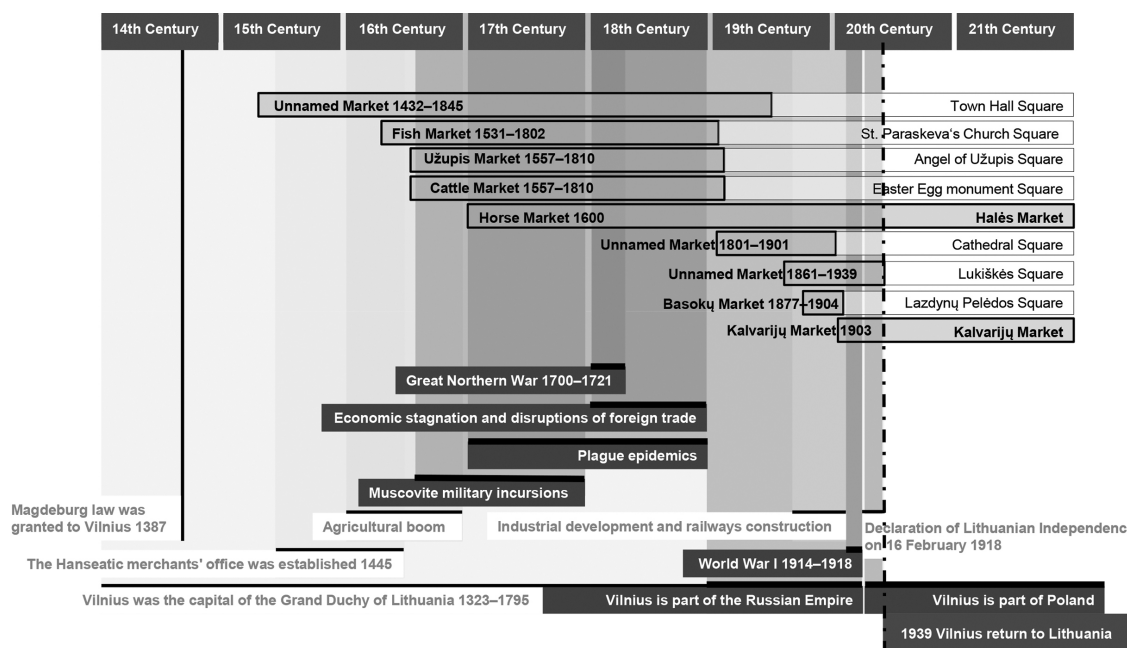


Fig. 1. Development of historical marketplaces in Vilnius in the context of political and economic events, from the foundation of the city to 1939 [created by the author]

sculpture in place of Užupis Market, and a representative square with the Easter Egg monument on the former site of the Cattle Market.

Period of Stagnation (1600 – 1800)

The period 1600–1800 marks the crisis and stagnation phase of the cycle, when political and demographic upheavals slowed the city's economic activity.

1600-1700 was distinguished by significant political and economic challenges. In the 17th century, Vilnius was devastated by invasions by the Muscovite armies and plague epidemics, which led to significant decline of population and weakening economic life. However, around 1600, the commercial infrastructure of the city expanded, with emergence of the Horse Market on the site, where the Halės Market stands today. Some sources indicate that a royal edict at the time authorised the establishment of a flea market in the Arklių Street, close to the city wall, at the turn near the Round Tower. The Arklių Street is mentioned in the documents as early as of 1556 and 1596 [2, 43]. Establishment of this market indicates the continuity of the network of specialised markets even in difficult historical circumstances. It is possible that after 1819, when the trade in other goods (including grain) was officially permitted there, the Horse Market was renamed to the Grain Market [2, 52]. In the blueprint of 1890, the square and nearby Bazilijonų Street were still referred to as the Horse Market Square, but from the 1890s, the name was finally replaced by the Grain (Bread) Square or market. [2, 52]. In the blueprints of the period of German occupation, as well as on postcards published abundantly at the time, the name "Halės" was found often: "Markthalle", "Markthallen", "Marktplatz". Whereas in the interwar period, the same name in Polish "Hale targowe" (Halės Market) was used, and it has remained up to this day [2, 54]. As indicated by the annals, this marketplace in official documents and press around 1960 was called the "Central Marketplace of Vilnius" rather than "Halės Market" [2, 137]. The former Horse Market is one of the few historical markets still in existence today and testifies the viability of the city's commercial traditions.

The beginning of the 18th century was marked by calamities, such as the Great Northern War (1700-1721), frequent plague epidemics, economic stagnation and disruptions of foreign trade. These crises had a deep impact on the life and economic development of the city. Nevertheless, the former markets continued to operate. Although no new markets emerged during this century, the continuous functioning of the existent ones shows a certain stability of trade structure of the city and its population's efforts to maintain trade connections even in difficult conditions.

