



Food for Thought

Understanding the Impact of Rural Food Shop Closures
and Strategies for Preventing Inequality in Food Access

Master Thesis

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Understanding the Impact of Rural Food Shop Closures and Strategies for Preventing Inequality in Food Access

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Abstract

Rural areas in the Netherlands are experiencing a decline in food shop availability, raising concerns about food accessibility, social cohesion, and spatial justice. While the concept of "food deserts" has been often used in the urban setting, rural food access remains underexplored. This thesis explores food shop closures in rural areas between 2016 and 2021, focusing on their spatial patterns as well as the social and symbolic consequences for communities.

Using geospatial analysis, news content, and policy reviews, this study connects shop closures to shifting consumer habits, low revenues, demographic change, and increased mobility. While car owners can adapt easily when a food shop closes, less mobile residents have more problems accessing food. Food shop closures disrupt daily routines, reduce social contact, and decrease village identity. Beyond physical access, they affect livability and community cohesion. Provincial policies acknowledge the issue but are quite vague, whereas local initiatives offer more practical solutions.

This research proposes three strategic approaches, starting with early recognition and tailored responses to potential closures. Second, efforts to maintain a food shop within the village. Third, when a food shop is not feasible, alternatives must focus on maintaining social meeting points to still have informal networks. Overall, it combines accessibility, livability, and spatial justice to inform equitable rural food strategies.

Rural food accessibility, livability, social cohesion, spatial justice, supermarket closures, and Bottom-up Initiatives

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Introduction 1



Title: Milk delivery at home (1956)
Source: Spaarnestad Photo

In popular media, there are reports about a decrease in the facilities in rural villages like supermarkets, butchers, bakeries, and salons in the last decades (NOS, 2017). This raises concerns about the accessibility of food. A lack of food, especially healthy food, leads to several types of diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer (WHO, 2020). According to WHO (2020), a healthy diet consists of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and whole grains, while minimizing sugar, unhealthy fats, and salt. The decline of facilities shows a longer-term transformation in the Dutch food retail system. Sluijter (2007) mentioned that in the Netherlands, food retail historically consists of small, specialized shops, such as independent grocers for dry goods, dairy vendors for milk, bakers for bread, and butchers for meat. This changed with the introduction of the self-service food shop model, which was brought to the Netherlands from abroad in the mid-20th century. These food shops offered convenience and lower prices by combining products in one building and changing to customer self-service. Furthermore, Sluijter (2007) mentions that this concept became more popular in the 1960s and 1970s, as national retail chains expanded and more households had access to private transport. Nowadays, supermarkets have replaced many traditional food shops and have become the main source of groceries.

While these food shops brought efficiency and convenience, their centralization of groceries also resulted in villages becoming more dependent on a single facility for both food access and informal interaction. As these centralized shops have now begun to disappear in smaller villages, new concerns are emerging about the accessibility of food provision in rural contexts. Media attention on the accessibility to food began in the late 90s in the British media (Cummins & Macintyre, 1999). The term "food deserts", a phrase by Beaumont et al. (1995), has been widely used but lacks a clear definition. Cummins (2002, p. 436) describes food deserts as "populated urban areas where residents do not have access to an affordable and healthy diet." Barnett (2019), describes it as areas with gaps in food shops in poor and underserved neighborhoods, often lacking food shops or access to healthy food. Overall, food deserts are areas with limited access to affordable, healthy food. Often, the result of supermarket closures, low-income levels, and transportation barriers. Despite the amount of research, most studies on food deserts have focused on urban areas, particularly in the US and the UK.

When focusing on the Netherlands, some research has been conducted about food deserts in the urban setting, one in Amsterdam (Helbich et al., 2017) and another one in The Hague (Janssen et al., 2022). The study in Amsterdam found no clear evidence of food deserts, while the research in The Hague showed that food insecurity in disadvantaged neighborhoods is rather the result of economic and social factors than the physical access to food. These findings show that access to healthy food in urban areas is not the result of physical access to healthy food.

