

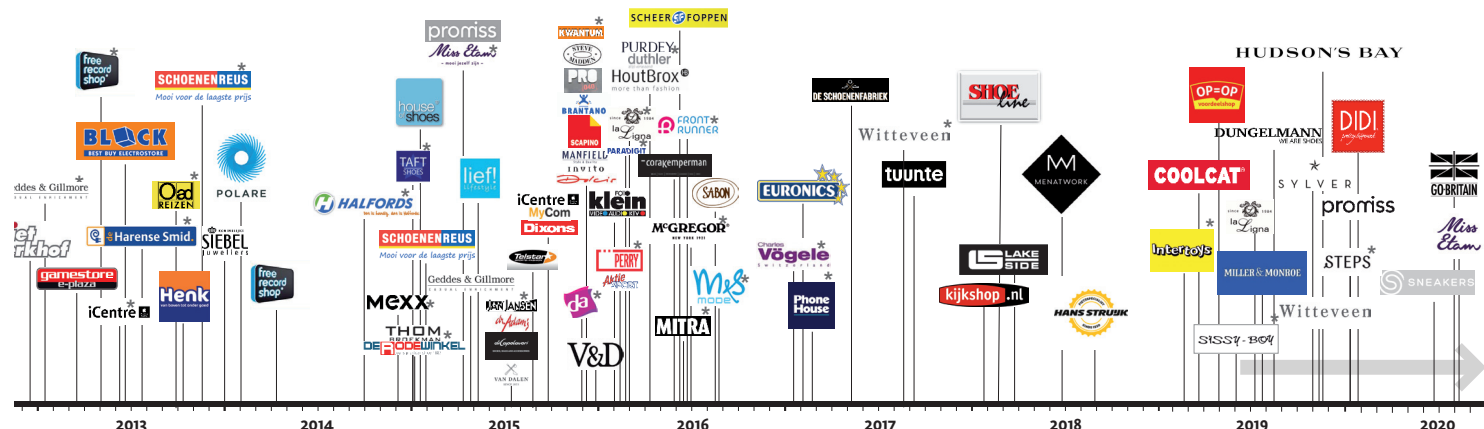
# Summary

Many shopping areas are facing problems. The number of visitors is decreasing, and turnovers are under pressure. Lack of occupancy and urban decay are imminent. Commissioned by INretail, DTNP drew up the manual 'Vitality through policy' which examines the way in which municipalities and provinces may prevent a crisis on the retail market as well as the decline of city centers. The main recommendation: make choices. There are many shopping areas with good future prospects, too. Proper management of these areas will encourage the market to venture into new investments.

## Demand for physical stores is diminishing

For years, the number of stores has been decreasing in the Netherlands. In the first decade of the 21st century, however, the total retail area still grew significantly. Since the area grew faster than the population, each resident gained an average of  $\pm 20\%$  in store meters in those years (up to a total of  $\pm 28\text{M m}^2$ ), but retail sales did not keep up with this growth. The growth in meters came to a halt in the second decade. Online purchases have been on the rise, while physical stores are confronted with not only different but also less frequent demands from their customers.

## Timeline of retail chains that went bankrupt or closed their stores



Many local suppliers were displaced as a result of subsidiarization, and now the retail chains are also disappearing from the shopping streets. The physical retail market has changed in the past 20 years from a growth market into a shrinking displacement market.

## Virtually all retail locations are (partially) vulnerable

We are heading towards a future with even fewer stores and higher vacancy rates and/or a need for transformation. The coronacrisis speeds things up (fastforward online purchasing). In particular, peripheral locations that focus on convenience and low prices are losing terrain to the internet. Our centers, too, have elements that are vulnerable, but they retain future value as a (supra)local service nucleus and central meeting place.



'Online purchase channels are gaining more and more ground'

# Vitality through policy

## Authorities as the driving force behind a sound retail structure

# Summary

## If everything is allowed, nothing will happen

Many market players hesitate to invest. Others attempt to save their vulnerable location by adding even more stores. However, not every market initiative contributes to a sustainable and attractive retail structure. There is a striking consensus among market parties to call on the authorities to make choices and pursue policies. After all, if 'everything is always allowed', this will only lead to uncertainty among developers, owners and stores. In that case, they will not be quick (or able) to invest, certainly not at expensive city center locations. Proper management by the authorities is essential for a sound retail structure and dynamic city centers.

## Choices: investment and quality

Well thought-out regional and municipal retail policies provide clarity and certainty to market parties. The pooling of scarce market potentials offers opportunities for relatively complex projects at central locations and this is exactly where most promise is held for stores and other public functions in the longer term. Compact locations will arise with sufficient 'critical mass' for visitors to provide quality and allure. Weak store projects with a short life cycle are avoided. This results in a sustainable retail structure.

## The ABC of 'getting started'

The manual 'Vitality through Policy' concludes with a practical ABC to get authorities (and market parties) started. It lists 'Seven Golden Tips' for retail policies that are tenable in terms of planning and legislation, promising retail locations, and strategies for phasing out disadvantaged locations. The manual can be downloaded free of charge from [www.dtnp.nl](http://www.dtnp.nl) and [www.inretail.nl](http://www.inretail.nl).

## 'Pursuing enhancement and transformation based on a contemporary vision on retail structure'

