

# HOPE AND RESPONSIBILITY VESTED IN YOUNGER GENERATIONS: THE CASE OF HUNGARY

Zsuzsanna Marton\*, Ildikó Ernszt, Nóra Rodek and Tivadar Máhr

University of Pannonia  
Nagykanizsa, Hungary

DOI: 10.7906/indecs.18.2.15  
Regular article

*Received:* 30 January 2020.  
*Accepted:* 2 June 2020.

## ABSTRACT

In the era of consumer society, the depletion of the world's natural resources brings conscious consumption in the spotlight. More and more people are said to be conscious consumers, who act responsibly with regard to the environment and society. Therefore, researches about conscious and responsible purchase behaviour draw the attention of economists and marketing specialists as well – thus being able to form their market actions. According to the stereotype about conscious consumers in our heads, the conscious consumer is young, well educated, and female. This paper aims to reveal the consumption habits of people and their attitude toward consciousness and responsibility, furthermore, to investigate them from the stereotype's point of view that finds youngsters more conscious. An online survey was conducted with 652 consumers of a German supermarket chain in Hungary. The research concentrates on identifying the main differences between generations regarding their purchase habits. The research results show that the consciousness is rather manifested in the self-interest than in the responsibility. While other international survey data have proven development through generations and found younger consumers more conscious and responsible, this fact has not been statistically proven in Hungary. The real causes or drivers behind conscious behaviour are still questionable in the Hungarian market.

## KEY WORDS

responsible consumers, generations, consumer decision-making

## CLASSIFICATION

JEL: M31

## **INTRODUCTION**

Environmental protection, sustainability, conscious consumption are magic words in our days. Not only environmental activists, climate researchers, but also economists, marketing specialists must have a piece of deep knowledge and understanding about the topic.

The depletion of natural resources of our globe is the consequence of the activities of the three, interrelated elements: the government, the business organizations, and the private individuals. Based on the view of Collomb, it is only the business sphere that plays the most important role in realizing sustainability [1, 2]. However, Hanssen states that decisions influencing the cutback of consumption are born on the level of citizens finally [1]. Companies have to fulfill two, in most cases contradictory demands: on the one side they have to offer their products and services at a low price; meanwhile, they should also be economically and socially conscious as well. This way, as they are unable to resolve this conflict; a more complex approach is needed, and all sectors have to do their share in this fight [1].

Therefore, on the way to a sustainable society, individual consumption habits play a crucial role. Meanwhile, it is a hard job to be a conscious consumer in today's world: you have to be aware of the environmental and social issues; at the same time self-discipline is also needed to resist the glittering temptations of the consumer culture. Besides, the person must have a deep faith, that one person can have a share in this fight and "can make a difference". For this, first, information is needed [2; p.138].

However, conscious consumption patterns are getting to be more and more popular in Hungary as well, there are still a lot of people, who are not willing to follow a sustainable lifestyle [3; p.32]. More authors underline the significance of different "consumer policy tools", because for these consumers sustainable consumption is not associated with positive attributes" [4; p.19]. Also in Hungary, sustainable development and related measurements are hot issues; the sustainable developmental strategy for the country is under progress [5].

Just as in the other part of the world, in Hungary, the younger generations can change the deeply entrenched habits, and they can take actions that make the whole economy and society more sustainable. Analysing the purchase habits and attitudes of the generations can provide information from a strategic point of view (e.g. attitude shaping) for both different market players and strategic makers on the governmental level.

Younger people are the future consumers; they have a growing disposable income. We tend to think, that youngsters, who have been the witnesses of the struggles of the world for sustainability in their whole lives, are much more conscious, than older generations. Our assumption is based on a stereotype, that the most conscious consumers are young, educated, well-to-do women [6]. This study concentrates on revealing how suitable this stereotype for the Hungarians.

This article aims to study the purchase habits and consumer behaviour of the generations on a Hungarian sample, to find answers, which the most dominant influencing factors are in the purchase decision, and how important the consciousness-related items in this process. Furthermore, we try to outline the differences in consciousness and responsibility of the different generations with a special focus on the younger generations. Also based on the theoretical overview, there is no clear unified consensus whether the younger people show a positive shift towards a higher degree of responsibility or not. Some studies proved that youngsters are more responsible, some of them did not. With conducting our research, we would like to have a resolution and react to this contradiction in the research field and problem.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### CONSCIOUS CONSUMPTION AND GREEN PURCHASE

Conscious consumption can be considered as an umbrella term. It embraces the self-conscious consumption, which concentrates on the self-interest of the consumer; but it also incorporates the responsible consumption, which considers the interests of others. Self-conscious consumption focuses on health, price, values, the brand, and the rights of the person as a consumer. Responsible consumption covers social responsibility, environmental consciousness, and ethical customer behavior as well [7, 8]. Based on the above-mentioned determinations, Dudás [7; p.48] also defined the criteria of the conscious consumers in the followings: the conscious consumers are aware of their rights, the personal or social consequences of their decisions, furthermore they consider their self-interest through purchase habits or they prefer social, environmental and ethical issues against their self-interest.

