Shopping Centre vs. Railway Station. Selected Examples in Poland

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Abstract. A modern shopping centre is often built as a multi-functional facility. It constitutes a place that generates the customer traffic, and consequently a demand for a relatively big number of parking spaces. A characteristic group of shopping centres are facilities erected in the vicinity of transport hubs, combining different means of transport. This study focuses on the shopping centres located near the railway stations. The railway station and the shopping centre are examples of buildings which fulfil different functions, and yet Poland has seen more and more projects combining these two types of facilities. This paper attempts to determine the influence of the shopping centre integrated with the railway station onto the functions and significance of the railway station building. It also touches upon the aspect of accessibility of the individual structures, particularly to pedestrians. Two shopping centres are considered herein within the scheme of the comparative analysis: “Galeria Krakowska” in Cracow and “Avenida” in Poznan. Both facilities came into being as parts of the construction of the new transport centres located near the main passenger railway stations in both cities. These areas are located in inner cities or nearby, which makes them the potential representational venues. In the result of the study, a tendency to the design shopping centres directly combined with a railway station, e.g. via passages with service outlets, has been observed. It seems that the railway station ceases to be a fully independent structure. In Cracow, it is located underneath the railway platforms, constituting a connector between the shopping centre and the coach station. In Poznan, the railway station is located above some of the railway stations and is linked with the “Avenida” shopping centre via a shopping passage. It has been observed that in both cases it is difficult to separate, both spatially and visually, the new railway station building from the building of the shopping centre, which seems to make the shopping centre take over the function of the edifice of the railway station, welcoming and bidding farewell to passengers. The building of the shopping centre in a way becomes the railway station building. The function of the transport hub, combining different means of transport, does not always entail comfortable pedestrian accessibility. For example in Poznan, some of the railway platforms are not accessible directly from the buildings of the railway station or the shopping centre. Furthermore, this paper points to the impact of such investments on the intended use of former railway station buildings. It has been observed that the adaptation of all the railway station buildings to the new functions in the examples referred to above took place several years after they had been closed down. The Author emphasises the need to determine the future use of old and often historic railway station buildings already at the stage of the investment planning.
1. Introduction
According to the definition of the International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC), a shopping centre is “a commercial property which has been planned, built, and is managed as one commercial entity, consisting of common spaces, of the minimum Gross Leasable Area of 5000 m², and consisting of at least 10 shops” [1]. The current tendency of developing diversified functions within shopping centres, such as catering services, office services, hotels, or even the residential function, makes such places become a location of all sorts of social activities and relations. They cease to be mere commercial entities. Shopping centres are erected in different parts of towns and cities – from inner cities through outskirts of cities. Amongst them, one can distinguish a group of shopping centres located near transport hubs, particularly near railway stations. More and more facilities of the kind located in the vicinity of railway stations have mushroomed in Poland as such locations are regarded as generating heavy passenger traffic and potential customers. Examples of such facilities are: “Galeria Metropolia” and “Galeria Bałtycka” located near the railway station in Gdańsk Wrzeszcz, the “Sopot Centrum” shopping centre at the railway station in Sopot, the “Złote Tarasy” shopping centre at the “Warszawa Centralna” railway station, the “Avenida” shopping centre at the “Poznań Główny” railway station, the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre at the ”Kraków Główny” railway station, the “Galeria Katowicka” shopping centre at railway station in Katowice, and the “Wrocławia” shopping centre at the “Wrocław Główny” shopping centre. Furthermore, there are plans to build e.g. an integrated shopping and transport centre “Dekada Konin” at the railway station in Konin [2] and a shopping centre near the emerging “Wałbrzych Centrum” railway station within the scheme of the future railway and coach interchange station located there [3], [4].

A railway station (within the meaning of the Act on Public Transport) is “a place intended for departures of passengers, equipped in particular with: public transport stops, a ticket office, and a passenger information centre” [5]; whereas according to the Act on Railway Transport a railway station is “a building object or a group of building objects intended for handling passengers using railway transport, located at a railway line” [6]. This paper adopts a more specific definition of a railway station (contained in the Act on Railway Transport), understood as a structure or a group of structures, without their surrounding infrastructure. Shopping centres built near railway stations, in interchange stations and railway transport hubs become dominating structures towards railway station buildings, or even towards the very track system of a passenger station.

Thus, the need to define the impact a shopping centre has onto the function of a railway station in the city and the issues related with providing and facilitating its appropriate accessibility has become more and more important.

