

A young child with blonde, curly hair, wearing a white t-shirt and blue denim shorts, is smiling and holding several shopping bags (one yellow, one blue, and one brown) in a brightly lit shopping mall. The child is the central focus of the image, with the background showing blurred mall interiors and other shoppers.

Child- friendly shopping centres

WARSAW AGGLOMERATION
JUNE 2014



Introduction

Colliers International has conducted an analysis of shopping centres in the Warsaw agglomeration in terms of their friendliness towards families with children.

The study included 32 shopping centres and consisted of two parts – an evaluation by Colliers International experts using adopted criteria and a survey conducted among parents living in the Warsaw agglomeration. Selected opinions of parents who took part in the survey have been quoted in the report.

The evaluation by experts covered three areas:

- > overall characteristics of the shopping centre,
- > facilities for families with children,
- > offering of shops aimed at families.

In the first criterion, functionality of avenues, elevators, ramps for prams, parking (including designated places for families with children), the marking of the centre and the child-safety system were rated. The facilities that were assessed included: childcare places, baby changing and feeding rooms, toilets adapted for children, rest areas, changing rooms, outdoor/indoor playgrounds, priority checkouts and the availability of special shopping trolleys, which are also an additional attraction for children (cars). The offering of a centre was evaluated in terms of shops with products for children, cinemas, family entertainment centres and restaurants suitable for younger customers.

The anonymous survey was conducted among parents living in seven districts of Warsaw, as well as among on-line respondents living throughout the whole Warsaw agglomeration. Parents were asked, which shopping centre is in their opinion the friendliest for families with children and what are the selection factors when taking into account shopping with kids. Furthermore, respondents rated the quality of infrastructure for families with children, identified factors improving child safety and also pointed out what in their opinion is missing in shopping centres.

‘Warsaw’s shopping centres lack free, attractive places, where children can be left under the care of qualified care providers during shopping.’

‘The things that encourage me to visit a shopping centre with children: clean toilets, good shops, cinema and play areas.’

‘I don’t understand why there are no outlets with healthy food for children (e.g. vegetable soup) in shopping centres, all we can find is fast food.’



TOP 5

Based on the data collected, Colliers identified the group of shopping centres that meet the highest standards in terms of having adapted their infrastructure for families with children, and at the same time the ones that are most popular among parents.

The Top 5 shopping centres provide a family-friendly shopping experience, a wide selection of shops with clothes and shoes for children, toys, accessories, a convenient and diverse restaurant offering, as well as cinema and family entertainment centres, dance schools for children and sports and leisure facilities.