Getting more conscious in consumption has a certain hierarchical order: people become concerned about environmental issues first since it is specific and simple to interpret. The next step is becoming aware of social responsibility, finally, ethical concerns are taken into account (they are harder to understand because they are more abstract) [9]. In Europe, most citizens have understood, that it is vital now, that both our production and consumption must stay within the limits determined by the environment and society. An overwhelming percentage of Europeans (81 %) have recognized that environmental concerns are not just the problem of scientists, but they have a direct impact on their everyday life and health [10].

In Hungary, this proportion was 82 %. However, it is obvious now for most citizens, that not only big companies and governments have a role in this fight since 87 % of Europeans are convinced that as individuals we can also play an essential part in protecting the environment and society. This number has been quite consistent for ten years now: ranging between 85-87 %. A survey conducted in the US and UK came to similar conclusions [10]. The tendency has not changed since more Europeans feel that big companies, industries do not do enough to protect the environment (79 %), than that citizens themselves (66 %) are not active enough on this field [11; pp.4-19].

Concerning the hierarchical order of purchase consciousness, environmental issues occur first, and they can be regarded as the most interpretable and tangible for the customers. The green purchase behaviour of the consumers influenced by several internal (e.g. self-interest, personal achievement) and external factors (e.g. product attributes, social image) [12, 13]. However, these factors can affect the purchase decision in two ways. On the one hand, they can serve as a motivating tool, on the other hand, they can hinder the purchase of green products (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Factors motivating or limiting green purchase behaviour [14, 15].

MOTIVATING FACTORS	LIMITING FACTORS
Environmental concerns	High price
Product attributes	Low availability and difficulties in accessing green products
Environmental knowledge	Lack of consumer trust in green products
Subjective/social norm and reference groups	Consumer habits
	Neutralization techniques: Denial of responsibility, Denial of benefits, (consumers do not believe, they can make a difference as individuals); Appeal to higher loyalties; Protecting one's self of self (perceived sacrifice, avoiding a negative self-concept); Consumer attachment to the brand

## **DIFFERENT GENERATIONS WITH DIFFERENT PURCHASE ATTITUDES**

Analysing generations is a hot topic – research field – that can support both the academic and market experts. Generation means the group of people who were born in the same period, having similar ideas, attitudes, problems or habits [16] Generational differences emerge in the behaviour of the people belonging to a certain generation. The collective memories, experiences, and opportunities determine the approaches and attitudes towards everyday life. According to Székely and Meretei [17], to set the ‘labels’, characteristics of the generations, it is crucial to know about the self-image of the generations, what they think about themselves. In addition to this, it is vital to mention that the family, the workplace, the form of leisure time and the educational background all contribute to the formation of generational characteristics [17], however not only the social but the technological, legal, environmental, political, legal and economic changes, developments have a significant role in this process, that can also support or limit the opportunities of the people.

The veterans’ (so-called silent generation born 1925-1945) lives have been permeated one or two world wars that fundamentally determined their world view and thinking with full of sadness and tragedy. Therefore, they only wish for safety, peace, and family harmony. They cannot adapt to this accelerated world and rapidly changing technology [18, 19] The Baby-Boomers (1946-1964) having been born after world war II represents a hard-working, but rebel generation who were also witnesses of political and economic changes. Because of mass production they did not care about consciousness [20]. Just as every generation X (1965-1980) tries to learn from the ancestors’ faults, they found the carrier, the status, the money, and the power more important than the older generations. They were born in the era of the first computers and the Internet, so they are also called as digital immigrants. The Millennials are the first digital natives who exactly know what they want, what is the key to success and happiness. They do not focus on the expectation surrounding them; rather they concentrate on themselves and enjoy life [17, 18]. If we thought that, only the oldest generations lived in crisis (wars, regimes), generation Z (1996-2010), the real digital natives also experience an economic depression, terrorism, or climate change. They are highly dependent on the Internet and electronic devices; they cannot live without them [17, 18].

As we have seen above, the different generations vary in many different fields in general terms; it is also true for their purchasing habits detailed in Table 2. Of course, these are rough generalizations, but the tendency is clear.