This paper attempts to explore the influence of a shopping centre located in the vicinity of a railway station onto the functions and significance of a railway station, upon selected examples. Furthermore, it analyses the accessibility of individual facilities. The comparative analysis focuses on two shopping centres: “Galeria Krakowska” in Cracow, and “Avenida” in Poznan. Both shopping centres came into being as part of the construction of transport centres located near main passenger railway stations in these cities.
2. “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre in Cracow

Table 1. General data – “Galeria Krakowska”

| ASPECT                    | ATTRIBUTE                           |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Location                   | Cracow, District I Old Town         |
| Designer                   | IMB Asymetria                       |
| Completed in               | 2006                                |
| Gross covered area [m2]    | 29,847.00                           |
| Gross leasable area (GLA) [m2] | 57,700.00                         |

The “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre (Figure 1) is located in the north-eastern part of the District I Old Town. It is situated in the vicinity of Cracow’s main transport hubs: the railway station and the coach station. The facility was built in 2006. It is Cracow’s third biggest shopping centre in terms of the gross leasable area (GLA). [7] General data are presented in Table 1.

![Figure 1. View of the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre facing Pawia street. A clock is visible on the left – a characteristic element for a railway station building. Above the entrance, beside the name of the facility, there is a sign “PKP Kraków Główny” /Kraków Główny Railway Station.](image)

The “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre came into being within the scheme of implementing the project of “Krakowskie Centrum Komunikacyjne” (KCK) – Cracow Transport Centre, that is an integrated transport-oriented hub comprising transport and commercial amenities, located between 29 Listopada avenue, Warszawska street, Lubicz street, Beliny-Prażmowskiego street, and the southern limits of the Rakowicki Cemetery [10]. The shopping centre analysed herein is a hub comprising the railway station, the old and new railway station building, the coach station, public transport stops, and

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1 Sources of the data in the table: RetailMAP website [7], Portal of the Municipal Spatial Information System of the Cracow City Hall [8] and Urbanity.pl website [9].
the surrounding inner city infrastructure, including the historic city centre. [11] The concept of the development of a new inner city of Cracow with a railway station as a nodal element emerged in the 1960s. [12] Over the following years subsequent concepts of the Cracow Transport Centre were developed, e.g. the urban planning contest of 1966, designs by Biuro Projektów Kolejowych /Railway Design Bureau/, international contest for a concept of the Cracow Transport Centre from 1985 (won by a design by the architect R. Loegler), designs by professionals from the office of the General Architect of the City of Cracow, and after 1989 the “New City” project. [12] One of the concepts of the Cracow Transport Centre comprised the development of a Main Railway Station to the west from the train platforms, a plate placed above the train stations with car parks and shops, a Central Coach Station to the east from the train platforms, a fast tram line running in a tunnel, a congress centre in the northern part of the Cracow Transport Centre at 29 Listopada avenue, and new building complexes to the west from the new railway station. The concept referred to above also planned a new public space – a square in front of the building of the new Main Railway Station. A new shopping centre, however, was not part of this project.2

Within the scheme of building of the so-called “New City”, in 2004-2007 the new development comprised the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre, Pawia street, “Andels” hotel, a car park over the train platforms, a road tunnel underneath the track system of the station consisting of e.g. elements of three railway lines, and a coach station (with a two-level parking lot for coaches, extended later on in 2017). In 2008 The Cracow Fast Tram was launched, with its line running in a tunnel in the section from the Mogilskie roundabout to the area of the Cracow University of Technology at Warszawska street. In 2014 a new underground railway station opened, located underneath the train station platforms. The multifunctional buildings have been developing along Pawia street for 15 years now (residential and office buildings, hotels, etc.). Currently, the “High5ive” office complex is being erected in the vicinity of the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre.

