MODERN DEVELOPMENTS IN DISTRIBUTIVE TRADE

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Abstract

Distributive trade represents a significant economic activity within national economy that links and mediates between production and consumption. Its importance is commonly indicated by its contribution to the national GDP and labour force employment. Institutionally, distributive trade is conducted by distributive trade enterprises that act as intermediaries and facilitators of exchange process between producers and consumers in a channel of distribution. By carrying out their specific channel functions, distributive trade enterprises contribute to the fulfilment of the main purpose of distribution channel as well as of value network as a whole – to efficiently satisfy consumers' needs by adding value through provision of time, place, possession and form utility. In this way, distributive trade directly interferes and influences people's standard of living and quality of life.

The purpose of the paper is to present research results on developments in distributive trade in Croatia and to compare them with those of developed European market economies.

Key words: distributive trade, developments, channel of distribution

1. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of distributive trade within economies is usually measured by its participation in GDP and the number of persons employed. Other indicators such as a number of enterprises engaged in distributive trade, their turnover and value added are used as well to determine the significance of distributive trade and degree of its development.

The paper aknowledges these findings and uses them to point out modern developments in distributive trade. Data on each aforementioned indicator have been collected and processed for the three best perfoming economic activities in Croatia as well as within the economies of the 27 member states of the European Union (hereinafter EU 27). Findings are presented in the form of tables comparable by the methodology, reference period, economic activity, employment size classes of enteprises and territory. Data presented in the first two subdivisions of the paper have been collected and processed from the national accounts statistics, while the latter ones have been sourced from the structural business statistics.

2. THE MAIN INDICATORS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND MODERN DEVELOPMENTS IN DISTRIBUTIVE TRADE

2.1. Gross value added and gross domestic product

Table 1. points to three the most significant economic activities in Croatia by gross value added in the GDP structure during the period 2004 – 2010. The proportion of distributive trade accounts for 10,4% on average that ranks it as the second most important economic activity just after Manufacturing. Unlike developments in other observed economic activities marked by the multiannual increase of the gross value added in the GDP structure (Real estate activities) or its decrease (Manufacturing), the main feature of developments in distributive trade can be described as volatile due to periods of the value rise, stability and, finally, decline.

Table 1 Gross value added according to NKD2007[14] and gross domestic product, structure, at current prices

	GDP structure, %						
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Manufacturing	15,1	14,5	14,0	14,1	13,5	13,3	13,6
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10,5	10,7	11,0	10,7	10,7	9,5	9,4
Real estate activities	7,6	7,6	7,9	8,8	8,5	9,0	9,1

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2013, p. 205; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2012 p. 201

At the EU 27 level as well, distributive trade is the second most important contributor of gross value added in GDP structure, just after Manufacturing, as accounted for 10,2% on average during the reference period (Table 2.). As it can be seen from the Table, developments in Manufacturing and Real estate activities correspondents to those in Croatia, while in distributive trade they show a tendency of decline.

Table 2 Gross value added (at basic prices) according to NACE Rev.2 and gross domestic product at market prices, structure

	GDP structure, %						
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Manufacturing	15,0	14,7	14,6	14,6	14,2	13,0	13,6
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10,4	10,3	10,1	10,1	10,2	10,1	9,9
Real estate activities	9,0	9,1	9,1	9,3	9,4	9,5	9,5

Source: author's calculation based on EUROSTAT data [online data codes: nama_gdp_c, nama_nace10_c and nama_nace21, access: 17.06.2014.]
Notes: Figures are rounded to one decimal place.

2.2. Number of persons employed

As a source of employment, distributive trade in Croatia averaged for 13,8% of persons employed during the period 2008 – 2012 that sets it as the third most relevant employer, after Manufacturingand Agriculture, forestry andfishing (Table 3). Presented data show a decline in employment in distributive trade as well as in Manufacturing.

Table 3 Distribution of persons in employment, according to NKD 2007

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	13,4	13,9	14,9	15,4	13,7
Manufacturing	18,6	17,2	16,4	16,9	17,4
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	14,7	14,3	13,2	13,2	13,5

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2013, p. 159; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2011, p. 154; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2010, p. 154

During the period 2008 – 2012 distributive trade employed 14,1% on average at the EU 27 level (Table 4.) Such proportion in total employment makes distributive trade the second largest employer, just after Manufacturing. The same developments present in Croatia can be noticed at the EU 27 level, too – a share in employment in distributive trade, as well as in Manufacturing, declines.