In our globalized world, there is an urgent need for a more sustainable approach from the younger generations. The way of thinking, the lifestyle and the consumption habits of each generation is determined by many different factors: they are driven by the historical background they live in, the expectations, the values, and the technological changes, as well [27; p.1]. According to Howe and Strauss (2000) the perceived membership to a group; the common behavioral patterns and beliefs, the decisions made determine the characteristics of a generation much deeper, than the age [28, 29; pp.2-3, 30; pp.24-25]. Furthermore, as Parment (2013) states referring to the result of other researches, the „consumer motivations often lie below the surface of age” [31]. He argues that cataclysmic events – which are called defining moment events by him – create different values within roughly the ages of 17-23, and they remain relatively constant during our whole life. These events can be technological developments, wars, even terror attacks [31; p.189].

## **INSIGHTS INTO THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS’ PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR**

Several types of research support this statement, since it was revealed earlier, that youngsters tend to accept innovative concepts, and they are conscious of cultural, environmental, and social

**Table 2.** The purchase habits of different generations [21-26].

	<b>PURCHASE MOTIVATIONS</b>	<b>PURCHASE DECISION DRIVERS</b>	<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF PURCHASES</b>
<b>VETERANS (1925-1945)</b>	To make reasonable decisions.	Good value for money. Do not like waste.	They prefer small shopping centers. They spend much more on food and medical care than others. They are conservative, careful customers. They do not like adventures, changes. The structure is important for them.
<b>BABY BOOMERS (1946-1964)</b>	Focus on value for their money and product quality.	Prioritize products that are reliable, fairly priced, and budget-friendly The reported popularity of a brand is important.	Do not consider shopping a way to relax, it is stressful for them. They prefer the personal engagement of traditional stores; however, they make regular purchases online. High expectations of customer service.
<b>GEN X (1965-1980)</b>	Want to feel emotionally connected to the purchase experience and to the brand itself The aim to make a good deal.	Speedy shopping is important. Conservative shopping. Deliberate purchasing decisions.	Research the product thoroughly before buying - extensive use of search engines, online reviews, and social media networks before making a purchase.
<b>GEN Y (1981-1995)</b>	To have fun; since shopping is a relaxing activity and a social event for them	Friends and family recommendations. Word of mouth. In-store experience. Social media posts, product reviews, user-generated content.	Use web devices in nearly every aspect of their life. Speedy shopping is important. They like foreign brands, consumer lifestyles, and global advertising.
<b>GEN Z (1996-2010)</b>	To have fun.	Review, atmosphere, tech, speed, word of mouth, coupon offers.	Uses Google resources to compare prices, styles, availability, and ratings of products to make the most educated purchase possible. Technology drives their shopping experience. She still prefers to shop in-store. She enjoys visiting stores as a social excursion. Make comments online.

aspects, as well. They show a positive attitude regarding green products and green marketing. Meanwhile, it is a sad reality that their ecological knowledge seems to be on a lower level, only some of them have deep knowledge in this issue opposite to the fact, that they can access information very easily through the social network and global communication technologies [32, 33].

A Nielsen 26 online global study also seems to strengthen the above-mentioned perception, since Millennial Generation (Gen Y) proved to be the most conscious when making shopping decisions, as 75 % of them answered that they were willing to pay more for sustainable goods. Generation Z considers the CSR activities of companies important even in this case, as 72 % of the respondents were ready to pay more for products of companies that are devoted to CSR activities. It is also a promising trend, that their ratio has grown from 55 % (2014) to 72 %. Based on these findings Grace Farraj (SVP, Public Development, and Sustainability, Nielsen) emphasized that “brands that establish a reputation for environmental stewardship among today’s youngest consumers have an opportunity to not only grow market share but build loyalty among the power-spending Millennials of tomorrow, too.” [34]. However, Baby Boomers are getting to be more conscious as well: 51 % of them are willing to spend more in the above-mentioned case; it means a 7 % increase compared to the previous year [33].

Another survey conducted in the US and the UK affirmed these findings: In biggest ratio, Millennials tend to pay more for eco-friendly, sustainable products (61 %), Generation Z (58 %), Generation X (55 %), Baby-boomers (46 %) come only later in this row [9].

Regarding the products, FMCG brands have to face first the „green motion”, as customers are likely to check the greenness of these products most. According to the earlier survey data (Young, 2018, 9), 73 % of the consumers do consider environmentally-friendly aspects of household cleaning products or personal care products. These products are followed by the food (61 %), electronic devices (49 %), and clothes (48 %) categories.

However, the above-mentioned thesis seems to be refuted by another research. According to the findings of Gilg et al. (2005) the older generations are more likely to be green consumers and save with special regard to the Second World War generation [6]. The same results were highlighted in other researches regarding green marketing, referring to the fact, that green consumers do not belong to the youngest generations [32].