Period of transformations and marketplace network formation (1801–1939)

During this period, a new cycle begins – a phase of concentration and major transformation of the city's commercial spaces, when marketplaces were relocated, consolidated, or replaced by modern public spaces.

In 1801-1900, as Vilnius became a part of the Russian Empire, the city underwent intense urban changes: industries grew, railways were built, new city districts developed.

During this period, 3 new marketplaces emerged. In 1801, after the demolition of the Lower Castle, an unnamed market near the Cathedral was founded; in 1861, another market was established in the suburb of Lukiškės; and in 1877, Basokų Market was founded on the site of the demolished Barefoot Carmelite convent. Emergence of these markets indicates the importance of growing outskirts and their adaptation to the

new economic and infrastructural conditions.

Today, these former marketplaces have been transformed into public spaces: a representative square near the Cathedral with the restored Grand Dukes' Palace; the Lukiškių Square replaced the former Lukiškių Market; and the Lazdynų Pelėdos Square formed on the site of the Basokų Market.

Nevertheless, during this period, many former markets were closed, such as, Town Hall Square, Užupio, Žuvies galo (Fish) and Cattle markets. This marks a significant transformation of urban commercial spaces and decline of the former market structure.

Between 1901 and 1939, Vilnius underwent several political changes. Until August 1915, it was part of the Russian Empire. During World War I, German forces occupied the city (August 1915 – December 1918). In December 1918, Lithuania declared independence, but Vilnius was taken by Polish forces in 1920 and remained part of Poland until 1939. These events made Vilnius a focal point of political tensions and shaped its urban and social development. During this period, the city's commercial infrastructure changed significantly, and many markets established in the 19th century were gradually closed [19].

This period saw the emergence of one of the largest still operating markets in Vilnius – Kalvarijų Market. Its operation started in 1903, before World War I. This was the first open marketplace of such scale in the Northern part of the city, founded to meet the needs of growing industries and suburban population. The market was famous for its large range of necessity goods and foodstuffs. Each year, on St. Casimir's Day, horses were traded in this market and purchased by the Polish army [9].

As mentioned above, all markets established in the 19th century were closed after losing their significance: in 1901, St. George Market was moved from the Cathedral Square to the Lukiškių Square [7, 128]; Basokų Market was moved to the former Grain Market place, situated a few hundred metres away; and, finally, on 6 February 1904, the market was closed, by the decision of the city governance [2, 51]. Lukiškės Market was operated until 1939. These changes were related to the concentration of the commercial centre in Lukiškės, where the market had secured its position as the main market in the city by the beginning of the 20th century.

In summary, it could be stated that positioning, specialisation and scale of Vilnius marketplaces had changed in line with the political breaking points, needs of the population and growth of the city: from market squares in the centre to the specialised markets on the outskirts. A cyclical model of marketplace development can be seen, including initiation, growth, and peak, followed by a period of crisis or stagnation, after which most marketplaces were closed or reorganized, leaving only Hales and Kalvarijos as the main markets after 1939. Most of the former markets eventually disappeared and were replaced by public spaces, but the remaining historical markets, such as Halės and Kalvarijų, testify the continuity of the commercial traditions of the city.

2. Marketplace network in the urban structure until 1939

Four phases in development of the historical town plan and the related changes of markets can be distinguished: the 2nd half of the 15th century, 16th century, mid 19th century (1859) and beginning of the 20th century (1906). The chronology of market emergence in Vilnius from the 15th to the early 20th century, along with their locations in the city, is shown in Figures 2 and 3. Markets are presented according to their status: those that emerged, were operating at the time



Fig. 2. Changes in historical markets in Vilnius in the urban structure, 15th–16th centuries [created by the author]

or have disappeared. This visualisation allows us to observe how the distribution and concentration of marketplaces have changed alongside the city growth and the transformation of its functional areas (Fig. 2).

By the end of the 15th century, the present Town Hall Square contained a market operating as an important commercial centre, in the very heart of Vilnius, near the main roads leading to Trakai, Polotsk and Medininkai [11, 44]. The city centre developed around this square, and these roads later became its main streets [11, 66]. According to Valionienė, who has studied the spatial structure of Vilnius, in 1390, the city had three centres: the Lower Castle and two nuclei – one covering the so-called Teutonic City and the other – so-called Ruthenian City with the surrounding areas. A process of spatial integration started in the Old Town, which continued throughout the entire 15th century, but did not bring any major reconstructions of the urban space. The marketplace became a centre connecting these two nuclei [12, 26]. By applying a complex approach to activities carried out in this district, its purpose can be identified: in modern terms, it could be described as the town's business management centre, or some kind of "a valley" that separated the residential districts [25, 168]. The marketplace in the present-day Town Hall Square, probably dating back to the 15th century, became a key element linking the entire city structure [25, 193]. The market didn't have any official name, but in some annals it is referred to as "imbarai" [2, 41]. This marketplace in Vilnius was for the first time mentioned in written annals as early as 1432 [25, 168]. Some scholars believe that the earliest market probably was located in the area of St. Johns' Church, where important roads from Ukmergė, Minsk, Polotsk, Vitebsk and Trakai crossed. Later, as the "Ruthenian" and "Teutonic" towns developed, the main market was moved to the Town Hall Square [2, 41].