While urban food access has received much more academic attention, rural food access issues remain largely understudied (Ramos-Truchero, 2024). Although it is mainly overlooked, some studies have been done in the rural areas of the Netherlands. An example is the research of Haartsen and Gieling (2021), which focused on the supermarket closure in Ulrum. This closure resulted in a perceived decline in livability because the supermarket was seen as a symbol of independence. While many residents of Ulrum preferred shopping in larger and cheaper supermarkets nearby, the loss of the local store reduced social interactions and informal meeting opportunities. Another study, conducted by Christiaanse (2020), focused on how accessibility to essential facilities has changed between 2000 and 2012 in the Dutch province of Friesland. They found that supermarkets have decreased by 15% and that the decrease in facilities is not in line with population decline. Although there was a decline in supermarkets, most residents still had a supermarket within 5km.

At the same time, mobility patterns have shifted in recent decades (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). Where the privately owned cars increased from roughly 350 to 500 cars per 1000 inhabitants between 1990 and 2020 (Zijlstra et al., 2022). The increased mobility enabled rural residents to travel to larger towns for groceries and other services, reducing their dependence on local facilities (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). As a result, rural residents are less dependent on the facilities and services of their village for daily necessities, leading to a decline (Gielsing et al., 2019). De Vries et al. (2016) mention that the average distance to the nearest supermarket in the Netherlands has increased from 2.11 kilometers in 2008 to 4.7 kilometers in 2014.

In addition to shifts in mobility, the Netherlands is also experiencing changes in demographics according to the CBS (n.d.). CBS (2024a) states that since the early 21st century, the population growth has mainly concentrated in and around major cities of the Randstad and other large cities across the Netherlands. At the same time, municipalities in rural areas face population decline because young people move to cities for work or study. Other reasons mentioned are the aging population, where in 1990, 12,8% of the population was above 65 years old, which increased to 20,5% in 2024 (CBS, 2024a). Furthermore, another decline can be seen because of deaths that outnumber births. Besides that, household sizes in the Netherlands are shrinking due to fewer children, more people living alone, and an increase in separations (CBS, 2021). This means that residential areas have fewer people on average. Resulting in a shrinking catchment area for services in rural areas, impacting the feasibility of local facilities.

The problems mentioned above, such as a small number of inhabitants, an aging population, and a lack of access infrastructure, make rural villages less attractive for commercial services (Miller et al., 2015). As a result, rural areas experience a decline in essential services. One consequence of this decline is the rising cost of food in rural areas and fewer healthier options. The lack of competition in rural areas drives up food prices, while low consumer demand limits variety and access to fresh products (Ramos-Truchero, 2024).

When rural food shops in the Netherlands close, the distance increases. Most of the time, a supermarket is close by and can be easily reached. While driving is an option for many, for elderly and less mobile residents this becomes a problem, often left without alternatives (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). These accessibility issues are becoming more of a problem because of the ageing population in the Netherlands, as mentioned above. Overall, Haartsen and Gieling (2021) mention the primary and secondary functions of a supermarket. The primary function of the supermarket is buying groceries, this function can be adapted most of the time by going to the town nearby. However, the secondary function as a meeting place will be gone. Especially in rural areas, the supermarket functions as (in)formal meeting place, where it creates a place for planned or spontaneous interactions and brings people together.

While research on healthy food access has mainly focused on the urban setting, rural food accessibility remains underexplored in academic research and policies. Some studies have been conducted in the Netherlands, however, they took place in specified areas like the province of Friesland (de Vries et al., 2016). Overall, the decline of rural food shops is not only influenced by spatial factors, but also by economic, social, and policy factors. Residents adapt by traveling to nearby towns when mobility increases, whereby those without transport face significant problems. These supermarkets have an important role in rural villages, as they function as social places besides providing groceries.

Despite these challenges, rural food accessibility is still underexplored. This research aims to showcase why and where food shops close, what the consequences are, and identify strategies for sustainable and equitable food access in rural areas. Investigating these interconnections is needed for developing strategies that look further than physical distance, including social factors as well. Although this research focuses on rural areas, it directly contributes to the AMS Institute's urban challenge on Metropolitan Food Systems (AMS Institute, n.d.).