## **METHODOLOGY**

A quantitative approach was chosen to assess the attitude of consumers of different generations toward conscious consumption. An online survey was conducted on 652 people who are the buyers of a German supermarket chain in Hungary. The questionnaire including 22 questions aims to reveal the general demographics and the buying habits of the consumers and the drivers of their shopping. To measure the importance of influencing factors (9 items) and the respondents’ attitude toward conscious consumption based on 16 statements a 5-point Likert type scale was developed. The sample is non-representative for the Hungarian population that can be regarded as one of the limitations of the research article.

## **RESULTS**

Shopping is a much more complex process than we would think. The product choice of consumers depends on many factors. Both descriptive and exploratory analysis methods were applied to reveal the factors playing a role in the decision. According to the Hungarian respondents, product quality (avg. mean = 4,67 on a 5-point Likert type scale) is the most determining factor in the decision-making process of purchase. 67,6 % of the buyers find the product quality extremely important. This is followed by the ‘good value for money’ (avg. mean = 4,38) and the labelling referring to bio or environmentally-friendly products. (avg. mean = 3,41). Concerning the whole sample, the factor with the least influencing power is the CSR activity of the business, while the brand, the packaging, or the design of the product have a moderate effect on the decisions. Considering the differences between generations, the veterans are the only ones, who regard the ‘good value for money’ as a more important factor than the product quality.

**Table 3.** Profile of the sample ( $n = 652$ ).

	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%
<b>Generation</b>			<b>Education</b>		
Veterans	22	3,37 %	Primary school	28	4,29 %
Baby Boomers	106	16,26%	Short vocational school	63	9,66 %
Gen X	200	30,67 %	High school	183	28,07 %
Gen Y	255	39,11 %	Vocational secondary school	101	15,49 %
Gen Z	69	10,58 %	college	158	24,23 %
<b>Gender</b>			university	111	17,02%
Female	80	12,2699 %	other	8	1,23 %
male	572	87,7301 %	<b>Frequency of purchase</b>		
<b>Occupation</b>			Every day	17	2,61 %
Unemployment	15	2,30 %	Few times a week	172	26,38 %
Housewife	29	4,45 %	Once a week	192	29,45 %
Student in middle education	26	3,99 %	Few times a week	133	20,40 %
Student in higher education	29	4,45 %	Once a month	138	21,17 %
Public sector employee		30, 83 %	<b>Monthly net income (HUF)</b>		
Entrepreneur	31	4,75 %	<50,000	25	3,83 %
Private sector employee	229	35,12 %	50,000-100,000	176	26,99 %
Pensioner	68	10,43 %	101,000-150,000	222	34,05 %
other	24	3,68 %	151,000-200,000	116	17,79%
			>200,000	113	17,33 %

As the means indicate that the CSR activity of the supermarket, the recyclability of product packaging, as well as, the environmentally conscious production are not determinants in the product choice. Running One-way ANOVA analysis gave the results that the groups of the Veterans and the Z-generation form distinct groups. LSD comparisons revealed that the mean (2,36) of Veterans was significantly different from the means of all the other generations in terms of the aspects of environmentally-friendly conscious production on a 5 % significant level ( $p^{BB}=0,000$ ,  $p^{Gen X}=0,000$ ,  $p^{Gen Y} 0,001$ ,  $p^{Gen Z}= 0,023 <0,05$ ). Like Veterans, Z-generation also differs from the other groups. Another consequence from the LSD analyses is that generations coming after each other (e.g. Baby-boomers and X-generation or X-generation and Y-generation) show many similarities in their attitudes, therefore the real changes can be identified between every second generation only (e.g. between Baby-boomers and Gen Y). In terms of commercials and advertisements, recyclable product packaging there was no significant difference between the groups.

Besides, the analysis of factors playing a role in consumer decision making, another question focused on the investigation of the characteristics and the habits of the survey participants in the light of consciousness.

By analysing the means of the factors, we can conclude that purchasing energy-saving bulbs (avg. mean = 4,49) or taking own textile bags for shopping (avg. mean = 4,41) are relatively popular among the respondents, however choosing recycled, recycled packaged or labelled (bio, fair-trade, etc.) products do not characterize the Hungarian consumers participated in the survey. A possible reason for the relatively higher mean of purchasing energy-saving bulbs can be due to the present EU regulation. Purchasing recycled copy papers is typical for the