The urban changes in the 16th century testify the growth and functional differentiation of the city. After Vilnius was surrounded by a defence wall in 1503–1522 [28], intensive construction began in the city core [11]. Urban development took place spontaneously, without following any predetermined plan or structures established already in the neighbouring Western countries [22, 40]. Specialised commercial zones began to emerge at the city gates and inside the wall. Such new marketplaces show not only territorial expansion, but also the differentiation of goods, as different kinds of goods were sold at different places. As

most notable 16th-century marketplaces can be named the Fish market, formed between the Town Hall Square and road to the castle, near St. Paraskeva Church, where the street naturally widened [11, 66]; Firewood Market (on the site of the present-day Halės Market), which was a specially-planned square of 104 fathoms in length and 66 in width [15, 23] (Pylimo Street was also wider on this spot, and it is a typical example of natural formation of commercial space, as is the case with the Didžioji Street running into the Town Hall Square [2, 44]); and Cattle Market, located in the suburb of Rūdninkai, outside the city wall [27, 8]. According to Lovmianska, it was a system of separate markets located along the main axis of the city – Pilies, Didžioji and Arklių streets. The system consisted of a Fish market near St. Paraskeva's Church, large market at the Town Hall, horse market (outside the city wall, close to the Round Tower) and small flea market nearby [25, 102]. Užupis market was located on two important roads leading to Antakalnis (via Marytė Margytė Street) and Lyglaukiai and Belmontas (via Polocko Street) [7, 358]. All markets were located on the main entrance roads to the city.

In the mid 19th century, Vilnius underwent rapid changes. In 1800–1805, most of its defence walls were demolished [28]. In late 19th century, under the influence of capitalism development, the growth of the city intensified even more [15, 27]. Marketplaces moved to periphery with some former ones disappearing for good and being replaced by public spaces. As one of the most important 19th century markets could be named the Cathedral Square Market, which emerged after the demolition of the Grand Dukes' Palace in 1799–1801. The square was paved over and became a trading place. By the end of the 18th century, St. George's Day fairs were held there [7, 128]. Lukiškės Market emerged in the middle of the 19th century as a part of the planned Lukiškės suburb. The Firewood and Hay squares were formed (124 x 79 fathoms), which were even and comfortable marketplaces [15, 23]. The marketplace arranged between the present Pamėnkalnis (also called the Tauras Hill) and Church of Saints Philip and James became the largest trading place in Vilnius [10, 8]. In 1861, the markets of firewood, hay, horses, grain and vegetables were functioning there [15, 27]. Basokų Market was situated on the site of the former Barefoot Carmelite Convent, on the northern side of the Lazdynų Pelėdos (former All Saints) Street, between Biržų and Arklių Streets [7, 208].

By the end of the 19th century, several historical marketplaces – Fish market, Cattle Market and Užupis Market – disappeared.



Fig. 3. Changes in historical markets in Vilnius in the urban structure, 19th–20th centuries [created by the author]

This indicates changes in the structure of the city centre and relocation of commerce in the newly developed districts.

At the beginning of the 20th century, in response to the new urban planning principles, hygiene requirements and increasing traffic, trade began to retreat from the Old Town centre. Most of the historical markets disappeared, with the exception only of the Halės Market. These changes reflect not only the relocation of commercial centre, but also modernisation of the entire spatial structure of the city. Vilnius began expanding into the suburbs, including Šnipiškės, which was connected to the city centre by two important streets going from the Žaliasis Tiltas, one leading to Ukmergė and the other to Verkių [7, 376]. Kalvarijų Market became an important commercial centre. It was formed in the area of Kalvarijų, H. Manto, Rinktinės and Turgaus streets. The exact date of its operation outset is unknown, but the market was explicitly mentioned in 1903, when arrangement of the market square started and the blueprint for a permanent structure was approved. In the interwar period, Kalvarijų Market became an important trading place, and during the Soviet times, when most of the trade was state-owned, it was a collective-farm market, selling agricultural goods from both collective and individual farms [2, 137; 8].