This research begins by examining where food shops closed between 2016 and 2021 and why they closed. It then investigates the consequences, focusing on the functional, social, and symbolic impacts of losing a food shop. Finally, the analysis focuses on provincial policy documents to identify proposed strategies for addressing shop closures. These will be complemented by local initiatives from villages that solved or mitigated the problem of losing a food shop. Eventually, it proposes a set of strategies for preventing closures or mitigating the effects of closures.

Research Questions

How do rural food shop closures in the Netherlands impact population groups, and what strategies can either prevent closures or mitigate the effects of closures?

This research examines the impact of rural food shop closures on population groups in the Netherlands, considering both the social and symbolic functions. Additionally, it evaluates strategies, which are aimed at preventing closures and mitigating spatial inequalities in food accessibility.

Sub-Questions

SQ1: What are the spatiotemporal patterns of food shop closures in rural areas in the Netherlands and the socio-demographics of these areas?

SQ2: How do food shop closures in rural Dutch villages affect residents' daily routines and access to food?

SQ3: What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to prevent closures or mitigate the effects of rural food shop closures?



Title: Self-service shop Gebrs. Van Woerkom (1953)
Source: Regionaal Archief Nijmegen

To understand the consequences of rural food shop closures, this thesis builds on a theoretical framework that integrates three concepts: livability, accessibility, and spatial justice. These concepts provide lenses for examining how closures affect individuals and communities. Livability shows how well environments meet human needs, while accessibility focuses on place-based and person-based barriers to reaching services such as food. Spatial justice shows an ethical lens to geography, questioning the fairness of the distribution of food shops. Within this framework, the impacts of food shop closures are analyzed with functional, social, and symbolic dimensions that affect daily routines, social cohesion, and perceptions of village identity. Together, these concepts show where and why food access has decreased, and how this loss impacts rural life, especially for vulnerable groups.

2.1 Livability

According to Veenhoven (1993, p. 6), livability is "the degree to which provisions and requirements of an area align with human needs and capacities." Van Kamp et al. (2003) explore various definitions of livability, concluding that livability is a measure of how well an environment supports human well-being, daily functioning, and social interactions. This means that livability is how well an environment meets human needs. Lui et al. (2020) evaluate livability in two ways, a subjective and an objective approach. The first is based on personal perceptions, experiences, and satisfaction with living conditions. Examples of subjective livability are a sense of community, safety perception, social connections, happiness, and emotional attachment to a place. In this context, a food shop in rural areas adds subjective livability by serving as a social hub, creating interactions and strengthening communities (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). On the other hand, the objective approach is measured through tangible, quantifiable factors, such as accessibility to food, healthcare, education, public transport, crime rates, pollution, and housing quality.

For understanding livability and food access, the framework of Hierarchy of Needs by Maslow (1943) is a useful framework, which illustrates how environmental factors affect human well-being. The model shows five levels of needs, structured as a pyramid. In this pyramid, individuals must satisfy basic needs (e.g., food, water, shelter) before seeking higher-level needs (McLeod, 2024). Since food is a fundamental need, access to food is essential. A lack of it affects well-being and livability and prevents individuals from achieving higher levels of personal and social development.

In summary, livability is how well an environment meets human needs. It can be evaluated in two ways, the subjective and objective approaches. Wherein, a lack of food access has a direct impact on livability, affecting both individual and community well-being and limiting opportunities for social and economic development. It provides a lens of understanding how the loss of food shops affects individual well-being and community well-being.

2.2 Accessibility

To understand how physical and social factors influence food access, the concept of accessibility is introduced. Accessibility is an important concept in urban and rural planning, where Hansen (1959) defines it as the potential of opportunities for interaction. Geurs and van Wee (2004, p. 128) expands on this by describing it as "The extent to which land-use and transport systems enable (groups of) individuals to reach activities or destinations by means of a (combination of) transport mode(s) at various times of the day (perspective of persons)". Overall, this means how easily people can reach places and activities using different transport options at different times of the day. Kwan (1998) makes a distinction between place-based and people-based accessibility. Place-based accessibility shows how easily locations can be reached from a fixed origin point, such as a home or workplace. This is a static measure based on distances and transport networks. In contrast, people-based accessibility focuses on the personal and social factors of an individual's ability to access services.

