

Retail Planning and Green Mapping Practice

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- There was a united will to draw up a so called “fair-map” of environmentally-friendly goods and services in the centre of Helsingborg.
- The work of producing a map of the city’s sustainable range was a process which became surrounded by various perceptions and conceptions regarding what is sustainable or ecological
- www.helsingborg.se/schysstakartan



Some results

- More than half of the businesses/stores investigated offer environmentally-friendly products or services.
- Ecological products were more available in food stores and stores selling health-related ranges.
- Fashion and home furnishing stores had a relatively extensive range of ecological products.
- For the stores selling children's clothes, the proportion of eco-labelled or ecological clothing was extensive.



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- Fashion and home furnishing rarely or never includes repair services.
 - In contrast to fashion and home furnishing stores, the technology and electronics stores offering repair services are not perceived, however, as specifically environmentally-friendly or sustainable.
 - This provides a thought-provoking perspective on the contemporary relationship between retail and handicrafts.
 - No huge difference between stores with different business structures when it comes to offering environmentally-friendly ranges.
 - The fact that independent stores are not behind chains in general is important. This means that independent stores, which are perceived to be vital for city-centre commerce, have the potential to meet the expectations of 'green' consumers.



Common stereotypes regarding green consumers

Well-educated, well-paid and knowledgeable customer aged between 25 and 50.

This customer is often female and shows a great interest in how the goods are produced.

The younger generation is perceived to be specifically interested in environmental issues, while some retailers are of the opinion that senior citizens can also be interested in these issues “when buying for their grandchildren”.

Other descriptions of the environmentally-friendly customer link terms like “leftist” with those who “buy ecological bread” or knowledgeable customers who “bring their own bags and know a lot about the products”.



Retailers about the future:

- Sustainable consumption is “the future”
- “People want more and more ecological stuff on the basis of the health perspective”.
- Faith in the mechanisms of fashion and, through recycling “becoming a trend”, it will be possible to develop sectors such as, for example, second hand.
- Some retailers felt, in a similar vein, that the increased level of interest in sustainability means that “the market will regulate itself”.
- Smaller retailers perceived their possibilities of being able to exert an influence as limited, and that “it’s the price that’s the problem”.



Conclusion

- There is growing market for the 'sustainable' consumption
- Prices and the suppliers are named as the barriers for a more widespread 'sustainable goods' market
- It partly conflicts with the planners' desire to attract international high-end chains and ongoing 'disneyfication' of city landscapes, likewise the desire of estate-owners to keep rents high.
- Planning for sustainable retail requires close and long-term collaborations between different parties, including both public and private stakeholders.
- As experienced during the process of the 'fair-map' project, such collaboration processes have their specific and contextual challenges to overcome.