3. Marketplace network in the Soviet urban structure

Urban transformations of Vilnius and, specifically, the transformation of marketplace network, in the Soviet times are illustrated by the data presented in urban plans of 1942 and 1993, as shown in Fig. 4.

By the mid 20th century, the network of Vilnius markets was still quite concentrated in the historical part of the city, as seen in the 1942 plan. Two historical marketplaces have remained: Kalvarijų Market, operated since 1903, and Halės Market, founded around 1600. At that time, the location of markets was not influenced Soviet urban planning processes or the formation of residential neighbourhoods (microrayons).

The town plan of the late 20th century clearly shows a rearranged network of markets, with emerging new layout pattern. Markets were formed in the centres of newly developed residential neighbourhoods (microrayons), such as Justiniškės, Šeškinė, Karoliniškės, Lazdynai, Naujininkai, Baltupiai, while the Gariūnai market grew into one of the most important regional shopping centres. This marks a clear shift from a centralised to decentralised, locally accessible trading system. Markets have become an integral

part of the infrastructure of residential neighbourhoods (microrayons), reflecting both the urban and socio-economic change of the city.

In summary, it can be stated that changing location of marketplaces in Vilnius, from the 15th to the early 20th century, reflects the transformations of the city plan – starting with the trade concentrated at the historical core of Vilnius, near the town hall, to the gradual spread outside the town wall, to suburbs and, finally, into the residential neighbourhoods (microrayons). Comparison of the 1942 and 1993 plans reveals a structural turning point in the organization of the city's markets: a transition from historical concentration in the centre to a dispersed, district-oriented system. This change has been urban, as well as social: markets have become part of everyday life in residential districts, adapted to the residents' needs and associated with the planned vision of soviet lifestyle.

4. Situation of markets and their network in the contemporary urban structure of Vilnius

Currently, the distribution of markets across the main structural zones of Vilnius – the Old Town, and the central, middle, and peripheral parts [21] is shown in Figure 5.

The Old Town is a historical core, where the main marketplaces have been concentrated since ancient times. It still has the highest density of markets pointing to the origins and continuity of commercial life in the city.

Central area including the territories around the Old Town stands out by a dense network of markets dating back to the turn of the 19th- the beginning of the 20th century. Most of them have been developed strategically to satisfy the needs of rapidly growing population.

Middle area covers the urbanised parts of the city away from the centre, but still containing a dense network of residential districts and comfortable transportation. The marketplaces of this area are orientated to the daily needs of local population. The peripheral area includes both the middle zone and suburb areas. Although the density of markets is lower there, certain marketplaces stand out by targeting specific consumer groups or regional demand.

Contemporary marketplace network reflects the decentralisation of trade and development of small businesses. The largest markets currently operating in Lithuania are Gariūnai Market, which brings together over 10,000 small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, and the

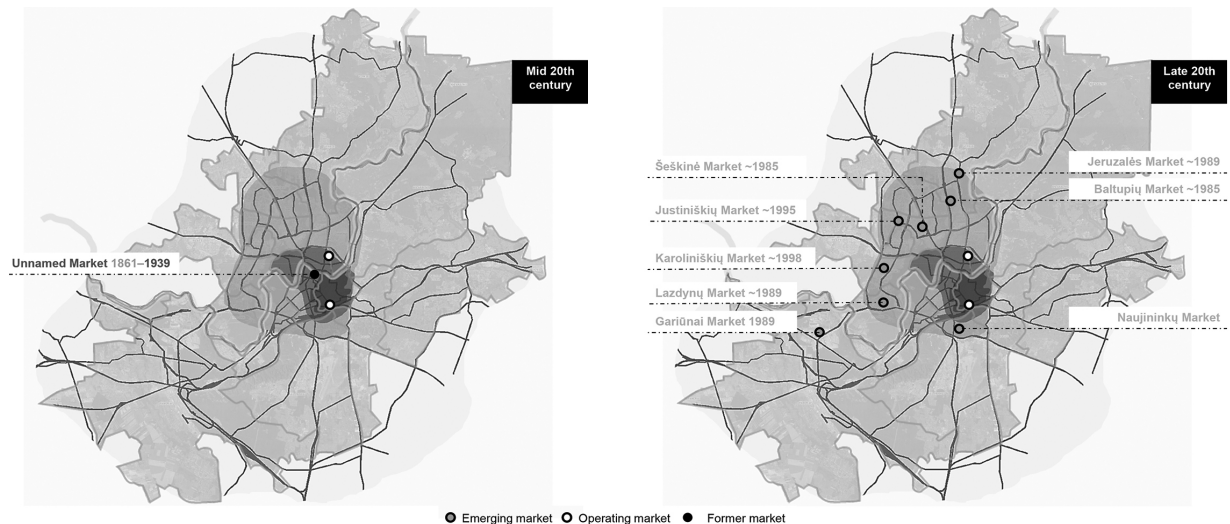


Fig. 4. Changes in the Vilnius market network in the Soviet period
 [created by the author]