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[14]*NKD 2007. - Nacionalna klasifikacija djelatnosti, verzija 2007.* (hr.) - National Classification of Activities, 2007 version.*NKD 2007.*is based on and comparable to the Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community, NACE Rev. 2. An alphabetical codes used in the paper to identify economic activities classified into sections according to NACE Rev.2 / NKD 2007. are as follows: C Manufacturing; F Construction; G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; M Professional, scientific and technical activities.

Table 4 Distribution of employment by economic activity, according to NACE Rev. 2

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Manufacturing	17,3	16,3	15,9	15,9	15,8
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	14,2	14,2	14,1	14,0	14,0
Human health and social work activities	9,6	10,0	10,3	10,5	10,6

Source: author's calculation based on EUROSTAT data [online data code: lfsa_egan2, access: 17.06.2014.]
Note: As in Table2.

2.3. Number of enterprises within structural business statistics

More detailed data on the significance of distributive trade and its developments can be found within structural business statistics[15] where data on the performance of enterprises broken down by their size classes (measured in terms of the number of persons employed) have been collected and processed by Croatian official statistics since 2008.

In regard to that, Table 5. distinguishes three best performing economic activities by total of active business entities during the period 2008 – 2011 in Croatia. As it is evident from the Table, in spite of the downsize in the total number of enterprises, interrupted by the sudden rise in 2009, distributive trade continues to hold a leading position as it engages in more than 40 000 legal entities and natural persons. Similarly as in the structure of other economic activities, micro enterprises[16] dominate in distributive trade as account for more than 92,3% on average. Due to proportion of large enterprises that remains stable over the observed period, the share of small and medium-sized enterprises (hereinafter SMEs) in total number of enterprises in distributive trade stays constant at 99,8%.

Table 5 Number of enterprises, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NKD 2007

Year	Economic activity	Total number of enterprises	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	24 071	84,0	0 – 9
			15,2	10 – 249
			0,8	250 +
	F	24 824	89,2	0 – 9
			10,7	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +
	G	46 817	91,4	0 – 9
			8,4	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +
2009	C	25 351	85,2	0 – 9
			14,1	10 – 249
			0,7	250 +
	F	27 083	90,5	0 – 9
			9,4	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +
	G	49 330	92,5	0 – 9
			7,3	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +

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[15] Structural business statistics or non- financial business economy refer to economic activities classified by NACE Rev.2 into following sections: B (Mining and quarrying), C (Manufacturing), D (Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply), E (Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities), F (Construction), G (Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles), H (Transportation and storage), I (Accommodation and food service activities), J (Information and communication), L (Real estate activities), M (Professional, scientific and technical activities), N (Administrative and support service activities) and division 95 of section S (Repair of computers and personal and household goods).

[16] Enterprise sizes by the number of persons employed are as follows: micro enterprises< 10 persons employed, small enterprises between 10 and 49 persons employed, medium – sized enterprises between 50 and 249 persons employed, large enterprises ≥ 250 persons employed, small and medium-sized enterprises < 250 persons employed. In the paper, due to tables' limits, data on small enterprises (10-49 persons employed) and medium-sized enterprises (50-249 persons employed) are aggregated (10-249).

Year	Economic activity	Total number of enterprises	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2010	C	23 809	84,7	0 – 9
			14,5	10 – 249
			0,7	250 +
	F	24 671	91,6	0 – 9
			8,3	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +
	G	45 624	92,8	0 – 9
			7,0	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +
2011	C	22 216	84,2	0 – 9
			15,0	10 – 249
			0,8	250 +
	F	21 987	91,6	0 – 9
			8,2	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +
	G	41 834	92,5	0 – 9
			7,3	10 – 249
			0,2	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2013, p. 226; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2012, p. 222; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2011, p. 223; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2010, p. 577

Notes:
1. As in Table 2.
2. Due to rounding, structure's total may not equal exactly 100,0%.

At the level of the EU 27, presented data highlight distributive trade as an economic activity with the highest total of the active business enterprises, as well (Table 6.). Significant majority of micro enterprises (93,4% on average) opposes to the large enterprises whose share accounts for only 0,1%. Unlike recent downsizing developments present in Croatia, the number of enterprises engaged in distributive trade at the level of the EU 27 increases.