**Table 4.** Importance of factors in purchase.

	Veterans <i>n</i> = 22		Baby-boomers <i>n</i> = 106		Gen X <i>n</i> = 200		Gen Y <i>n</i> = 255		Gen Z <i>n</i> = 69		TOTAL <i>n</i> = 652	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
<b>Product quality</b>	4,23	,528	4,62	,489	4,69	,466	4,72	,458	4,65	,590	4,67	,490
<b>Value for money</b>	4,36	,581	4,34	,600	4,34	,698	4,41	,747	4,45	,718	4,38	,701
<b>Labels</b>	3,18	,907	3,65	1,024	3,49	1,066	3,31	1,169	3,23	1,126	3,41	1,108
<b>Product desing</b>	3,55	1,057	3,72	1,067	3,28	1,113	3,06	1,244	3,28	1,110	3,27	1,176
<b>Brand</b>	3,41	1,182	3,37	1,214	2,93	1,222	3,28	1,142	3,55	1,092	3,22	1,190
<b>Environmentally conscious</b>	2,36	1,002	3,49	,959	3,27	1,036	3,17	1,158	2,97	1,200	3,21	1,107
<b>Recyclability of product packaging</b>	2,91	,971	3,39	1,092	3,22	1,074	3,12	1,125	2,81	1,309	3,15	1,128
<b>Advertising</b>	3,73	1,077	3,04	1,218	2,63	1,104	2,64	1,212	2,80	1,324	2,75	1,209
<b>CRS of the supermarket</b>	2,23	,922	2,84	1,034	2,72	1,043	2,65	1,050	2,41	1,089	2,66	1,051

**Table 5.** Characteristics of consumers by generations (Means).

Statements	Vet.	BB	Gen X	Gen Y	Gen Z	Total
Purchasing energy-saving bulbs	4,14	4,42	4,63	4,57	3,97	<b>4,49</b>
Purchasing recycled copy papers	3,82	4,36	4,59	4,4	4,22	<b>4,41</b>
The quality is the most important factor for me	3,64	4,2	4,21	4,19	3,99	<b>4,16</b>
Purchasing fair-trade products is important for me	4,36	4,23	4,04	4,11	4	<b>4,1</b>
Purchasing labelled products (e.g. bio)	3,95	3,9	3,95	3,9	3,61	<b>3,88</b>
Purchasing returnable/ recycled packaging products	3,45	4,18	3,94	3,67	3,88	<b>3,85</b>
The product I purchase represents me	4,05	3,78	3,58	3,56	3,64	<b>3,63</b>
The price is the most determining factor	4	3,85	3,48	3,53	3,83	<b>3,61</b>
The primary goal is to find wide range of products during shopping	3,41	3,5	3,38	3,51	3,17	<b>3,43</b>
Taking my shopping list	3,14	3,47	3,36	3,45	3,03	<b>3,37</b>
Putting the bakery products into paper bags during shopping	2,73	3,5	3,23	3,01	2,84	<b>3,13</b>
Taking my own basket/textile bag for shopping	2,82	3,14	3,3	3,11	2,71	<b>3,12</b>
Purchasing environmentally-friendly hygiene products	3,23	3,55	3,16	2,89	2,81	<b>3,08</b>
Purchasing recycled toilet papers	2,55	3,12	3,16	2,85	2,57	<b>2,95</b>
I am willing to pay more for fair-trade products to help others	2,5	3,07	3,07	2,86	2,62	<b>2,92</b>
Brand loyalty is important for me	2,36	3	2,97	2,88	2,62	<b>2,88</b>

younger generations, especially for Gen X and Y, which is also statistically proven with the ANOVA F probe ( $F = 11,368$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ).

The labelled and recycled packaged products usually cost more than the other products, which can also hinder the purchase willingness, however, based on the Chi-square test on a 5 % significance

level, there is no association between income and this kind of purchase habit ( $p = 0,059 > 0,05$ ). Since the higher price cannot be blamed for lower purchase intention, other reasons needed to be found. Another surprising result from the survey data is that purchasing fair-trade products is so important for all generations; however, they are not willing to pay more for them. Based on the survey data, real characteristics regarding consumption habits cannot be defined such as in other European and US samples. The younger Hungarians 'attitude toward responsible consumptions and their habits are not promising yet, even though, the hope is invested in the younger generations.

As earlier studies and the research, results above already underpin the fact, that there are limiting and motivating factors in the decision-making process. Sometimes the price limits the purchase opportunities appeals to the buyers. However, how educated they are regarding responsibility and consciousness is still a question. As the previous data show, purchasing labelled products moderately or rather important for the Hungarian customers. In the survey, ten labels were analysed in terms of the awareness among the respondents (shown in Table 6.) The 'Hungarian Product' label was the most known among the respondents, hence the 99 % of them recognized the label. The label of BIO-Siegel was also recognized by most of the survey participants (ca. 79 %).

As Table 6 shows, slight differences can be detected between generations. Significant difference (on 5 % level) was justified only in some cases (e.g. OKÖ-TEST,  $p = 0,000$ ; Naturland  $p = 0,000$ , ÖEKO-TEX).