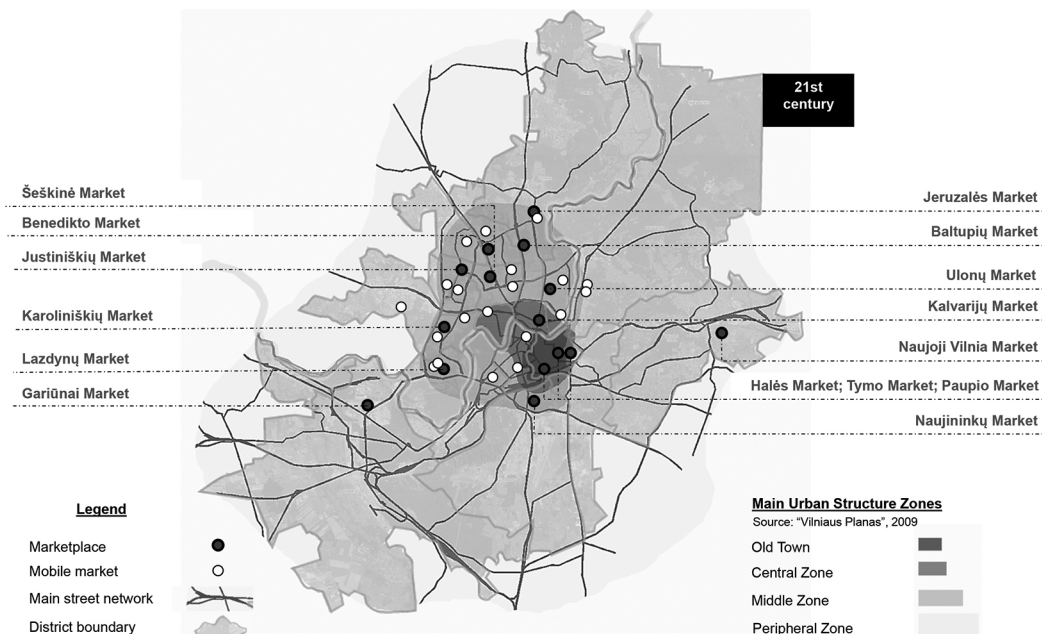


Fig. 5. Situation of the Marketplace Network in Vilnius, 2024
 [created by the author]

historical Kalvarijų and Halės Markets, which are important shopping places in Vilnius [28]. Mobile markets are mainly located in the central and peripheral structural areas, in response to the population's need for quick, convenient and local access to fresh produce.

In summary, it can be stated that the contemporary network of marketplaces reflects the decentralisation of commerce and growth of local businesses, with Gariūnų, Kalvarijų and Halės Markets still remaining the main shopping destinations. In conclusion, the development of Vilnius marketplaces reflects the city's economic expansions and recessions, political upheavals, and urban transformations. In prosperity periods, the number of markets increases, they tend to specialise and spread outside the city centre. During crises, wars or epidemics, commercial activity slows down or changes. Each market becomes a mirror of the society and economy, reflected in the urban fabric of a particular historical period. The network of markets developed over the centuries reflects the growth of Vilnius, complexity and spatial transformation of its commercial structure, from a centralised model in the Town Hall Square to specialised markets on the outskirts of

the city. The post-war and Soviet times saw the centralisation of markets, while the period of independence has witnessed the decentralisation and recovery of small businesses. Nowadays, traditional markets are concentrated in the Old Town as well as in the central and middle zones, while mobile markets are mainly found in the central and middle zones. In the middle zone (for example, in Fabijoniškės, Justiniškės, Pilaičė, Naujoji Vilnia, Paneriai) mobile forms of trade predominate. Thus, the contemporary network of Vilnius markets reflects the historical continuity and adaptation to the contemporary urban structure and needs of the population.

III. Characteristics of Vilnius city markets

This chapter is based on the analysis of former and currently operating markets in Vilnius. Five main categories of features (location within the urban structure, historical development, architectural characteristics, cultural significance, and organization of activities) along with their respective criteria, have been identified. These aspects allow for a comprehensive analysis of market transformation from the 15th century to the present day, revealing their links to urban development,

social dynamics and economic changes.

The first section is dedicated to concise description of categories of features and applied criteria, while the second and third sections analyse marketplaces and their characteristics in different historical periods: historical, Soviet, and contemporary.

