



## A Research on the Shopping Trends of Bulgarian Tourists with the View of the Tradesmen of Edirne Selimiye Arasta

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### Abstract

Shopping tourism is an important element of destination marketing within the scope of national or international tourism movements. Restaurants, hotels, recreation centers, shopping centers as well as traditional bazaar tradesmen are an intermediary and an important role in providing economic input to touristic destinations. Despite the rapid consumption structure of modern shopping centers, maintaining traditional artisan culture also brings loyal customers to destinations. Shopping tourism, which is an important part of tourism activities in particular, is an important center since Edirne Province is both deeply rooted in terms of history and an attractive destination in terms of culture and food tastes. In addition, Edirne Province is active in international tourism movements due to the border gates opening to Europe. This mobility has turned Edirne into a shopping tourism temple of Bulgarian tourists, especially due to exchange rates in recent years. In this context, a study was conducted on the perceptions of Edirne Selimiye Arastası tradesmen towards the shopping tendencies of Bulgarian tourists. This research is a quantitative research. The data were collected through a questionnaire and analyzed with SPSS for Windows 22 statistical software. In the research, sampling technique was preferred as convenience sampling. A face-to-face questionnaire was applied to 80 tradesmen serving in Edirne Selimiye Arastası. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of the data. As a result of the research, various suggestions were made to public institutions and organizations. In addition, research results regarding the shopping trends of Bulgarian tourists are expected to guide destination marketers.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The changing daily life, the expansion of the mass media's influence area and the effect of the popular culture developed accordingly have accelerated this process and caused the consumption habits of the individuals to change. The perception and value judgments that have changed with the social structure have also changed the meanings that people give to the concept of consumption; It caused the formation of consumption rituals that differed between generations. The situation, which is defined as the traditional bazaar culture, includes a consumption behavior shaped by the needs and realized within the possibilities. Economic and social developments, especially in the last 30 years, have caused a change in consumption habits. Shopping centers have become widespread, the concepts of brand and fashion have been brought to the fore, and the concept of consumption has been removed from being a need (Öndoğan, 2016, p. 35). Current a tourist profile that demands more personal products, combines the need for holiday with learning and experience, is more environmentally conscious and has more disposable income, and is becoming more and more evident. Social, economic and cultural interactions have created new demands and spending habits. Today, the role of shopping has moved away from the understanding of purchasing needs only. The shopping factor has contributed to the formation of travel experiences in which consumers are motivated by their special interest. As a result, it is observed that shopping tourism, which expresses a rising trend in tourism, has emerged (Dinçer and Kanay, 2017, p. 2). Shopping centers, which are one of the indispensable elements of social life in terms of increasing consumption culture and meeting many different needs of individuals, constitute an important opportunity among commercial recreation enterprises. Since shopping spaces and shopping malls meet different needs under one roof, individuals and families who make up the society prefer these covered spaces to save time and spend time (Şimşek, 2018, p.86).

Shopping areas (souvenir sellers or fairs) in touristic destinations, craft centers, shopping areas in hotels and similar accommodation establishments, recreation and shopping opportunities in big shopping malls (AVM), recreation-oriented centers that are part of attraction centers (Disneyland, Atatürk Orman Çiftliği and Youth Parks, etc.), provides people with recreational activities (Hazar, 2014, p.70). Shopping; In addition to being a trade act, a social activity that takes an important place in daily life is also a recreational activity. Shopping type and habits vary according to the settlements in different parts of the world. The common purpose in the places that meet the shopping needs; Along with the functions of purchasing goods and services, it is to create qualified environments that meet the social needs of people such as gathering and communicating. Therefore; Shopping in tourism experience has an important function in the tourism industry (Dinçer & Kanay, 2017, p.4). Today, as a way of life and leisure assessment, the use of shopping malls and shopping places brings the birth of mega centers. In the future, swimming pools, bowling areas and sports facilities will be included more in these mega complexes. For example, the presence of an artificial ice skating rink in the Haller Youth Center, which has an atmospheric structure reminiscent of a flower passage in Eskişehir, can be considered as an element of interest to consumers. Similarly, themed restaurants, multi-level bookstores, high-tech playgrounds will be environmental incentives that can be used to entertain consumers (Argan, 2007, p.124).