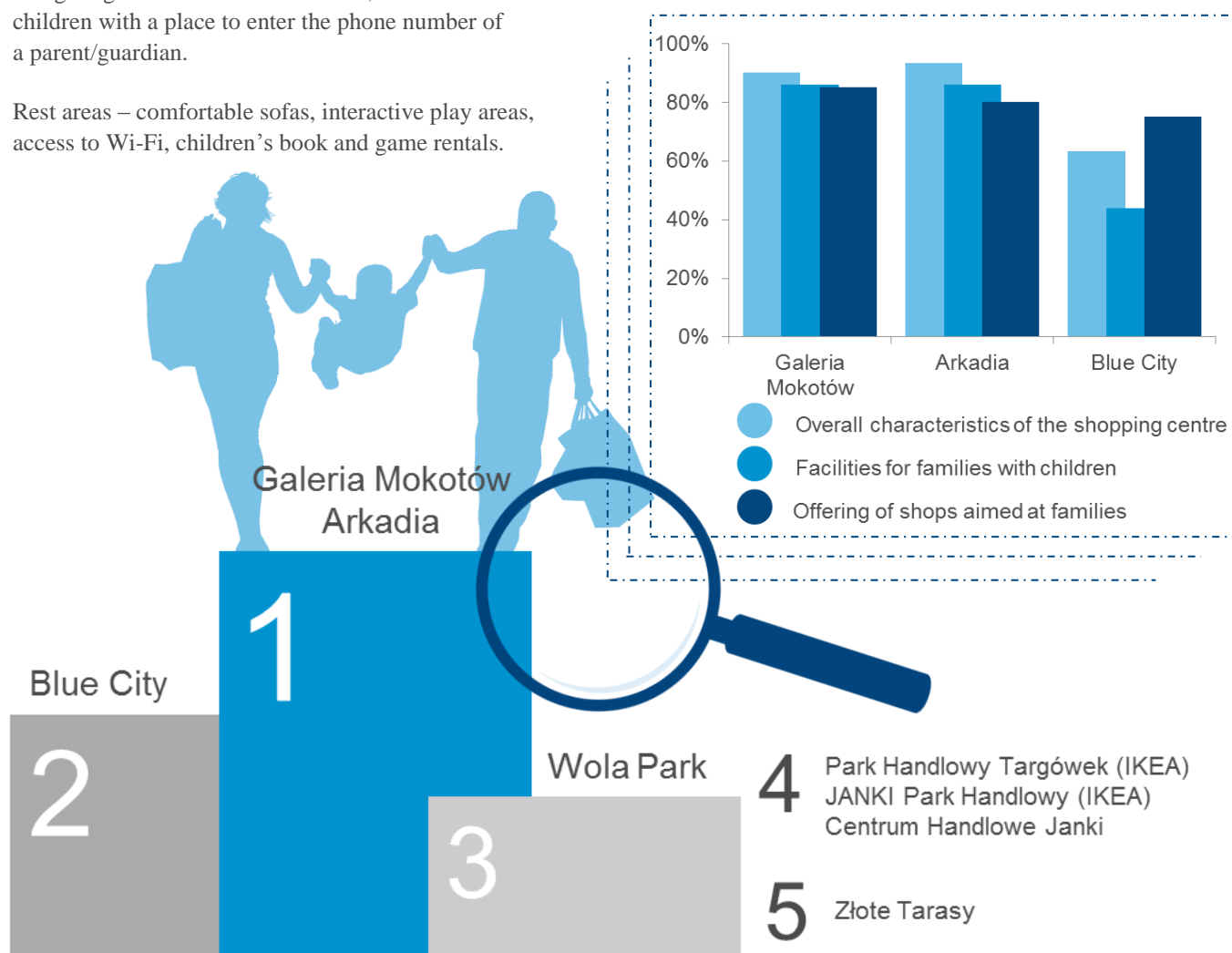
The majority of the leaders in the ranking have well-equipped and clean baby changing and feeding rooms, toilets adapted for children, vending machines with nappies as well as parking spaces designated for families with children. In addition, these centres have introduced additional amenities:

- > Safety system – information points, a clear system of signs navigating visitors around the centre, wristbands for children with a place to enter the phone number of a parent/guardian.
- > Rest areas – comfortable sofas, interactive play areas, access to Wi-Fi, children's book and game rentals.

- > Events for children – art classes, competitions, theatre performances, etc.

Shopping centres that were not included in the ranking are characterised by a relatively low quality of infrastructure for families with children. These centres usually lack baby changing and feeding rooms or they are located in ladies toilets or toilets for the disabled. The cleanliness level of sanitary facilities is unsatisfactory. Furthermore, these centres do not have interesting offering for families (poor range of shops with products for children, no cinema, lack of friendly restaurants, rest areas and other attractions for children).

'Staff in some shopping centres leave a lot to be desired, while their competence and kindness are very important especially in the context of child safety.'

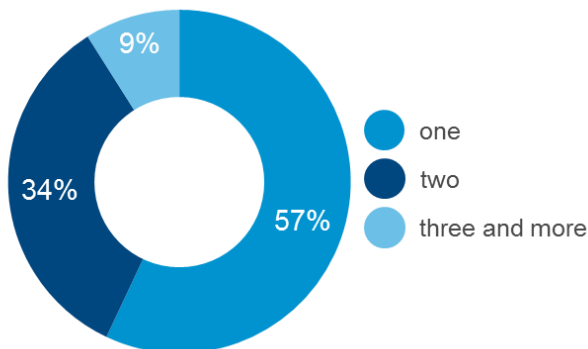


Source: Colliers International

According to parents

The vast majority of respondents declared that they have one child (57%). The dominant group among respondents were women (84%).