Building on Hägerstrand's (1970) time-geography framework, this approach recognizes that accessibility is not just about physical distance but also time constraints, mobility options, and socio-economic factors. Factors such as income, gender, age, car ownership, and work schedule all affect whether a person can realistically reach essential services, even if they are geographically nearby. To further refine the concept, Geurs and van Wee (2004) divided accessibility into four components: land use, transportation, temporal, and individual.

Land-Use Component

This part focuses on the spatial distribution of opportunities, such as supermarkets, jobs, and healthcare, as well as the demand at original locations (e.g., residential areas).

Transportation Component

The second part focuses on the effort, cost, and time needed to travel between origins and destinations using different modes of transport. Including travel times, costs, infrastructure quality, and reliability.

Temporal Component

Accessibility can vary due to temporal constraints, such as store opening hours and individual schedules.

Individual Component

Personal circumstances affect someone's accessibility, such as income, physical ability, transport availability, and education.

These components make accessibility a structured and measurable concept, making it easier to understand how various parts influence people's ability to reach destinations. Overall, this study is based on the idea that accessibility is more than physical distance to food shops, taking the personal and economic constraints into account as well that limit individual ability to access food. Accessibility theory helps analyze these barriers and can be used for understanding where shop closures occur and who is most affected.

2.3 Impacts of closure

Building on the concepts of livability and accessibility, this section explores how the closure of rural food shops impacts daily life, social cohesion, and perceived village identity. The work of Haartsen & Gieling (2021) identifies three dimensions to explain the effect of a closure. While accessibility frameworks show how distance, mobility, and infrastructure influence food access, they do not show how residents experience the loss of a food shop. Haartsen and Gieling (2021) show a better way to understand the closure of rural facilities and how it affects people. They identify three key dimensions of impact: functional, social, and symbolic.

Functional Impact

Facilities in rural villages primarily have a practical function by providing residents with access to daily needs, such as groceries (Gieling et al., 2019; Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). Haartsen and Gieling (2021) mention that the closure of these shops impacts daily life, requiring residents to find alternative options. This often results in travelling further and relying more on public transportation or other residents. Although most residents can adapt easily, the closure of local services limits the independence and quality of life for less mobile residents, particularly the elderly, disabled, and economically vulnerable (Gieling et al., 2019; Haartsen & Gieling, 2021).

Social Impact

Secondly, facilities and services have a social role for a village, as they are important for community life within small villages (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). These places are often described as the beating heart of a village and function as third places (Gieling et al., 2019). They provide places for meeting residents intentionally or spontaneously, which results in informal interactions and strengthens community cohesion (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). Gieling et al. (2019) and Christiaanse and Haartsen (2017) both emphasize the importance of these interactions for less mobile residents, including the elderly and disabled.

These groups rely more on local facilities to have regular and casual interactions with neighbors, such as food shops. These interactions are important for them, as their limited mobility limits their opportunities to socialize outside of the village. Overall, residents miss the contacts and casual conversations experienced during food shopping after a shop closure (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021).

Symbolic Impact

Lastly, facilities and services have symbolic meaning within rural villages. According to Haartsen and Gieling (2021), a local food shop represents a community's independence and its overall livability. Furthermore, it has a positive effect on a village's sense of identity and proof that the community is doing well (Gieling et al., 2019; Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). The closure of such a facility often results in a negative response and is felt as a decline in livability (Christiaanse & Haartsen, 2017). Although symbolic meanings may not directly affect residents' daily routines, they can influence perceptions of livability and village status (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021).

The framework developed by Haartsen and Gieling (2021) adds three impacts: functional, social, and symbolic. These closures not only reduce access to daily needs, especially for vulnerable groups, but also weaken social ties and affect how residents perceive the livability and identity of their village. Together, these insights show the consequences of rural service declining more than physical distance alone.