## **Literature**

Recreation includes a number of activities, such as sports, games, crafts, music, theater, drama, hobbies, travel, which are usually for leisure purposes. In other words, recreation is the activities in which people participate

voluntarily for leisure, rest and satisfaction (Hacıoğlu et al., 2003). One of the activities carried out within the scope of free time is shopping. In leisure shopping, consumers only shop for their utilitarian values and tastes instead of the consumption of the products they purchase (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2005). Shopping is considered an important and big leisure activity today. The entertainment aspect of the shopping retail industry is increasingly seen as an important competitive tool in the current situation (Perera & Sutha, 2018).

Shopping, which is one of the most basic activities of human beings, was a social action in the urban space in the past. Throughout history, venues have been needed in every period and civilization in which product circulation will take place. When the transformation of shopping spaces in time is analyzed, it is seen that the main characteristic of the shopping places in the cities until the 20th century is "integration with the urban texture". For example, agora in ancient cities and squares in medieval cities were the most important shopping places of these cities. These places, which are indispensable parts of the cities, were the places where shopping activity took place together with urban functions such as gathering for various purposes, especially recreation, and social communication with other urbanites. In these spaces, the city space and the shopping space are intertwined, located in the core of the city and created a multifunctional public space (Birol, 2005 as cited in Argan, 2007, p.119). Shopping, as a recreational activity, enables people to go out of their routine lives, have fun, get away from work and be happy for many other reasons (Karaküçük, 2008, p.92). Recreational activities improve physical health, protect mental health and contribute to its sustainability, socialize people, develop individual skills and abilities, develop creative power, increase work success and work efficiency, improve economic movement, provide social solidarity, enable the creation of a democratic society (Ardahan et al., 2016, p.15-17). According to Backström (2006), recreational shopping defines an action that transforms shopping into experience with entertainment, a new strategy developed by retailers and innovators. Boedeker (1995) defines the concept of recreative shopping as an indicator of the tendency to explore in the context of shopping. Recreation can be defined as the sum of the activities that people can do alone or with pleasure with their free will in their free time and as a result of which they have fun, rest, feel a refreshment, renewal and enjoyment in body and spirit (Ardahan et al., 2016, p.11). Recreative shopping consumers represent those who pursue non-functional shopping purposes. Products, retail environment and service factors are very important for recreational shopping consumers who spend time and effort for shopping activity and make use of the inherent benefits of shopping (Hibbert & Tagg, 2001). Recreative shopping consumers are different in quality from economic shopping consumers who are not satisfied with the basic needs. Recreative shopping consumers enjoy the pleasure of shopping with friends, giving advice, looking for discounts, using discount coupons, and prestigious brands. Advertising tends to affect the purchasing decisions of recreational shopping consumers (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Ohanian & Tashchian, 1992).

In spite of leisure time, people choose the recreational activities that they can reach the fastest and most effective when the race is highest. Shopping can be one of these activities. Shopping areas seem to be the most popular place in the field of commercial recreation. Within the scope of recreational shopping, going to the cinema, playing games, eating are the main activities of people (Argan et al., 2016). When evaluating traditional and new shopping malls in terms of changing consumer culture, the following results appear (Şimşek 2018):

- Transformation of shopping spaces from traditional open market culture into closed spaces affects social relations.

- Closed shopping areas increase the happiness levels of consumers with their different designs.
- The fact that the shopping places are in the city centers increases the frequency of shopping.
- Since traditional shopping places are formed in urban planning, they develop in harmony with their surroundings and are shaped in accordance with the surrounding roads and structures.
- The presence of certain products and services on the same street in traditional shopping venues enables both consumers and tourists to find products and facilities together, and price and quality control together. (Şimşek, 2018: 87).

According to Rajagopal (2009), the ambiance of shopping venues, the variety of stores, sales discounts and economic gains greatly increase the customer traffic. In particular, advertisements tend to affect the purchasing decisions of recreational shopping consumers. In addition, recreational shopping consumers prefer products with prestigious brand names, upper-scale stores, and trendy clothes (Ohanian & Tashchian, 1992).