Number of children of respondents



Source: Colliers International

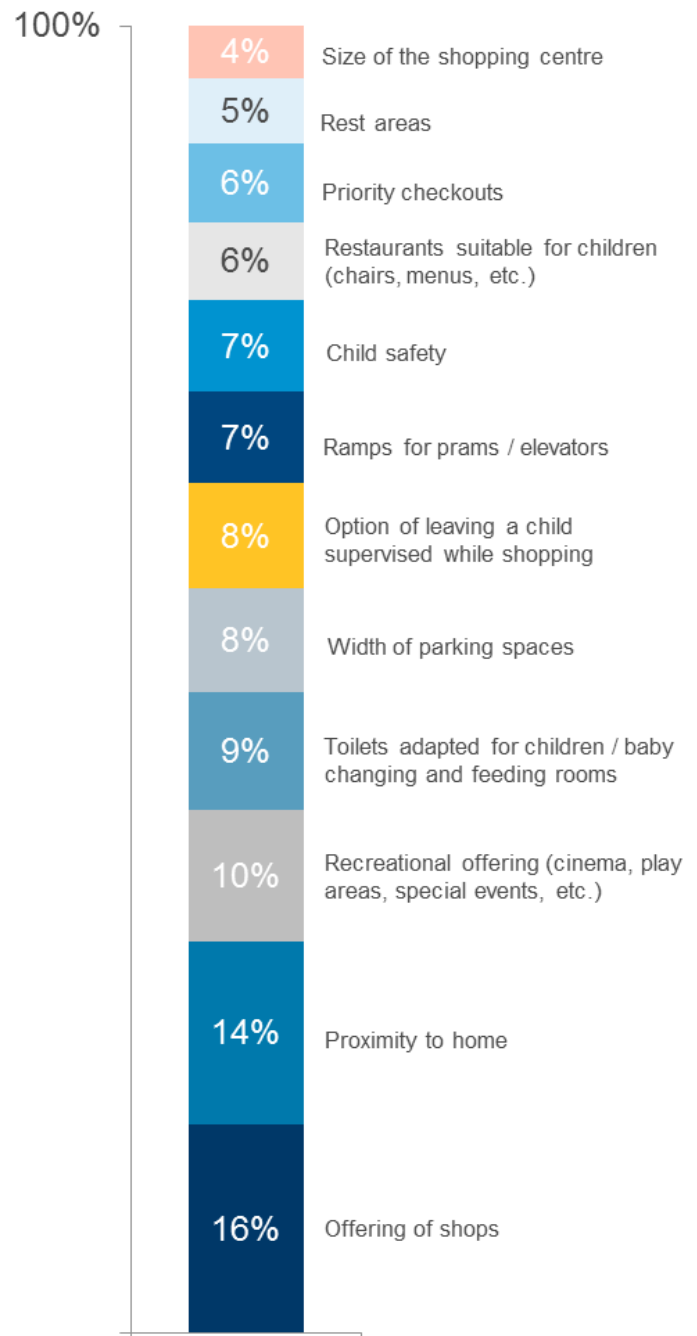
Among the most important factors in selecting a centre for family shopping, respondents pointed out: a wide selection of shops, proximity to home and a choice of entertainment and activities for children. Subsequently, as significant they pointed out the availability of sanitary facilities adapted for children (toilets, baby changing and feeding rooms), convenient parking spaces and ease of moving with a pram around the centre.

‘There are baby changing and feeding rooms – it’s a fact, but a big barrier is that in some shopping centres, in order to get to them I have to look for a security guard or run to the reception to get a key.’

‘Elevators in shopping centres are too slow and the wait is too long. A much better solution are moving ramps, allowing movement with a pram between floors. An additional difficulty are revolving doors.’



