



Romania

One in ten Romanians living in a town has a credit card

GfK Romania has created a profile of the users of credit cards and looked at how the use of this type of banking product has changed over the past two years. The credit card lost much of its popularity during the period of 2008 and up to the second half of 2009. In January 2008, 11% of the total urban population aged 15+ was using this type of banking product but by September 2009 the number of users had halved. Since late 2009 the growth has resumed so that, currently, 10% of the urban population holds a credit card.

Although the economic crisis has deepened in 2010, a possible explanation for the return to favour of credit cards over the last year comes from the fact that banks have sustained their focus on promoting shopping cards with the emphasis on the various benefits, including the extended period of grace before paying interest.

This banking product is used, in particular, by employed persons, especially those working in management positions or as specialists with a higher educational background. Those who have a personal income of over 1300 lei per month also use credit cards more than the general population do - 17% compared to 10% of the urban population as a whole.

Most holders of this type of card use it to pay for purchases in stores, but a significant proportion - 25% - limit themselves to ATM withdrawals.

Credit cards go with hi tech

An analysis of the urban population aged 15+ shows that credit card users tend to be people more attracted to hi-tech products, more so than the rest of the population. A higher proportion of people in this segment than from the overall population are particularly attracted to new technologies or they consider it important to at least keep up-to-date with them. Holders of credit cards also tend to be the people who use more hi-tech products, such as laptops or PCs and mobile phones. This difference is not just due to the fact that this segment has higher incomes than the general population. Moreover, if a comparison is drawn between them and people with an above average income, in general, there are still differences:

Credit card holders in urban areas	Persons with incomes over 2,500 lei per household, urban areas
Mobile Phone: 98%	Mobile phone: 89%
Laptop: 33%	Laptop: 21%
Desktop PC: 65%	Desktop PC: 48%



The "Influencers"

In general, credit card holders go shopping more often than the rest of the population and they also get more enjoyment from this activity. For example, they are more inclined to buy things for themselves as a reward or as an indulgence.

An interesting segment of the population is represented by the "influencers" of consumption, i.e. those who have access to a variety of social groups and tend to provide advice and recommendations to these groups on various product categories. There is a higher proportion of influencers to be found amongst credit card holders than amongst the urban population as a whole or amongst the population with an above average income. The users of these banking products exert a particular influence in the markets for furnishing homes or decorating, out-of-home places for leisure activities and the markets related to healthy lifestyle, fitness and physical exercise.

The data underlying these findings come from two studies conducted by GfK Romania: GfK FMDS and Roper Reports Romania 2010.

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