**Table 1.** Percentage Distribution of Leisure Activities

Activity Name	Man %	Woman %	Total %
Go to cinema	9,8	10,8	8.8
Go to theater	1,7	1,6	1.8
Go to concert	2,2	2,3	2.1
Paintings, museum, etc. go	1,4	1,3	1.4
Go to the library	3,1	2,8	3.3
Participating in sports activities as spectators	3,5	5,9	1.2
Visiting relatives	69,9	68,3	71.4
Visiting friends	55,7	55,1	56.4
Going to the fair, kermes, festival	3,5	32	3.8
Going to picnic	12,8	13,6	12.1
Reading newspapers and magazines	39,4	48,8	30.1
watching TV	94,6	95,6	93.6
Listening to the radio	39,6	43,2	36.1
Entertainment and socializing places (patisserie, coffee shop, cafe, bar etc.)	28,8	38,6	19.2
Go to internet cafe	4,0	7,1	1.0
<b>Getting around the shopping mall</b>	<b>40,5</b>	<b>42,8</b>	<b>38.3</b>
Daily tours, joining trekking	2,1	2,3	1.9
Spending time on social media	33,9	41,7	26.2
Solve puzzles, sudoku etc.	13,0	15,5	10.6
Knitting, patchwork, sewing, embroidery, wood painting	12,7	0,4	24.8
The others	0,2	0,3	0.2

**Source:** (TÜİK, Zaman Kullanım Araştırması, 2014-2015 nar from Karaküçük et al., 2016: 44).

Percentage distribution of leisure activities by Turkey in the leisure and recreational use of the work not done much about life in his Turkstat Time Use Survey 2014-2015 are given as shown in Table 1. Among these activities, watching TV with 93.6% in total, then visiting relatives (71.4%) and friends (51.4%). Participation in leisure activities in shopping centers was determined as 38.3%. (Karaküçük et al., 2016, p.442).

Turks have built the foundations of modern shopping malls in the past as inns, later on, bedestens and covered bazaars. In the next process, it appears as passages. The bazaars that formed over time were the markets, shopping places on the pedestrian road, shopping areas along the road of the vehicle road, and finally modern shopping places (big stores, supermarkets, hypermarkets, shopping malls, urban shopping centers, urban shopping centers) evolved (Şahin, 2015). Beginning in the second half of the 15th century, the Ottomans built structures consisting of shops

lined up on one axis and named them “arasta”. Arastas are still shopping places used from the past (Şahin, 2015, p.2881). Actions by shopping spend their leisure time in Turkey is increasing. One of the most important indicators of this is the people entering the souvenir shops in the cities they travel. Grand Bazaar, Spice Bazaar, Tahtakale, Izmir Kemeralti etc. in Istanbul. places are among the places that people only visit for shopping. (Göker, 2014, p.195).