Factors affecting the choice of shopping centre for family shopping

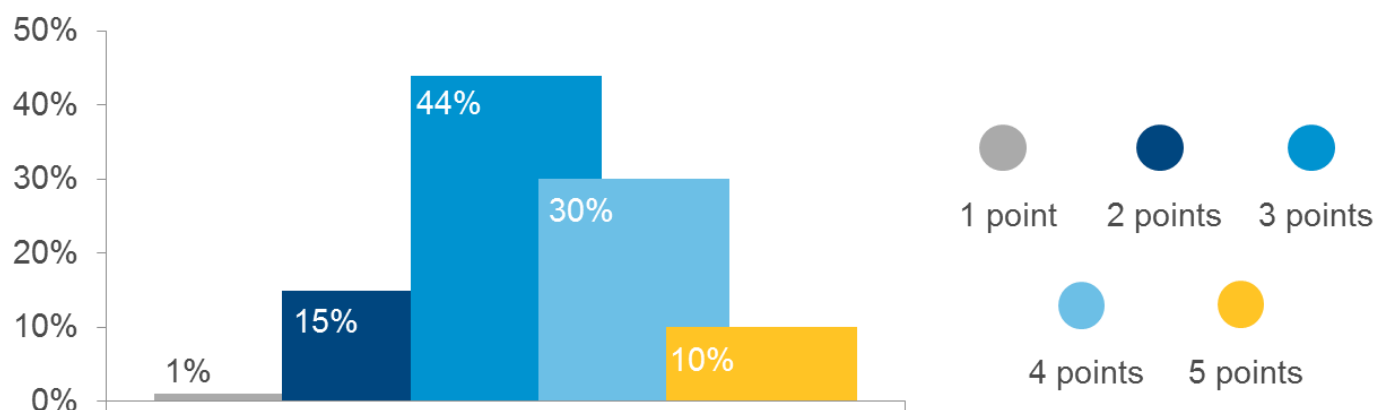


Source: Colliers International

The quality of infrastructure for families with children in Warsaw agglomeration shopping centres, on a scale of 1-5, was rated at 3.

Respondents pointed out the lack of facilities in shopping centres and the unsatisfactory cleanliness of children’s areas, including toilets and baby changing and feeding rooms, as well as worn out ball pits.

The quality of infrastructure for families with children according to respondents



Source: Colliers International



Respondents criticised play area equipment and the limited number of rest areas. Parking infrastructure in many cases was assessed as not well adapted for families with children (narrow parking spaces and lack of designated spaces).

'In shopping centres wide parking spaces enabling pram or baby carrier to easily be removed from a car are beginning to appear, but still there are definitely not enough of them.'



According to respondents, staff in shopping centres also leave much to be desired (sales staff, security guards, cleaning service). In many cases they are not very child-friendly. Parents emphasised that this aspect is particularly important for the safety of children in shopping centres.

Many of parents expect that free child-care points, a child-parent monitoring system and well-marked information points, which will help lost children to find their parents (applies especially to children aged 3-6 years) will be introduced.

Summary

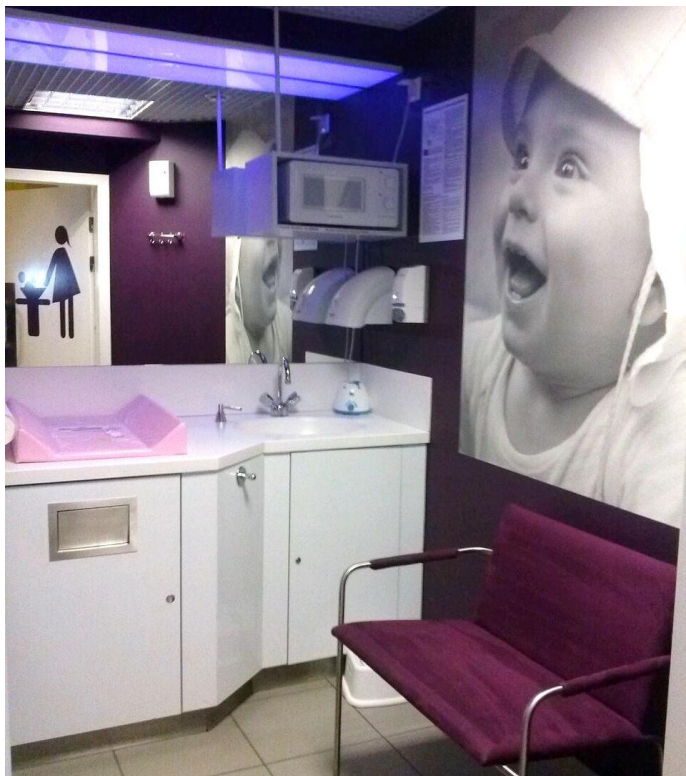
The research conducted by Colliers International shows that only some shopping centres located in the Warsaw agglomeration are suitably adapted for families and can be considered as child-friendly. In addition to basic infrastructure and a satisfactory offering, not many centres have additional features such as child-safety systems, reception, or extensive rest areas.

There are many areas that still require improvement. The disadvantages most often mentioned by respondents are the lack of suitably adapted and clean toilets and baby changing and feeding rooms, the lack of places where children can be left supervised while parents go shopping, as well as a poor entertainment offering.

However, over recent years some positive changes have been noticeable including the introduction of new features that improve the comfort of shopping, including those that are important for parents when deciding to go to a shopping centre with children.

It is important that the owners of shopping centres adequately recognise the changing needs and growing demands of today's customers and by following them, raise the quality of their facilities.

Diaper changing room, Galeria Mokotów



Source: Colliers International

Shopping trolleys – ‘cars’, Tesco Goćław



Source: Colliers International

Child seats in food court area, Blue City



Source: Colliers International

Parking spaces designated for families with children, Factory Annopol



Source: Colliers International

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