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Global shopping center development at all time high

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Global shopping center development continues apace with growing middle class populations and retailer expansion leading to unprecedented levels of construction and new openings, largely in emerging markets, according to global property advisor CBRE.

CBRE measured the level of shopping centre development in 180 of the world's major cities to identify the most active markets, both in terms of 2011 completions and space currently under construction. The research found that development activity has reached significant levels, with 29.6 million square metres under construction - equivalent to all the combined existing space in France, United Kingdom (UK) and Germany - while 7.8 million square metres of new space opened in 2011. Emerging markets such as China, Turkey, and India are far more active than the more mature markets of western Europe and North America. Growing middle class populations have led to an upsurge in new development to meet demand, while the maturity of the retail sector in western Europe and North America has forced retailers from these markets to cross borders in order to grow their businesses.

Neville Moss, EMEA head of retail Research, CBRE, said, "It is our view that shopping centre development activity is currently at an all time high, with growing middle class populations, particularly in the BRIC markets, fueling this demand. The shopping centre concept, once the preserve of the western world, is becoming ubiquitous. China has led the way in recent years and with huge opportunities still existing in its secondary cities, it is likely to remain the most active development market over coming years. However, the upsurge in development is also evident in Turkey, Mexico, Malaysia and Vietnam among others."

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