In our country, some researches that measure consumer perceptions with shopping tourism have been carried out. Buluk (2016) was conducted in order to measure the quality of service of the salespeople working in the shopping centers in the city of Istanbul and to determine to what extent the criteria that make up the service quality are important. The service quality that German tourists perceive from the salespeople working in the shopping centers in Istanbul province is higher than the service expectations in line with the sub-dimensions of “friendliness, kindness, benevolence, ability to deal with consumer needs and gift packaging”, on the other hand, salespeople are helpful and friendly towards them. Despite their behavior, their inability to speak foreign languages, on the other hand, was found to cause service quality to fall below their expectations in line with the sub-dimensions of “German speaking skills and giving information skills”. Öndoğan (2016) has examined the consumption rituals in Konya Bedesten with an artisan perspective. Meetings were held with the tradesmen operating in the Bedesten Bazaar of Konya, and information was collected on the old and new consumption habits of the customers and the effect of this situation on their commercial functions. Today, different consumption habits are directly related to the changing social, cultural and individual structure, and this affects the works of Bedesten tradesmen who are insufficient to meet consumer expectations. However, with the efforts made by Bedesten tradesmen to keep pace with change and meet consumer expectations, it has been observed that a positive belief is that it will continue to keep the traditional bazaar culture alive. Dinçer and Kanay (2017) evaluated the Grand Bazaar in terms of shopping tourism and the current status, advantages and disadvantages, physical and social texture of the shopping in the Grand Bazaar were discussed. Then, suggestions were made to regain the importance of the potential of this space in the city. As a result of the research; It is understood that the Grand Bazaar is one of the most important destinations of Istanbul in terms of shopping tourism and it has a great tourist attraction, but in today's conditions, advertising and marketing tools are not used well and also the historical Grand Bazaar culture has changed. According to the results of Zengin and Şengel (2014) researches on the perception of the Istanbul Grand Bazaar tradesmen on tourism, it is possible to say that the bazaar tradesmen do not have sufficient knowledge about tourism. It was also determined that there was a consensus that the Grand Bazaar is an important resource for Istanbul tourism. Erşahin and Demirkol (2020) aimed to determine the dissatisfaction factors of visitors participating in shopping tourism and to contribute to the existing e-complaint studies in the tourism industry. In the study, it was determined that the most complaints were the sale of non-featured products, which can be found everywhere, at higher prices.

### **Edirne Selimiye Arastası**

Arasta, one of the first examples of shopping centers in the Ottoman period, is defined as an open or closed market structure, consisting of rows of shops lined up on an axis in Ottoman architecture. It is estimated that such structures were started after the second half of the 15th century (Uğurlu, 2010, p.7). Selimiye Arastası, one of the most important bazaars of the Ottoman period in Edirne, still maintains its importance today. Located in the complex of Selimiye Mosque, the bazaar continues to be one of the indispensable shopping centers of tourists. Built in 1590 by Murat III to cover the expenses of Selimiye Mosque, the masterpiece of Mimar Sinan, the market continues to cover the

expenses of the historical mosque for 428 years (Demirci, 2018). Recently, Edirne has started to gain importance in its commercial life. The shops selling touristic items are in the majority. It is also a preferred shopping center for local and foreign tourists visiting the Selimiye Mosque. Arasta: It is defined as "the department where the tradesmen doing the same work in the bazaars". Selimiye Arastası In order to bring income to Selimiye Mosque; After the construction of this mosque, during the reign of Sultan Murat III, the architect of Mimar Sinan was built by Davut Ağa. As one of the reasons for making Arasta; The need to support Selimiye Mosque from the west and south direction is given in architectural terms (Edirne Vergi Dairesi Başkanlığı, 2020).

## **Methodology**

### **Aim and Importance of the Research**

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the number of foreign visitors coming to Edirne in 2019 is 4,348,565 people (Culture and Tourism Ministry, 2019). Selimiye Mosque, on the other hand, was visited by 2 million people in 2017 and 2.5 million people in 2018. Selimiye Mosque visited 3 million people in 2019 (Ensonhaber, 2020). In addition, Edirne Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ETSO) President Recep Zıpkinkurt stated that 2019 was a very bright year for Edirne, and that the Greek and Bulgarian tourists coming to the city spent approximately 100 Euros per person and contributed to the economy of 270 million Euros. It has. However, the most important reason for Greek and Bulgarian tourists to come to Edirne is the depreciation of the TL against the Euro. Last year, Edirne was flocked with tourists from neighboring Bulgaria and Greece. Due to the exchange rate difference, tourists who come to the city with special vehicles and tours for shopping buy almost everything from food to textile. According to 2019 data at Kapıkule, İpsala, Hamzabeyli, Pazarkule Border Gate, which opened to Greece and Bulgaria, 2 million 166 thousand 483 Bulgarians, 570 thousand 382 Greek tourists entered Edirne, the number of citizens of the two countries was 2 million 736 thousand 865. Bulgarian and Greek tourists, who prefer weekends, stay in hotels at night while shopping. They spend about 100 Euros per person in our surveys about the money Greek and Bulgarian tourists spend in the city. Accordingly, 270 million euro has been contributed to the country's economy (Ministry of Commerce, 2020). Considering the touristic structure of Edirne and the number of tourists visiting the Selimiye Mosque, Selimiye Arastası is an important and touristic shopping destination for tourists and craftsmen.