Table 6 Number of enterprises, by size class of number of persons employed, according to NACE Rev.2

Year	Economic activity	Total number of enterprises – EU 27	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	F	3. 297.727	92,6	0 – 9
			7,2	10 – 249
			0,1	250 +
	G	6.129.387	93,5	0 – 9
			6,4	10 – 249
			0,1	250 +
	M	3.431.852	96,2	0 – 9
			3,7	10 – 249
			0,1	250 +
2009	F	3.177.088	92,9	0 – 9
			7,0	10 – 249
			0,1	250 +
	G	6.065.504	93,3	0 – 9
			6,6	10 – 249
			0,1	250 +
	M	3.438.856	96,2	0 – 9
			3,7	10 – 249
			0,1	250 +

Year	Economic activity	Total number of persons employed	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2010	F	3.308.608	93,4	0 − 9
			6,6	10 − 249
			0,1	250 +
	G	6.222.356	93,5	0 − 9
			6,4	10 − 249
			0,1	250 +
	M	3.692.179	96,5	0 − 9
			3,5	10 − 249
			0,1	250 +
2011	F	3.244.741	93,4	0 − 9
			6,5	10 − 249
			: [0,1]	250 +
	G	6.229.767	93,3	0 − 9
			6,5	10 − 249
			0,1	250 +
	M	3.788.640	96,5	0 − 9
			3,5	10 − 249
			0,1	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on EUROSTAT data [online data codes: sbs_sc_sca_r2, sbs_na_dt_r2, sbs_sc_dt_r2, sbs_sc_con_r2 and sbs_sc_1b_se_r2, access: 18.06.2014.]
Notes:
1. As in Table 5.
2. : data not available but [calculated by an author under assumption of structure's total equals exactly 100,0%].

2.4. Number of persons employed within structural business statistics

Within structural business statistics, the same three economic activities with the highest total of active enterprises are the most significant employers in Croatia, as well (Table 7.). During the presented period, more than 250 000 persons employed on average emphasize distributive trade as the second most important employer within non-financial business economy, after Manufacturing, that confirms its earlier mentioned relevance as an employer. Data presented in the Table show a trend of decline in distributive trade, mainly in SMEs, whilst large enterprises operating with only 0,2% of total number of enterprises in distributive trade remain an important provider of jobs that continue to augment its already significant share.

Table 7. Number of persons employed in enterprises, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NKD 2007.

Year	Economic activity	Total number of persons employed	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	316 658	15,7	0 − 9
			44,1	10 − 249
			40,2	250 +
	F	163 257	32,7	0 − 9
			46,4	10 − 249
			20,8	250 +
	G	276 786	36,0	0 − 9
			38,2	10 − 249
			25,7	250 +
2009	C	297 314	17,3	0 − 249
			36,6	10 − 19
			38,0	250 +
	F	160 144	35,9	0 − 9
			45,1	10 − 249
			19,0	250 +
	G	270 728	38,0	0 − 9
			36,1	10 − 249
			25,9	250 +

Year	Economic activity		Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2010	C	281 220	17,1	0 – 9
			46,1	10 – 249
			36,8	250 +
	F	136 560	37,8	0 – 9
			43,5	10 – 249
			18,7	250 +
	G	250 642	37,4	0 – 9
			35,6	10 – 249
			27,0	250 +
2011	C	273 002	16,4	0 – 9
			46	10 – 249
			37,5	250 +
	F	120 587	36,6	0 – 9
			44,2	10 – 249
			19,0	250 +
	G	239 934	35,4	0 – 9
			36,2	10 – 249
			28,4	250 +

Source: As in Table 5.
Notes: As in Table 5.

In comparison to Croatia, some differences exist at the level of the EU 27. The three economic activities with the highest total of enterprises engaged in their performing are not the most significant in terms of persons employed (Table 8.). Additionally, as presented data highlight, distributive trade is the most important employer that reached in 2011 the highest absolute number of persons employed since 2008. Similarly to developments in Croatia, a majority of more than 70% on average is employed by SMEs while micro enterprises increase their proportion in total employment as well as large enterprises that already provide a significant share of jobs in the EU 27.

Table 8 Number of persons employed in enterprises, hundreds, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NACE Rev.2

Year	Economic activity	Total number of persons employed – EU 27	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	328.112	13,8	0 – 9
			45,7	10 – 249
			40,5	250 +
	F	144.867	43,4	0 – 9
			44,0	10 – 249
			12,7	250 +
	G	325.440	26,9	0 – 9
			33,5	10 – 249
			28,9	250 +
2009	C	304.091	13,7	0 – 9
			46,0	10 – 249
			40,1	250 +
	F	138.999	45,1	0 – 9
			42,5	10 – 249
			12,3	250 +
	G	329.086	27,6	0 – 9
			34,5	10 – 249
			28,3	250 +

Year	Economic activity	Total turnover, 000 kn	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2010	C	300.000	14,3	0 – 9
			45,8	10 – 249
			39,9	250 +
	F	134.913	45,9	0 – 9
			42,0	10 – 249
			12,0	250 +
	G	327.914	36,7	0 – 9
			35,0	10 – 249
			28,4	250 +
2011	C	301.000	14,3	0 – 9
			45,6	10 – 249
			40,2	250 +
	F	130.147	45,2	0 – 9
			42,6	10 – 249
			12,3	250 +
	G	330.130	36,1	0 – 9
			35,0	10 – 249
			28,8	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on EUROSTAT data [online data codes: sbs_sc_sca_r2, sbs_sc_ind_r2, sbs_sc_con_r2 and sbs_sc_dt_r2, access: 19.06.2014.]
Notes: As in Table 5.