**Table 6.** Label recognition by generations.

	Known	Veterans	Baby-boomers	X-generation	Y-generation	Z-generation	Total	$\chi^2$ test
<b>EU Organic</b>	no	86,4 %	72,6 %	71,5 %	71,8 %	66,7 %	71,8 %	0,517
	yes	13,6 %	27,4 %	28,5 %	28,2 %	33,3 %	28,2 %	
<b>Fairtrade</b>	no	100,0 %	88,7 %	82,5 %	73,7 %	82,6 %	80,7 %	<b>0,001</b>
	yes	0,00 %	11,3 %	<b>17,5 %</b>	<b>26,3 %</b>	17,4 %	19,3 %	
<b>Green Dot</b>	no	100,0 %	72,6 %	38,5 %	22,4 %	5,8 %	35 %	<b>0,000</b>
	yes		27,4 %	61,5 %	<b>77,6 %</b>	<b>94,2 %</b>	65 %	
<b>Egg label</b>	no	59,1 %	74,5 %	71,5 %	66,3 %	78,3 %	71,0 %	0,168
	yes	40,9 %	25,5 %	28,5 %	33,7 %	21,7 %	29,0 %	
<b>OKEO-TEX 100</b>	no	54,5 %	25,5 %	41,5 %	50,2 %	52,2 %	<b>43,9 %</b>	<b>0,000</b>
	yes	45,5 %	<b>74,5 %</b>	<b>58,5 %</b>	49,8 %	47,8 %	56,1 %	
<b>Naturland</b>	no	81,8 %	69,8 %	45,5 %	44,7 %	85,5 %	54,6 %	<b>0,000</b>
	yes	18,2 %	30,2 %	<b>54,5 %</b>	<b>55,3 %</b>	14,5 %	45,4 %	
<b>BDIH (Natural Cosmetics)</b>	no	81,8 %	76,4 %	86,5 %	80,0 %	81,2 %	81,6 %	0,236
	yes	18,2 %	23,6 %	13,5 %	20,0 %	18,8 %	18,4 %	
<b>BIO Siegel</b>	no	36,4 %	28,3 %	21,5 %	16,9 %	20,3 %	21,2 %	0,057
	yes	63,6 %	71,7 %	<b>78,5 %</b>	<b>83,1 %</b>	<b>79,7 %</b>	<b>78,8 %</b>	
<b>ÖKO-TEST</b>	no	86,4 %	64,2 %	34,5 %	24,3 %	59,4 %	39,7 %	<b>0,000</b>
	yes	13,6 %	35,8 %	<b>65,5 %</b>	<b>75,7 %</b>	40,6 %	60,3 %	
<b>Hungarian Product</b>	no	4,5 %	0,9 %	1,5 %	0,4 %	1,4 %	1,1 %	0,398
	yes	95,5 %	99,1 %	98,5 %	99,6 %	98,6 %	98,9 %	

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Responsibility and consciousness get growing awareness on the institutional, entrepreneurial, and private levels, too [35, 36]. Based on the literature overview and the number of studies

and researches born in the topic, the research field is emerging from generational aspects, as well, however, a clear consensus has not been made yet, if a real difference in the degree of consciousness can be proved according to generations.

By researching in Hungary, we wanted to know the current situation in Hungary, if the younger generation is more responsible than the older ones. Based on our analyses, only every second generation shows a slightly positive shift towards consciousness, a sharp change cannot be experienced through generations – based on the Hungarian data. Comparing the Hungarian results to other international data (e.g. the UK or the US) unfortunately, the difference is detected. After the analysis of the influencing factors in consumer decision-making and consumption habits, the consciousness is rather manifested in the self-interest than in the responsibility. While other international survey data have proven development through generations and found younger consumers more conscious and responsible, in Hungary this has not been statistically proven.

As our survey results show, the younger generations have not brought such a big change in terms of conscious consumption than we expected based on earlier survey data and global trends. Regarding the responsibility in consumption/ shopping, the majority of the Hungarian respondents are not as sensitive to the CSR activity of companies as the other Europeans are. Only 25 % is the proportion of those respondents in each generation, who would pay more for products coming from companies with a strong CSR activity. This proportion in the UK and the US amounts to a minimum of 46 % (Baby-boomers), but concerning Generation Z this is 58 %.

The results above indicate that we have to carry on our research activity in this field in the future, which aims to find answers to the following questions. What can cause the difference between Hungary and other countries? Socio-demographic factors of consumers or education (family or institutional)?

Until the new research starts, the authors highlight some measurements based on earlier analyses. On the one hand, giving more information or introducing training to change the attitudes of people is vital on the state level, however, the marketing communication strategies and tactics of the companies adapted to the generations' media consumption habits is essential. Several types of research revealed, that knowledge, the information belongs to the most influential factors regarding conscious purchase behavior. Having this knowledge still seems to barrier responsible attitudes [14].