Shopping tourism is very important in the economic development of touristic destinations. Shopkeepers are an important tool in shopping tourism. For this reason, issues such as the tradesmen's interest in the shopping trends, their approaches, economic contributions, their level of satisfaction with tourists, and language problems are important. For these reasons, in this research, an investigation was made on the perceptions of the tradesmen of Edirne Selimiye Arastası towards the shopping tendencies of the Bulgarian tourists. For this purpose, data was collected through a face-to-face questionnaire for the tradesmen of Edirne Selimiye Arastası. Within the scope of the research, besides the demographic features of the tradesmen, how long they have been trades, what days, how often the Bulgarian tourists shop, how much time Bulgarian tourists spend shopping, what kind of products they buy the most, how much they spend, how they come to shopping, and in what season, which currency they prefer in shopping, whether they like bargains, whether they prefer local products, whether they are loyal customers, whether they have complaints from artisans or not. In addition, topics such as whether Bulgarian tourists have contributed to the economy of Edirne, satisfaction with income generated by Bulgarian tourists, and the language problem with Bulgarian tourists have been investigated. Since Bulgarian tourists have been coming to Edirne for intensive shopping

for several years, it is anticipated that the research will contribute to the literature as the subject is up to date. It can be suggested that the results of the research will be beneficial to destination marketers.

### Sample of the Research and Data Collection Tool

In this research, using the quantitative research method, survey technique was used to collect data. The authors personally contributed to the creation of 24 different questions by examining the studies in the literature (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Ohanian & Tashchian (1992); Boedeker (1995); Hibbert & Tagg, 2001; Backström (2006); Rajagopal (2009) in the form of the questionnaire. In the research, primary and secondary data sources were used. In the research, related literature, scientific studies, internet resources and various statistical researches were used for secondary data sources. In the first part of the questionnaire form, demographic questions about trades are included. Then, the statements of the tradesmen of Edirne Selimiye Arastası, which measure the perspectives of Bulgarian tourists, are given. The questions were prepared as multiple choice.

The research questions were applied face to face to the tradesmen of Edirne Selimiye Arastası between 29 November 2019 and 1 March 2020. Although there are 124 shops in Arasta, according to official records, data were collected from 80 tradesmen who were openly, since the remaining shops were closed. Easy sampling method which is not probabilistic was used in sample selection. According to this sampling method, it was tried to reach everyone in a certain place in a certain time period (Kozak, 2014, p.118). Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to evaluate the data obtained. Descriptive analysis is generally applied to define the properties of variables (Nakip, 2003, p.236). The collected data were analyzed in the statistical package program, then converted into tables and these tables were interpreted.

### Results of the Research

Descriptive analyzes were applied in accordance with the purpose of the research. The findings among the demographic characteristics of the tradesmen of Edirne Selimiye Arasta are given in Table 2. 70% of the participants are male and 30% are female. Among the marital status of the participants, 70% are married and 30% are single. 51.2% of tradesmen who participated in the research are high school graduates. While 33.8% of the participants in the study were between 35-44 years old, the group with the highest monthly income was between 37.5% and 2001-3500 TL.

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics of Edirne Selimiye Arasta Tradesmen

n= (80)	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Woman	24	30,0
Man	56	70,0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	56	70,0
Single	24	30,0
<b>Education Status</b>		
primary education	6	7,5
High school	41	51,2
Undergraduate and associate degree	28	35,0
Graduate	4	5,0
Total	79	98,8
Missing data	1	1,3

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics of Edirne Selimiye Arasta Tradesmen

Age		
18-24	15	18,8
25-34	17	21,3
35-44	27	33,8
45 -54	10	12,5
55 +	11	13,8
Total	80	100,0
Income		
2000tl and down	14	17,5
2001-3500	30	37,5
3501-4000	17	21,3
4001-5000	9	11,3
5001-6000	5	6,3
6001 tl and up	4	5,0
Total	79	98,8
Missing data	1	1,3