2.5. Turnover within structural business statistics

In spite of the general decline in turnover within reference period in Croatia, distributive trade remains the economic activity that generates the highest absolute turnover within non-financial business economy (Table 9.). While large enterprises increase their proportion of turnover in distributive trade, SMEs still generate more than its 68%.

Table 9 Turnover of enterprises, thousand kn, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NKD 2007

Year	Economic activity	Total turnover, 000 kn	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	157 803 707	8,6	0 – 9
			38,6	10 – 249
			52,8	250 +
	F	75 990 984	23,1	0 – 9
			47,8	10 – 249
			29,1	250 +
	G	264 510 847	20,6	0 – 9
			50,5	10 – 249
			28,9	250 +
2009	C	127 894 579	9,8	0 – 9
			41,2	10 – 249
			49,0	250 +
	F	68 356 629	25,3	0 – 9
			46,2	10 – 249
			28,5	250 +
	G	225 409 191	21,2	0 – 9
			48,3	10 – 249
			30,5	250 +
2010	C	125 215 805	10,0	0 – 9
			41,2	10 – 249
			48,9	250 +
	F	51 486 305	26,4	0 – 9
			46,7	10 – 249
			27,0	250 +
	G	214 247 813	20,0	0 – 9
			48,3	10 – 249
			31,8	250 +

Year			9,4	0 – 9
2011	C	128 557 468	40,2	10 – 249
			50,3	250 +
	F	46 030 708	27,4	0 – 9
			46,5	10 – 249
			26,1	250 +
	G	221 044 342	19,2	0 – 9
			49,2	10 – 249
			31,7	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2013, p. 227; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2012, p. 223; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2011, p. 224; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2010, p. 578
Notes: As in Table 5.

At the level of the EU 27, distributive trade is not only the most important economic activity by the number of enterprises it engages in and by persons employed, but by the highest turnover as well (Table 10.). In comparison to other observed economic activities in the EU 27 and unlike to developments in Croatia, distributive trade succeeded in recovering in terms of turnover and break its 2008 level after drop in 2009. As in Croatia, large enterprises continue to increase their share in the structure of turnover at the account of the still prevailing SMEs that generate more than its 66% within reference period.

Table 10 Turnover of enterprises, million €, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NACE Rev.2

Year	Economic activity	Total turnover or gross premium written – EU27	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	7.140.000	5,7	0 – 9
			: [34,1]	10 – 249
			60,2	250 +
	F	1.918.098	35,4	0 – 9
			44,7	10 – 249
			19,8	250 +
	G	9.112.422	16,9	0 – 9
			: [50,6]	10 – 249
			32,5	250 +
2009	C	5.810.000	5,8	0 – 9
			34,1	10 – 249
			59,8	250 +
	F	1.600.431	34,8	0 – 9
			44,8	10 – 249
			20,4	250 +
	G	8.229.705	22,2	0 – 9
			44,1	10 – 249
			33,6	250 +
2010	C	6.410.000	5,6	0 – 9
			33,6	10 – 249
			60,7	250 +
	F	1.553.890	36,2	0 – 9
			43,9	10 – 249
			19,8	250 +
	G	8.870.866	22,5	0 – 9
			43,9	10 – 249
			33,8	250 +

			5,6	0 – 9
2011	C	7.000.000	33,2	10 – 249
			61,1	250 +
	F	1.559.989	34,9	0 – 9
			44,8	10 – 249
			20,3	250 +
	G	9.506.673	21,7	0 – 9
			: [44,6]	10 – 249
			33,7	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on EUROSTAT data [online data codes: sbs_na_ind_r2, sbs_sc_sca_r2, sbs_sc_ind_r2, sbs_sc_con_r2 and sbs_sc_dt_r2, access: 19.06.2014.]
Notes: As in Table 6.

2.5. Value added within structural business statistics

As with turnover, there is a general decline in value added within reference period in Croatia, as well, that ranks distributive trade to the second place, just after Manufacturing (Table 11.). Additionally, large enterprises engaged in distributive trade increase their contribution in the value added at the account of SMEs whose participation is more than 71% on average.