There is a strong relationship between the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre and the new railway station – the main passage to the underground railway station leads through the passages of the shopping centre. The function of the railway station along with the waiting room and ticket offices has been moved from the former railway station building, located at Jana Nowaka-Jeziorańskiego square, to the basement underneath the platforms. The edifice of the former railway station (Figure 2) was erected in 1847. It housed ticket offices, a waiting room, and an information point. It was located at a certain distance from the currently functioning platforms, which could be accessed via an underpass and the so-called historical platform. Today, the historic building of the old railway station houses: “HistoryLand” – an interactive facility where one can explore the history of Poland, presented by means of models made of Lego blocks, and a branch of the Cracow Library. The intended use of the old railway station was not known at the stage of the implementation of the new project. Various options were considered (e.g. a cinema and offices). The interactive centre opened three years after the old railway station had been closed. The new railway station, combined with the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre, constitutes a space which is an extension of the underground shopping malls. The shopping centre and the railway station hall are linked by means of an underground passage with shops and service outlets on the ground floor, which correspond to the shopping malls of “Galeria Krakowska”. Only the sign above the door leading to “Galeria Krakowska” marks the end of the space of the shopping centre and the beginning of the transport-oriented development. The retail and service space seems to dominate over the transport function. The railway station hall provides access to the train platforms by means of lifts or escalators. The underground location of the railway station and its accessibility through the shopping centre makes the edifice of “Galeria Krakowska” fulfil the function of a railway station, too, understood as a place of departure of passengers using train and coach services.

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2 On the basis of the concept of the Cracow Transport Centre, published in: “Encyklopedia Krakowa” [10].
Figure 2. View of the building of the former railway station in Cracow. In the foreground – elements of street furniture located in Jana Nowaka-Jeziorańskiego square. On the right – statue of Ryszard Kukliński

The shopping centre and the railway station can be accessed through the public transport services: trams and buses. The nearest tram stations of four tram lines are located underground, as part of the Cracow Fast Tram line (a ca. 2-minute walk to the railway station) and one tram line at the entrance to the shopping centre from Pawia street (ca. 3-4-minute walk). For a considerable part of passengers of the city tram and bus lines, the pedestrian access route from the public transport stops located at the intersection of Lubicź, Pawia, Westerplatte, and Basztowa streets is still valid, whereas from here the railway station can be reached after a longer walk – 8-10 minutes. Before the Cracow Transport Centre was built, tram and bus stops located the closest to the former railway stations, called “Main Railway Station”, were situated at the intersection of Lubicź, Basztowa, and Westerplatte streets (there had been no public transport along Pawia street). At the end of 2018, the name of these stops was changed into “Słowacki Theatre”. The shopping centre has three main entrances, located as follows: one facing Jana Nowaka-Jeziorańskiego square, and two facing Pawia street. Above the train platforms of the “Kraków Główny” railway station, there is a 24h outdoor car park. The entrance to this car park, located behind the new complex of office buildings, simultaneously leads to an indoor car park of the “Galeria Krakowska”. The car park provides access to the shopping centre and the train platforms via staircases or lifts. At the same time, the area of the car park functions as the nearest driveway for taxis.

Within the scheme of the Cracow Transport Centre project, Jana Nowaka-Jeziorańskiego square, situated between the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre, the edifice of the former, historic railway station, and “Andels” hotel, was renovated. Before the shopping centre was built, this square, called then Kolejowy square, had fulfilled various functions: a taxi rank, a car park, as well as a coach station. Today, it is a public space with elements of greenery and street furniture (seats), as well as the statue of Ryszard Kukliński. This space provides access to the shopping centre from the south, but the nearest
passage to the railway station constitutes an uncomfortable, narrow route to the historical platform between the old edifice of the railway station and the premises of “Galeria Krakowska”.

3. “Avenida” shopping centre in Poznan

Table 2. General data – “Avenida” shopping centre[^3]

| ASPECT             | ATTRIBUTE                                      |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Location           | Poznan, Wilda auxiliary unit (“estate”)         |
| Designer           | Pentagram Architekci                           |
|                    | Bose International Planning and Architecture   |
| Completed in       | 2013                                           |
| Gross covered area [m2] | 35,938.00                                    |
| Gross leasable area (GLA) [m2] | 58,000.00                                    |

“Avenida” shopping centre (Figure 3) is located within the perimeter of the Wilda auxiliary unit (“estate”), to the south-west from the Old Town. The facility is situated at the “Poznan Główny” railway station and the coach station. It was erected in 2013. It offers 58,000 m² of gross leasable area (GLA), which makes it the fourth biggest shopping centre in Poznan. [7] General data are presented in Table 2.

![Figure 3. View of the “Avenida” shopping centre in Poznan facing Wolne Tory street.](https://example.com/figure3.jpg)

Photo: R. Łabuz, 2018.