**Table 3.** Statistical Data of Bulgarian Tourists Regarding Tradesmen's Perspectives on Shopping for Tourism

n= (80)	n	%
How many years have you been trades in this area?		
1-5 year	18	22,5
6-10 year	29	36,3
11 year and up	33	41,3
Total	80	100,0
Which days of the week do Bulgarian tourists shop more often?		
weekdays	2	2,5
weekend	54	67,5
Both Weekdays and Weekends	24	30,0
Total	80	100,0
How Much Time do Bulgarian Tourists Take for Shopping?		
1-2 hour	19	23,8
3-4 hour	30	37,5
5-6 hour	20	25,0
7 hour and up	11	13,8
What kind of products do Bulgarian tourists buy the most? (multiple options can be marked)		
textile products	46	57,5
Missing data	34	42,5
Food	56	70,0
Missing data	24	30,0
Gift items	53	66,3
Missing data	27	33,8
Technological products	4	5,0
Missing data	76	95,0
Cleaning products	22	27,5
Missing data	58	72,5
Others.....	3	3,8
Missing data	77	96,3
What is the average amount of spending Bulgarian tourists spend on shopping?		
100-300tl	21	26,3
301-500 tl	27	33,8
501-700 tl	18	22,5
701-900 tl	8	10,0
901 tl and up	4	5,0
Total	78	97,5
Missing data	2	2,5

**Table 3.** Statistical Data of Bulgarian Tourists Regarding Tradesmens' Perspectives on Shopping for Tourism

<b>How do Bulgarian tourists come to shopping?</b>		
Individually	7	8,8
In a group with the agency	6	7,5
Either way	66	82,5
Total	79	98,8
Missing data	1	1,3
<b>What season of the year do Bulgarian tourists go shopping? (multiple options can be marked)</b>		
In summer	42	52,5
Missing data	38	47,5
In winter	8	10,0
Missing data	72	90,0
In spring	27	33,8
Missing data	53	66,3
In autumn	13	16,3
Missing data	67	83,8
<b>Which currency do Bulgarian tourists prefer in shopping? (multiple options can be marked)</b>		
Dolar	5	6,3
Missing data	75	93,8
Euro	24	30,0
Missing data	56	70,0
Leva	49	61,3
Missing data	31	38,8
TL	35	43,8
Missing data	45	56,3
Other .....	3	3,8
Missing data	77	96,3
<b>Do Bulgarian tourists negotiate with tradesmen?</b>		
Yes	61	76,3
No	19	23,8
<b>Do Bulgarian Tourists Prefer Local Products for Shopping?</b>		
Yes	52	65,0
No	22	27,5
Total	74	92,5
Missing data	6	7,5

According to Table 3, 41.3% of the participants have been trades in Arasta for 11 years and above. In line with the information provided by the tradesmen, 67.5% of the Bulgarian tourists come to the weekend with a high rate, 37.5% of the Bulgarian tourists spend 3-4 hours on shopping, the most food (70%) and souvenirs (66.3%). stated that they bought textile products (57.5%). Bulgarian tourists spend 33.8% of shopping for 301-500 rubles, 82.5% of them go shopping both with an agency and individually (either way), with a maximum of 52.5% of the year shopping in the summer, the most Euros (It is seen that they shop in 61.3%) and TL (43.8%) currency. Stating that Bulgarian tourists love to bargain at 76.3%, tradesmen stated that 65% of Bulgarian tourists prefer local products.