The results of Hungarian market research on the FMCG market emphasized that every third Z Gen consumer makes the purchase decision based on the opinions of social media influencers [37, 38]. This result also strengthens us that the power of marketing does alter consumer behaviour, whose deep and detailed analysis is needed in the future.

This article attempted to give insights into the green purchase behaviour of Hungarians by generations; nevertheless, the study has several limitations. The first limitation is linked to the sampling frame. Even though, the sample size was relatively high; the sampling was non-representative. In the future, it is worth to choose a representative sampling from one or more aspects, furthermore, it would be interesting to repeat the research time by time, how much the attitude of the consumers change thanks to political measurements (attitude shaping), education or social media.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Málóvics, G.; Csigéné, N.N. and Kraus, S.: *The role of corporate social responsibility in strong sustainability*.  
The Journal of Socio-Economics **37**(3), 907-917, 2008,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socec.2006.12.061>,

- [2] Autio, M. and Heinonen, V.: *To consume or not to consume? Young people's environmentalism in the affluent Finnish society.* Young Nordic Journal of Youth Research **12**(2), 137-153, 2004, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177%2F1103308804042104>,
- [3] Kovács, I.: *Examining the characteristics of socially responsible consumer behavior.* In Hungarian. Ph.D. Thesis. Szent István Egyetem, Gazdálkodás- és Szervezéstudományok Doktori Iskola, Gödöllő, 2015,
- [4] Zilahy, G. and Zsóka, Á.: *Proceedings: Sustainable Consumption Research and Action and Initiative.* (SCORAI) Worksho, Bregenz, 2012,
- [5] Rádi, B.: *Secretary of State: Hungary must gradually switch to circular farming.* In Hungarian. [https://makronom.mandiner.hu/cikk/20200210\\_harcba\\_indult\\_a\\_kornyezeti\\_problemak\\_ellen\\_az\\_itm](https://makronom.mandiner.hu/cikk/20200210_harcba_indult_a_kornyezeti_problemak_ellen_az_itm), accessed 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020,
- [6] Gilg, A.; Barr, S. and Ford, N.: *Green consumption or sustainable lifestyles? Identifying the sustainable consumer.* Futures **37**(6), 481-504, 2015,
- [7] Dudás, K.: *Dimensions of conscious consumer behavior.* In Hungarian. Vezetéstudomány **12**(7-8), 7-55, 2011,
- [8] Kautish, P.; Paul, J. and Sharma, R.: *The moderating influence of environmental consciousness and recycling intentions in green purchase behaviour.* Journal of Cleaner Production **228**, 1415-1436, 2019,
- [9] Roux, C. and Nantel, J.: *Conscious Consumption and Its Components: an Explanatory Study.* Advances in Consumer Research, Association for Consumer Research **36**, 903-905, 2009,
- [10] Young, K.: *The Rise of Green Consumerism: What do Brands Need to Know?* <https://blog.globalwebindex.com/chart-of-the-week/green-consumerism>, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019,
- [11] European Commission: *Attitudes of Europeans toward the environment.* Special Eurobarometer **468**, 2017, <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKey/81259>,
- [12] Vermeir, I. and Verbeke, W.: *Sustainable food consumption: exploring the consumer 'attitude-behavioural intention' gap.* Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics **19**(2), 169-194, 2006, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10806-005-5485-3>,
- [13] Kumar, P. and Ghodeswar, B.M.: *Factors affecting consumers' green product purchase decisions.* Marketing Intelligence & Planning **33**(3), 330-347, 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/MIP-03-2014-0068>,
- [14] Joshi, Y. and Rahman, Z.: *Factors Affecting Green Purchase Behaviour and Future Research Directions.* International Strategic Management Review **3**(1-2), 128-143, 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ism.2015.04.001>,
- [15] Johnstone, M.L. and Tan, L.P.: *An exploration of environmentally-conscious consumers and the reasons why they do not buy green products.* Marketing Intelligence and Planning **33**(5), 804-825, 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/MIP-09-2013-0159>,
- [16] Joshi, A.; Dencker, J.C. and Franz, G.: *Generations in Organizations.* Research in Organizational Behaviour **31**, 177-205, 2011, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2011.10.002>,