The “Avenida” shopping centre came into being within the scheme of the project of the Integrated Transport Centre of Poznan. In 2011 the City of Poznan signed an agreement with a Hungarian company TriGranit Development Corporation on the construction of the Integrated Transport Centre (ZCK). [16] The project comprised the construction of a new railway station, a shopping centre, a coach station, and a multi-storey car park. The development of a stop of the Poznan Fast Tram line, situated nearby, was

[^3]: Sources of the data in the table: Urbanity.pl website [13], MTDI Group Sp. z o.o. website [14], Spatial Information Portal of the City of Poznan [15], RetailMAP website [7].
also included. The investment referred to the area located between Głogowska street, Stanisława Matyi street, and Króla Przemysława II Avenue. The new railway station was opened in 2012, and the “Avenida” shopping centre combined with it – in 2013. The shopping centre was built in the place of the former freight terminal called “Wolne Tory”. [17] In 2014 the name “Integrated Transport Centre” was replaced with “Poznań Główny”. [18] Within the scheme of the Integrated Transport Centre project, the road layout was modernised, as well. A new road connection was built along Króla Przemysława II Avenue, Ks. Jakuba Wujka street between Stanisława Matyi street and Przemysłowa street, and Wolne Tory street along with Szczęśliwej Podróży roundabout, which constitutes an access route to the new coach station and a multi-storey car park located at the shopping centre. Underneath the new railway station building, a coach station was organised. Above the train platforms, a multi-storey car park was built, addressed also to customers of the “Avenida” shopping centre and to passengers at the railway station. The new railway station building was built over the platforms Nos. 1, 2, 3 from the side of the Dworcowy Bridge. The former railway station building is situated in the middle, between the platforms Nos. 1, 2, 3 located in the eastern part of the building and the platforms Nos. 4, 5, 6 located in its western part. It was erected in 1879, and in the 1960s and 1970s, it was rebuilt. [17, p. 57] When the new railway station and the “Avenida” shopping centre were built in 2013, the old railway station building closed down (Figure 4). There were plans to modernise it and to erect office and hotel facilities. [19] However, the investment did not come to fruition. Since 2018 the building has housed “Food Hall” – a catering facility, where concerts and dance parties are held, too. In the new edifice of the railway station, there are ticket offices, a waiting room, shops, and service outlets. The new railway station building constitutes a continuation of the shopping centre. Their spaces are separated by a glass door. Areas located in the vicinity of the new transfer hub have been subjected to intense transformations since 2011. To the north-east from the shopping centre, residential and office buildings have been erected, with services on the ground floors. Currently, the construction of a residential building located at the Dworcowy Bridge and the “Nowy Rynek” office complex, located to the east from the “Avenida” shopping centre, is in under construction.

![Figure 4. View of the edifice of the former railway station in Poznan. Photo: R. Łabuz, 2019.](image-url)

Two main entrances to the “Avenida” shopping centre are located at Wolne Tory street. The third entrance faces the Dworcowy Bridge (and is linked with it via a footbridge). The facility can be also reached from the multi-storey car park and the new edifice of the railway station. Due to the fact that the “Avenida” shopping centre is located in the direct vicinity of the “Poznań Główny” railway station and the coach station, it provides very good transport accessibility within the regional and national range.
There are two main roads in the area: along Głogowska street turning into Franklina Roosevelta street, and along Stanisława Matyi street. Both roads lead to the A2 motorway. The local street layout, providing access to the shopping centre, consists of Głogowska street, Roosevelta street, Stanisława Matyi street, Dworcowa street, Wolne Tory street, Króla Przemysława II street, and Księdza Jakuba Wujka street. In the area facing the city centre, an underpass for pedestrians and cyclists was built, which allows crossing Stanisława Matyi Street towards Marcinkowski Park with no risk of collision. “Avenida” has two car parks: a two-storey indoor car park with an entrance from the street level, and a three-storey outdoor one located above train platforms of the “Poznań Główny” railway station. The three-storey car park can be accessed through an outdoor ramp, with an entrance from Wolne Tory street. Altogether, the facility offers 1500 parking spaces. Traffic accessibility in the area is provided also by means of public transport. There are 9 daytime tram lines along Stanisława Matyi street, and 13 more along Głogowska street. The nearest tram stops are located at the intersection of Stanisława Matyi and Towarowa streets, ca. 200 m away from the building of the shopping centre and ca. 250 m from the railway station. To the west from the railway station and the shopping centre there runs the route of the Poznań Fast Tram. The “Dworzec Zachodni” stop is situated in the distance of ca. 400 m from the railway station. The area of the transport centre is also accessible by means of buses. The nearest bus stops are located near the eastern entrance to the “Avenida” shopping centre and on the west side of the railway station building.