**Table 4.** Statistical Data of Bulgarian Tourists Regarding Tradesmens' Perspectives on Shopping for Tourism (continuation of the table 3)

<b>n= (80)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Do you have any Bulgarian customers coming as a loyal customer?</b>		
Yes	62	77,5
No	16	20,0
Total	78	97,5
Missing data	2	2,5
<b>Do Bulgarian tourists have complaints from tradesmen's services?</b>		
Yes	20	25,0
No	57	71,3
Total	77	96,3
Missing data	3	3,8

<b>If your answer to the above question is "YES", what are the sources of complaints? (multiple options can be marked)</b>		
Low product variety	9	11,3
Missing data	71	88,8
Low product quality	2	2,5
Missing data	78	97,5
High prices	12	15,0
Missing data	68	85,0
Frequent changes in prices	8	10,0
Missing data	72	90,0
Other	8	10,0
Total	72	90,0
Missing data	8	10,0
<b>Do you think that Bulgarian tourists contribute to the economy of Edirne?</b>		
Yes	76	95,0
No	3	3,8
Total	79	98,8
Missing data	1	1,3
<b>If your answer to the question above is "YES", what is the contribution of Bulgarian tourists to your monthly average income?</b>		
1000-2000 tl	27	33,8
2001-3000 tl	17	21,3
3001-4000 tl	19	23,8
4001-5000 tl	4	5,0
5001-6000 tl	5	6,3
6001 tl ve üzeri	72	90,0
Total	8	10,0
Missing data	27	33,8
<b>Are you satisfied with the income generated by the Bulgarian tourists coming to Arasta?</b>		
Yes	68	85,0
No	9	11,3
Total	77	96,3
Missing data	3	3,8
<b>Do you have language problems in Bulgarian tourists?</b>		
Yes	35	43,8
No	43	53,8
Total	78	97,5
Missing data	2	2,5
<b>Which foreign languages can you speak in shopping? (multiple options can be marked)</b>		
English	49	61,3
Missing data	31	38,8
Bulgarian	51	63,7
Missing data	29	36,3
Greek	22	27,5
Missing data	58	72,5
Other Languages .....	7	8,8
Missing data	73	91,3
I can't speak any of them	14	17,5
Missing data	66	82,5
<b>Would you consider attending a free language course that the government plans to open?</b>		
Yes	54	67,5
No	25	31,3
Total	79	98,8
Missing data	1	1,3

According to Table, stating that 77.5% of Bulgarian tourists are loyal customers, the tradesmen stated that the tourists do not complain about 71.3% of them. Among the sources of complaints of the Bulgarian tourists, the high prices (15%) and the low product variety (11.3%) are among the thoughts of the tradesmen. 95% of tradesmen has imported that of Bulgarian tourists contribute to Edirne economy, 33.8% of this contribution to monthly average income is between 1000-2000 TL, 21% is between 2001-3000 TL, 23.8% is 3001-4000TL. Tradesmen stated that

53.8% of the tradesmen who were happy with 85% of the income generated by the Bulgarian tourists coming to Arasta stated that tradesmen didn't experience language problems with tourists, but 43.8% of them experienced this problem. When asked about the foreign languages they can use in shopping, 63.7% stated that they could speak Bulgarian and 61.3% said they could speak English. Would you have attended if there was a free language course that the government planned to open? 67.5% answered yes to the question.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Shopping tourism, which occurs in parallel with the development of urban tourism, is an important market for destination marketers. Especially our country takes its place in the world in an important position with both traditional shopping places and modern Shopping Centers. Shopping festivals are organized within the scope of shopping tourism in Ankara, Izmir and other metropolitan cities, especially Istanbul. Apart from the tourism sector, shopping is also a recreational entertainment that delights in the daily life of people.

Edirne Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ETSO) President Recep Zıpkıncı stated that the Bulgarian and Greek tourists who came to Edirne for shopping in 2019 approached 3 million people, left an income of 270 million Euros, and our target is to reach 5 million tourists from 2 neighboring countries in 2020-2021 (Haberler.com, 2020).

Edirne Province has made this destination an important shopping center because it is the capital city of the Ottoman Empire in terms of history, it is rich in terms of culture, and its local tastes have attractiveness, and most importantly, the Bulgarian currency Leva has increased against TL. In addition, Edirne Province is active in international tourism movements due to the border gates opening to Europe. These movements turned Edirne into a shopping center for Bulgarian and Greek tourists. Edirne Selimiye Arasta is in a more privileged position compared to the tradesmen outside due to its historical and touristic attraction. In this study, it was tried to evaluate the relationship between Edirne Selimiye Arastası and the shopping tourism of the Bulgarians from an artisan perspective. The important results of the research are as follows;