1. Main features and categories

The position within the urban structure is characterised by the neighbourhood, the structural area of the city, and the name and classification of the adjacent street. Urban neighbourhood indicates, in which urban district or unit of Vilnius a given market is located, based on data from the official interactive map administered by Vilnius City Municipality. A given market is assigned to one of the five main city areas (the historic core, historic suburbs, central, middle and peripheral area) by the structural area of the city and according to the data provided by the municipal enterprise Vilniaus vystymo kompanija (VVK). The name and category of the adjacent street helps to determine the proximity of the market to the main streets and their importance in the city's transport system.

Features of historical development cover the territory formation process of a given market and period of its operation. Five main aspects are assessed: 1) the outset of formation of a village, suburb or district, which indicates the age or period, when the territory was formed; 2) maintenance of the original urban structure and built environment, indicating whether the historical layout of the area was preserved prior to the market's establishment; 3) the outset of new urban structure and development defining the period, when the renovation or development of the territory was initiated, if any; 4) the year of foundation of a market, which refers to the date (exact or approximate), when the operation of the market started; 5) the year of closure indicating the date, when operation of the market was terminated (if it is no longer operational).

While defining the architectural attributes of marketplaces, it is important to find out, whether a given market has its own space and infrastructure, and if not, what infrastructure it has been using. It is defined what type of space the market operates in, and whether the marketplace contains a permanent building or uses temporary structures. Architectural attributes are used to define the physical environment of a given marketplace, based on five main criteria: 1) operation of marketplace in its own independent space and infrastructure, 2) the owner of the space, if the marketplace uses the infrastructure of another facility, 3) the type of commercial space (street, square, building, etc.), 4) the type of structure of the marketplace (permanent or temporary), and 5) the year of construction of the building, if any.

Features of the cultural significance include the recognition of a given marketplace in the context of culture and tourism. Two main aspects are identified: 1) data from the Registry of Cultural Property showing whether the marketplace and/or its territory is included into the Registry as a protected cultural item; 2) its presence on the official list of tourist attractions "Go Vilnius", which indicates whether the marketplace is presented as a recommended site for tourists. It is noteworthy that only a small number of marketplaces are included in the Registry of Cultural Property: out of 42 marketplaces, four are listed solely as sites, while only one—Halės Market—is included both as a building and as a site.

Features of the organisation of activities encompass the characteristics of commercial operations and distinguish four main aspects. 1) The type of activity indicates whether a given marketplace is permanent or mobile. 2) The functional type

defines the character of the activity – whether a market sells a variety of goods, such as farmers' produce or foodstuff, or functions primarily as a catering venue. 3) Opening hours indicate whether a market operates daily or only on specific days of the week. 4) Finally, the administrator specifies who is responsible for organising the markets operations.

2. Features of markets established until 1939

This section covers the historical period, from the foundation of Vilnius to 1939. Historical markets of Vilnius are closely connected to the urban, architectural and social development of the city. According to their location in the urban structure, the markets operated before 1939 mostly were situated in the Old Town and its historical suburbs – Užupis, Rūdninkai, the outskirts the New Town and Šnipiškės. They are identified as the historical core and historical suburbs, while the Kalvarijų Market is associated with the central structural area. Most of the markets were located along the main transport arteries – Polotsk, Kalvarijų, V. Šopeno, Pylimo, Arklių and other streets, and it indicates their strategic position in the city's transport network. Two unnamed markets and the so-called Fish market were operated in the historical core and the Halės Market – on the outskirts. The historical suburbs hosted the Užupis, Cattle, Kalvarijų markets and one more unnamed market. Out of these, the Halės Market (on the outskirts of the Old Town) and the Kalvarijų Market (now part of the central structural area) are still in operation.

Historical development shows that markets usually were situated near the main streets and infrastructure nodes. Their origins mostly date back to the 15th – 19th centuries, with many areas retaining their original urban structure (e.g. the Halės Market built in 1906). Many of them were founded in the 18th – 19th centuries, at the time of intensification of urban trade. Foundation and closure dates of markets stand in proof of their long-term existence – some markets, such as Halės, are still functioning, while others were closed in the interwar or Soviet period. According to transformation of architectural features, most markets were in possession of their own space and infrastructure, with trading taking place in squares, streets and specialised buildings. Halės, Basokų and Kalvarijų Markets were situated in marketplace buildings constructed in the 19th c. – the early 20th c. Whereas some other markets had no buildings of their own. Of the eleven marketplaces that operated until 1939, only Halės Market is listed in the Registry of Cultural Property, both as a building and as a site. Halės Market is also mentioned on the "Go Vilnius" tourism portal [8].