In front of the main entrance to the shopping centre, a new public space has been arranged. Directly in front of the main entrance, there are seats, standing out thanks to their multitude of colours, as well as bike racks. Parking spaces for taxis have been demarcated along the carriageway. A line of trees separates the entrance space and the street from the new recreational area, arranged as a greenery area with a water body and a fountain. Walking paths with seats have been arranged around it. This area is surrounded by streets from four sides, which constitutes a spatial barrier between the shopping centre and the surrounding area due to the intensity of car traffic.

4. Results and discussions

“Galeria Krakowska” in Cracow and „Avenida” in Poznan both came into being within the scheme of the implementation of new integrated transport centres, combining railway transport, coach transport, and municipal public transport. Both projects comprised the construction of a new railway and coach station. In both cases the railway station was built as a facility directly combined with the shopping centre, replacing the existing railway station building.

In Cracow, the shopping centre is located along the tracks, whereas the new railway station is an underground structure located directly underneath the train platforms. The hall of the railway station in Cracow is accessible via an underground shopping arcade from: each platform of the “Kraków Główny” railway station, from the “Galeria Krakowska” shopping centre, from the Fast Tram stop, and from the coach station. The underground shopping mall constitutes a continuation of the shopping malls of “Galeria Krakowska”. Furthermore, the edifice of the shopping centre is a facility which serves as a gateway to the city, as it is the first site seen after arriving at Cracow. It is worth mentioning that besides the sign “Galeria Krakowska”, above the entrance to the shopping centre from Pawia street, there is a sign “PKP Kraków Główny” – the main railway station in Cracow – which was characteristic for the building of the main railway station.

In Poznan, the “Avenida” shopping centre has been designed as a parallel to the tracks, as well. The new railway station and the multi-storey car park have been arranged over the platforms. The railway station building is accessible from the “Avenida” shopping centre, from the Dworcowy Bridge, and from the railway square. There are no direct links between the railway station and all of the platforms. The new facility is located over platforms 1, 2, and 3, and is linked with them by means of lifts. Platforms 4, 5, and 6 are situated on the other side of the railway station square, which is accessible by means of an
escalator. This layout, however, seems to be illegible. The plans included a footbridge leading to the platforms mentioned above [20]. Currently, it is planned to build a tunnel under the platforms [21]. The “Avenida” shopping centre is also one of the places which welcome visitors to Poznan.

In Cracow as well as in Poznan the edifices of former railway stations have been adapted to new functions. In Cracow, the new railway station is better connected with the train platforms than the former railway station building. In Poznan the accessibility of platforms 4-6 is insufficient from new railway station building. It is worth emphasising that in both cities the shopping centre takes over or completes the railway station functions, offering passengers a chance to e.g. have a meal before or after their trip. At the same time, it is a connector between the railway station, the coach station, and the municipal public transport stops.

5. Conclusions
Transport and shopping centres constitute essential elements in the structure of the city. They are areas which may constitute a stimulus for the development of the urban tissue. Nevertheless, it needs to be borne in mind, during their planning process that it is necessary to secure appropriate pedestrian accessibility and access to taxis, as well as to create an attractive public space. The examples presented in this paper demonstrate the tendency occurring in Poland, consisting in the introduction of a shopping centre as one of the elements of a transport centre. It is a facility which generates an additional flow of people (who are not always passengers using the services of the transport centre). Due to the scale of the project, it is a dominating form in the space; hence, it is necessary to provide it with top-quality architecture, including a street frontage with service outlets accessible from the outside. The examples discussed herein demonstrate that a shopping centre combined with a railway station completes the function of the railway station, e.g. with catering functions. In a shopping centre, constituting a nodal element, it is essential to secure a legible connection between individual parts of the transport centre with the city, e.g. through the indoor passageways. Another important issue which needs to be taken into account at the stage of investment planning is the function of the former railway station building. Already at the stage of the investment planning, it is necessary to plan measures relating to the old facility, which will be undertaken within the scheme of the modernisation works. The examples discussed herein demonstrate that edifices of former railway stations lose their importance, whereas they can be maintained in a good condition only if they are properly used, which is relevant particularly for historic buildings, which must not and should not be destroyed. Building a shopping centre in the vicinity of a railway station or any other transport hub requires thorough analyses of the effects of the transformations of traffic relations, because both functions generate considerable traffic.

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