- [17] Baksa, M.: *Interview with researchers Levente Székely and Barabara Meretei: What we know about generations?* In Hungarian.  
<http://www.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/content/corvinuskioszk/mit-tudunk-a-generaciokrol>, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020,
- [18] Komár, Z.: *Generation Theories*. In Hungarian.  
Új köznevelés **8-9**, 14-16, 2017,
- [19] Pais, E.R.: *Basics for Generation Z Science Communication*. In Hungarian.  
[https://ktk.pte.hu/sites/ktk.pte.hu/files/images/szervezet/intezetek/mti/pais\\_alapvetesek\\_a\\_z\\_generacio\\_tudomany-kommunikaciojához\\_-\\_tanulmány\\_2013.pdf](https://ktk.pte.hu/sites/ktk.pte.hu/files/images/szervezet/intezetek/mti/pais_alapvetesek_a_z_generacio_tudomany-kommunikaciojához_-_tanulmány_2013.pdf), accessed 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020,
- [20] 6GENERÁCIÓ blog: *Generations*. In Hungarian.  
<https://www.6generacio.com/copy-of-generaciok>, accessed 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020,
- [21] Square: *How Generational Differences Affect Purchase Behavior*,  
<https://squareup.com/us/en/townsquare/generational-influences-in-buying>, accessed 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019,
- [22] Salesfloor: *How Each Generation Shops*.  
<https://salesfloor.net/blog/generations-shopping-habits>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020,
- [23] Budac, A.: *Next Generations of Consumers – Challenges and Opportunities for Brands*.  
Bulletin of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. Economics **6**(171), 6-10, 2015,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.17721/1728-2667.2015/171-6/1>,
- [24] Directional Insights: *Shopping habits of different generations*.  
<http://resources.news.com.au/files/427/894/shssshopping-1569351-1237438450570.pdf>, accessed 20<sup>th</sup> April 2019,
- [25] Wolner, A.: *Marketing by Generation: All About the Silent Generation*.  
<http://www.lexiconcontentmarketing.com/blog/marketing-strategy/marketing-by-generation-all-about-the-silent-generation.aspx>, accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019,
- [26] Licsandru, T.C. and Chi Ciu, C.: *Ethnic marketing to the global millennial consumers: Challenges and opportunities*.  
Journal of Business Research **103**, 261-274, 2019,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.01.052>,
- [27] Williams, K.C. and Page, R.A.: *Marketing to the generations*.  
Journal of Behavioral Studies in Business **3**(1), 37-53, 2011,  
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-0922.2010.01489\\_3.x](http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-0922.2010.01489_3.x),
- [28] Howe, N. and Strauss, W.: *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation*.  
Vintage Books, New York, 2000,
- [29] Pál, E. and Töröcsik, M.: *Science communication for Generation Z*. In Hungarian.  
Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Pécs, 1-21, 2013,
- [30] Töröcsik, M.; Szűcs, K. and Kehl, D.: *How Generations Think: Research on Generation Z*.  
Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Communicatio **1**, 23-45, 2014,
- [31] Parment, A.: *Generation Y vs. Baby Boomers: Shopping behaviour, buyer involvement and implications for retailing*.  
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services **20**(2), 189-199, 2013,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2012.12.001>,
- [32] Awad, T.A.: *Environmental segmentation alternatives: buyers' profiles and implications*.  
Journal of Islamic Marketing **2**(1), 55-73, 2011,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17590831111115240>,
- [33] Kanchanapibul, M.; Lacka, E.; Wand, X. and Chan, H.K.: *An empirical investigation of green purchase behaviour among the young generation*.  
Journal of Cleaner Production **66**, 528-536, 2014,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2013.10.062>,
- [34] Nielsen: *Green Generation: Millennials Say Sustainability is a Shopping Priority*.  
<https://www.nielsen.com/ssa/en/insights/article/2015/green-generation-millennials-say-sustainability-is-a-shopping-priority>, accessed 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019,

- [35] Baric, A.: *Corporate social responsibility and stakeholders: Review of the last decade (2006-2015)*.  
Business Systems Research **8**(1), 133-146, 2017,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/bsrj-2017-0011>,
- [36] Mazidi, A.A. and Abusha, E.: *Study of general education diploma students' performance and prediction in Sultanate of Oman based on data mining approaches*.  
International Journal of Engineering Business Management **10**, 1-11, 2018,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1847979018807020>,
- [37] Schäffer, L.: *Influencer marketing has outgrown Generation Z*. In Hungarian.  
[http://storeinsider.hu/kereskedelem/cikk/az\\_influencer\\_marketing\\_tulnotte\\_a\\_z\\_generaciot](http://storeinsider.hu/kereskedelem/cikk/az_influencer_marketing_tulnotte_a_z_generaciot),  
accessed 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019,
- [38] Suša, D.: *Digital immigrants and digital natives: Learning business informatics at higher educational level*.  
Business systems research journal: international journal of the Society for Advancing Business & Information Technology **5**(2), 84-96, 2014,  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/bsrj-2014-0012>.