This indicates not only commercial, but also cultural significance of this market. Specialisation of historical markets closely correlated with their location. Many of them functioned as permanent trading spots specialising according to types of goods: fish, cattle, timber, brooms, broomsticks, horses, leather items, etc. Markets of mixed specialisation mostly were situated in the centre, near main crossroads and functioned as main shopping centres with wide variety of goods and intense flows of visitors. Markets situated further away from the centre (e.g. Basokų Market) tended to serve specific neighbourhoods or districts. Moderately specialised markets were located at the city gates. Over time, the functions of many markets expanded from specialised to mixed trade.

Historical markets have retained their architectural identity reflecting different stages of Vilnius urban development – from the Middle Ages to early 20th century. They functioned as important centres of city life, bringing together the residents, merchants and craftsmen.

3. Features of markets established during the Soviet period

The Soviet period in Vilnius marked a significant transformation of the city's urban and economic structure, which affected the marketplace network. Most historical markets were closed before the start of Soviet period, and the establishment of new trading places was centralized and state-regulated.

Most of the markets established during the Soviet period were located in the centre of residential neighborhoods and were well connected to the transport infrastructure. Their location were planned according to Soviet urban planning principles. They had no historical or cultural connection to the Old Town markets, but functionally met the needs of residents: they ensured accessible supply of goods in the new districts and served as local community trading centers.

Architectural solutions varied: some markets had marketplaces buildings, while others operated as open squares. Due to the centralized nature of the economy, market specialization was limited, usually focused on supplying basic goods (food, clothing, household items).

Markets from the Soviet period laid the foundation for the contemporary marketplace network. Later, during the independence period, they either transformed into place for mobile markets serving residential neighborhoods or were integrated into newly built contemporary market complexes. This period reflects urban development and adaptation to the conditions of the planned economy, although the markets were much less notable in terms of cultural or historical value.

4. Features of markets operating today

Markets that emerged after 1939—mainly during the Soviet period and the following decades—developed in response to changes in the urban structure, the growing needs of citizens, and the modernisation of the commercial system. Unlike the historical markets, these have no organic links to the city's historical development or cultural heritage, but are functionally adapted to the growing neighbourhoods, often afar from historical core. Architectural solutions for markets are varied: some, such as Tymo Market (established in 2006) and Paupio Market (2020), have their own buildings. They function in the central urban structure zones and are included in the Registry of Cultural Property as sites. Whereas many other markets – especially mobile farmers' markets - operate on shopping malls' sites, streets, squares or parking lots, with neither permanent structures nor engineering infrastructure. The middle urban structure zone is dominated by markets such as Šeškinės, Benedikto, Justiniškių, Karoliniškių, Lazdynų, Jeruzalės, Baltupių, Ulonų and Naujininkų, which were established between ~1985 and 2021. Some of them (e.g. Benedikto Market) are distinguished by expressive architecture and permanent structures, while others (e.g. Justiniškių, Lazdynų, Karoliniškių) are located on the parking lots of supermarkets (Maxima, Rimi, etc.) and therefore tend to be temporary or mobile. In peripheral areas (e.g. Naujoji Vilnia, Gariūnai), there are Naujosios Vilnios Market (2011) and Gariūnų Market (1989). The latter is distinguished by its size and significance, having become an informal economic centre operating as a multifunctional retail park.

Features of historical development show that most markets were established in transformed or newly urbanised areas, where no former urban structures remain. As a result, they are mostly unrelated to the urban historical heritage and only rarely included in the Registry of Cultural Property or official tourist routes. Mobile farmers' markets have become popular in Vilnius since 2000, as a flexible, temporary form of commerce supplying local production. They have been

operating in many neighbourhoods: Fabijoniškės, Justiniškės, Pilaite, Žirmūnai, Šeškinė, Lazdynai, Karoliniškės, Naujininkai, etc. Most of them are managed by the organisation Lietuviško ūkio kokybė, and trading takes place from one to several days per week. These small markets don't have a permanent infrastructure, but due to their location close to residential areas and shopping centres are easily accessible to local residents.

In summary, Vilnius marketplaces reflect the different stages of its historical and urban development - from the old markets at the historical core to modern mobile forms of trade. Two historical markets, Halės and Kalvarijų, have remained to the present day and are important for the Vilnius identity and cultural heritage. Whereas industrial-period markets that emerged after 1939 (mainly in the Soviet period and following decades) mark the functional spread of the city to its new districts. Although these markets usually don't have any historical or cultural value, their importance lies in ability to adapt to the needs of contemporary Vilnius residents. They reflect the dynamics of the city, are important for the local economy, food supply and social cohesion, and offer an alternative to standardised commercial centres, while maintaining a culture of contact, informal trade. The popularity of mobile farmers' markets after 2000 marks another step in the development of urban commerce: they are adaptable, mobile, focused on local, seasonal agricultural production. Such markets tend to be located in the middle or peripheral areas of the city, complementing to the network of permanent markets and responding to emerging needs.