- In line with the information provided by the tradesmen, Bulgarian tourists mostly come to the weekend.
- Bulgarian tourists spend 3-4 hours about shopping,
- Bulgarian tourists mostly buy food, souvenirs and textile products,
- Bulgarian tourists spent 301-500 TL on 33.8% shopping,
- The vast majority of Bulgarian tourists come to shopping both through an agency and individually (either way),
- The majority of Bulgarian tourists come for shopping in the summer,
- The currency most used by Bulgarian tourists is Leva and TL,
- The majority of Bulgarian tourists are tourists who like to bargain,
- Tradesmen stated that Bulgarian tourists prefer local products.
- In addition, tradesmen stated that Bulgarian tourists are loyal customers,
- Tradesmen stated that Bulgarian tourists do not complain to a large extent about the services provided to them.
- The tradesmen who stated that the complaint issues existed are among the sources of complaints of the Bulgarian tourists, the high prices and the low product variety.

- Tradesmen make up 95% of Bulgarian tourists contributing to Edirne economy, 33.8% of this contribution to monthly average income is 1000-2000 TL, 21%, 3% 2001-3000 TL, 23.8% 3001-4000 TL. He stated that he was among.

- 53.8% of the tradesmen, who are very satisfied with the income generated by the Bulgarian tourists coming to Arasta, stated that they did not experience language problems with tourists, but 43.8% of them experienced this problem. The fact that tradesmen have qualified personnel with language-speaking tourism education will contribute to them.

- They stated that they can communicate with Bulgarian and English among the foreign languages they can use in shopping. It is very important for tourism that tradesmen give priority to trained personnel who know several languages (especially Bulgarian, Greek, English) in recruitment.

- Would you attend if there was a free language course for the tradesmen that the state plans to open? 67.5% answered yes to the question.

*Recommendations to public institutions and organizations;*

- Trainings can be given to Arasta tradesmen to inform them about spending trends and buying behavior of Bulgarian tourists,

- Within the scope of the training, by making use of the information in this research, it is possible to arrange the opening-closing hours of the tradesmen shops according to the arrival times of the Bulgarian tourists. For example, the closing hours can be extended on the weekends when the tourists are busy during the summer months,

- Capacity can be increased with new accommodation facilities (hotel, motel, apart hotel, boutique hotel, etc.) that will be opened for tourists who come to the shopping on weekends.

- In addition to historical and cultural places, Shopping Centers in Edirne can be included in package tours for those who prefer the agency as the way of arrival of Bulgarian tourists.

- Local products of Edirne can be offered as gift packages for Bulgarian tourists who are interested in local products.

- It can be ensured that the prices, which are among the complaints of the Bulgarian tourists, are high and the product variety is low, and the prices can be reduced to more reasonable levels. Different touristic products (textile products, souvenirs, etc.) can be brought from a large, diverse city such as Istanbul.

- Just as there are people who have difficulties with the language of the tradesmen, there are also a few languages that do not have any problems.

- The tradesmen are positive about the free language courses that the public will open. For this reason, tradesmen should be helped to train with language courses. For this, support can be provided from academicians at universities.

It is also revealed that the shopkeepers of Arasta Bazaar in Edirne are interested in Bulgarian tourists, see the tourist as a guest, a friend, and show the necessary respect to the tourists. In addition, it was stated that during the making of the questionnaire, tradesmen preferred foreign tourists more in terms of shopping tourism due to their foreign currency contribution. The tradesmen stated that they show the necessary respect for tourists, they like to communicate with tourists, they maintain their friendship and friendships for many years by establishing bilateral relations with tourists. In addition, the fact that the tourists who have been shopping before come back to the workplace is an indication that the tourists are satisfied with the artisans and the loyal customer. The fact that

Bulgarian tourists are in contact with the local people and are interested in local products also pleases the shopkeepers. In this context, municipalities should organize trainings and seminars on shopkeepers about tourist behavior. This research only evaluates the shopkeeper's perspective on Bulgarian tourists. Future research may include sampling tourists from different nationalities.

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