Table 11 Value added at factor costs of enterprises, thousand kn, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NKD 2007.

Year	Economic activity	Total value added at factor costs, 000 kn	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	44 093 673	8,7	0 – 9
			40,1	10 – 249
			51,0	250 +
	F	22 238 509	21,4	0 – 9
			50,3	10 – 249
			28,4	250 +
	G	37 924 867	24,3	0 – 9
			50,0	10 – 249
			25,7	250 +
2009	C	37 904 599	9,2	0 – 9
			42,9	10 – 249
			47,9	250 +
	F	20 843 942	22,2	0 – 9
			47,3	10 – 249
			30,4	250 +
	G	32 818 841	25,3	0 – 9
			46,7	10 – 249
			27,9	250 +
2010	C	36 088 668	8,9	0 – 9
			42,5	10 – 249
			48,6	250 +
	F	16 071 191	21,2	0 – 9
			47,3	10 – 249
			31,5	250 +
	G	29 925 593	23,6	0 – 9
			46,0	10 – 249
			30,4	250 +

			8,1	0 − 9
2011	C	35 610 024	41,6	10 − 249
			50,3	250 +
	F	12 698 409	21,9	0 − 9
			49,8	10 − 249
			28,3	250 +
	G	29 775 805	22,2	0 − 9
			47,4	10 − 249
			30,4	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2013, p. 227; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2012, p. 223; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2011, p. 224; Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia 2010, p. 578
Notes: As in Table 5.

At the level of the EU 27, distributive trade is ranked as second, after Manufacturing, as well (Table 12.). Unlike developments in Croatia, distributive trade has recovered after a drop in value added in 2009 and reached its peak value in 2011. Already predominant proportion of the SMEs that account for more than 68% on average is additionally strengthened by the most recent developments in the structure of value added.

Table 12. Value added at factor costs of enterprises, in million €, by size classes of number of persons employed, according to NACE Rev.2

Year	Economic activity	Value added at factor costs – EU 27	Structure, %	Enterprise size classes
2008	C	1.670.000	7,5	0 − 9
			: [38,6]	10 − 249
			53,9	250 +
	M	573.650	40,0	0 − 9
			37,8	10 − 249
			22,3	250 +
	G	1.151.266	20,5	0 − 9
			: [48,2]	10 − 249
			31,3	250 +
2009	C	1.400.000	: [7,7]	0 − 9
			38,5	10 − 249
			53,8	250 +
	M	519.000	38,4	0 − 9
			: [37,7]	10 − 249
			23,9	250 +
	G	1.109.543	24,8	0 − 9
			43,3	10 − 249
			31,9	250 +
2010	C	1.590.000	7,1	0 − 9
			37,4	10 − 249
			55,0	250 +
	M	560.532	39,8	0 − 9
			: [37,3]	10 − 249
			22,9	250 +
	G	1.145.812	25,9	0 − 9
			42,0	10 − 249
			32,3	250 +
2011	C	1.650.000	7,3	0 − 9
			37,6	10 − 249
			54,9	250 +
	M	580.427	39,7	0 − 9
			37,5	10 − 249
			22,8	250 +
	G	1.193.564	25,7	0 − 9
			: [42,6]	10 − 249
			31,7	250 +

Source: author's calculation based on EUROSTAT data [online data codes: sbs_sc_sca_r2, sbs_sc_ind_r2, sbs_sc_dt_r2 and sbs_sc_1b_se_r2, access: 19.06.2014.]
Notes: As in Table 6.

3. CONCLUSION

The paper presented main findings on indicators usually used to measure the importance of distributive trade and deployed them to point out modern developments that have been occurring in Croatia and at the level of EU 27. A conclusion could be drawn on the existence of a significant degree of convergence among them. A trend of decline in the contribution of distributive trade in gross value added in the structure of GDP is present in Croatia as well as at the level of EU 27. In spite of that, distributive trade is still ranked as the second most important economic activity. Similar developments regarding employment and its proportion exist in Croatia as well as at the level of EU 27. Additional similarities are revealed by the structural business statistics. These are distributive trade's prevalence in the number of active business entities, dominance of micro enterprises in total number of business entities or multiannual constant proportion of large enterprises. Regarding persons employed, convergence can be seen in the majority employed by SMEs or rising influence of micro enterprises and large enterprises in employment. Data on turnover and value added in Croatia and at the level of EU 27 rank distributive trade at first and second place, respectively.

The verification of the findings could be included in the future research conducted at the more detailed level of analysis such as on the structure of the distributive trade's divisions.

4. REFERENCES

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