Conclusions

Development of Vilnius marketplaces reveals that these spaces have always been essential parts of urban structure and fabric of life. They have satisfied the economic needs, formed social connections, strengthened cultural identity and retained historical tradition and memory. Markets have shaped the living history of the city from the times of the GDL to the present day, and the analysis confirms that they function as urban nodes having a significant impact on viability and identity of the city.

Based on Lynch's concept of nodes, markets are places, where vectors intersect and significant functions are concentrated, making them landmarks in the urban fabric. According to Sennett's theory, it is these nodes, rather than traditional centres, that reflect the dynamics of the modern city and the social interactions of its citizens, particularly through commerce and public life. Markets, functioning as nodes, maintain the functional viability of the city and connect different social strata, cultural practices and historical memory. Therefore, their role is important not only in urban, but also social and cultural aspects.

The network of Vilnius markets has developed dynamically – the locations, functions and structural integration into the urban fabric have changed. These changes were directly linked to political, economic and urban transformations. Each period reflects a different stage of the city transformation - from the localised markets in the Old Town to decentralised network in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

Emergence, disappearance or transformation of marketplaces have been closely connected to broader changes in the city: demolition of the defensive wall, industrialisation, principles of Soviet urbanism and transition to the neo-liberal market economy. This makes markets a reliable indicator of urban socio-economic transformation.

In the contemporary structure of Vilnius, markets often lose

their original functions, while taking on new roles: becoming cultural spaces, gastronomic attractions and places of social interaction. Their viability depends on their ability to adapt to changing urban lifestyles, and their transformation – on their ability to combine tradition and innovation.

Two remaining historical marketplaces – Halės and Kalvarijų – are of particular importance. They are not just architectural or functional relics, but rather urban symbols of the city's ability to maintain its historical continuity. As an indicator of urban viability and resilience, Halės Market reflects the transition of Vilnius from the GDL's capital into a modern European city. Historical challenges – wars, epidemics, industrialisation – didn't destroy the market, but encouraged its adaptation. Both, Halės and Kalvarijų Markets still function as living centres of historical memory.

Marketplaces should be seen not only as commercial facilities, but also important elements of local identity, public relations and coherent urban structure. Their integration into urban planning is in line with such contemporary trends as the "15-minute city" concept. Even upon changing consumption patterns and forms of trade, markets remain potential community hubs that promote social cohesion, micro-economic activity and cultural viability. Their purposeful incorporation into contemporary urban plans means not only functional, but also memory-retaining city, which maintains its human scale and historical coherence.

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Kopsavilkums

Pētījumā analizēti Viļņas pilsētas plāni, vēsturiskā literatūra un tirgus laukumu telpiskie aspekti, kā arī to sociālais, ekonomiskais un pilsēt būvnieciskais konteksts. Balstoties uz Kevina Linča (Lynch), Ričarda Seneta (Sennett) un Džeinas Džeikobsas (Jacobs) idejām, tirgus laukumi tiek interpretēti kā pilsētvides mezgļpunktī – stratēģiski nozīmīgas vietas, kas veicina pilsētas dzīvotspēju, sociālo kohēziju un kultūras identitāti. Pētījumā identificēta tirgus laukumu tīkla attīstība un lejupslīde vēsturisko, politisko un ekonomisko pārmaiņu kontekstā. Tirgus laukumu tīkls pilsētas struktūrā analizēts dažādos Viļņas attīstības periodos: vēsturiskajā, padomju un mūsdienu periodā. Identificētās Viļņas tirgus laukumu raksturiezīmes ļauj visaptveroši analizēt to transformācijas laika gaitā, aptverot dažādas attīstības posmus. Pilsētas struktūrā ir novērojams tirgus laukumu attīstības cikliskums, kas ietver to izveidošanos, izaugsmi un uzplaukumu, kam seko krīzes vai stagnācijas periods, pēc kura tirgus laukumi tiek slēgti vai piedzīvo būtiskas pārmaiņas. Pētījums atklāj tirgus spēju saglabāt vēsturisko pēctecību un vienlaikus pielāgoties mainīgajiem apstākļiem. Tajā uzsverta pilsētvides nepārtrauktības nozīme, kur tradīcija kļūst par pamatu inovācijām. Pētījumā īpaši akcentēta tirgu integrēšanas nozīme mūsdienu pilsētplānošanas stratēģijās, piemēram, "15 minūšu pilsētas" koncepcijā, tādējādi sekmējot dzīvotspējīgas, iekļaujošas un ilgtspējīgas pilsētas attīstību.