2.4 Food Deserts and Food Access

While these impacts above focus on the loss of a previously available service, some rural areas have not had a food shop for over a decade or more. In these cases, the issue is about the long-term absence of food access, often described as food deserts. Defined in the introduction as "populated urban areas where residents do not have access to an affordable and healthy diet." Barnett (2019). Although food deserts mainly focus on geographic distance, a broader concept is needed to include the social and economic barriers to food access as well. Ebugosi and Olaboye (2024) use the term food insecurity and define it as the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food insecurity affects individuals' physical health and affects a range of social and economic challenges as well (Ebugosi & Olaboye, 2024). FAO et al. (2019) similarly define food insecurity as inadequate physical and economic access to healthy foods.

A framework for understanding food accessibility barriers is the Social Ecological Model (SEM) (Bronfenbrenner 1979), which explores how individual, social, and environmental factors interact to shape behaviors. This model has been used in various fields to explore complex interactions that impact an individual's behavior (McClay et al., 2023; McLeroy et al., 1988; Nagel & Partelow, 2022). Building on this, Janssen et al. (2022) applied the SEM to analyze healthy food access in The Hague. This research is more easily defined as it developed three factors based on the original levels of the SEM, personal, social, and physical environmental factors. These are based on the individual level, microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem. The report doesn't take the macrosystem (policy) into account. The findings show that personal factors (such as income and education) have the strongest impact, followed by social determinants (employment status, civil status, and religion), whereas physical environment factors (such as proximity to supermarkets) have a relatively small role.

For fair access to food, spatial justice provides a lens for understanding unequal resource distribution between urban and rural areas. Jacobs (1961) and Gehl (2011) emphasize the human scale in urban and rural planning, advocating for equitable access to services to enhance social cohesion. Soja (2010) defines spatial justice as the fair distribution of resources, services, and opportunities, formed by geographic, economic, political, and social factors. Rocco (2023) further built upon Soja and categorizes spatial justice into three dimensions:

- **Distributive justice** focuses on ensuring equitable access to public goods, amenities, and essential services in both urban and rural settings.
- **Procedural justice** refers to how spaces are negotiated, planned, and managed by public and private actors.
- **Recognition justice** focuses on acknowledging and respecting the unique histories, identities, and needs of different social groups. Furthermore, ensuring that policies consider marginalized populations who may be disproportionately affected.

Food shop closures in rural areas, for example, increase spatial injustices as food shops disappear. As Mahon et al. (2023) argue, rural communities often face distributive inequalities in services, procedural exclusion from policy decisions, and a lack of recognition for their needs.

By integrating the Social-Ecological Model with spatial justice, this research examines how rural food shop closures impact different population groups and what policy strategies can mitigate food accessibility inequalities.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

To have a holistic overview of rural food shop closures, this thesis uses a conceptual framework inspired by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) SEM. As shown in Figure 1, the model has three layers, each showing a dimension of the research.

At the core is the personal level, which is shown as accessibility. This layer is how easily an individual can reach a food shop. It is about the presence and geographic location of food shops and focuses on concepts such as proximity, accessibility, and food deserts to assess spatial inequality and service decline in rural areas. Moving outward, the second layer focuses on social dynamics, exploring how shop closures affect community life, social cohesion, and well-being. It is based on livability theory and covers interactions between individuals and within communities. This layer captures both objective and perceived impacts on daily life. The outermost layer addresses governance, focusing on the role of public institutions, policies, and community-led initiatives in addressing closures.

While each dimension provides an analytical lens, they are interconnected with each other as well. For example, a decline in accessibility (resulting from a closure) often results in consequences for livability, including reduced independence, increased social isolation, and a weakened sense of place, particularly for vulnerable groups. As these effects grow, they will raise questions about governance and what is needed to solve this problem. At the same time, shortcomings in governance can create accessibility challenges, such as fragmented policies. In contrast, well-designed bottom-up initiatives can help restore a sense of livability by creating services and restoring social cohesion.

In this way, the framework functions as a dynamic feedback loop. Together, these layers structure the analytical lens through which the problem is approached. These layers will be the start of each sub-question, wherein Chapter 4.1 focuses on the layer accessibility. The layer of social dynamics is used in Chapter 4.2. Lastly, Chapter 4.3 was built upon the governance layer.

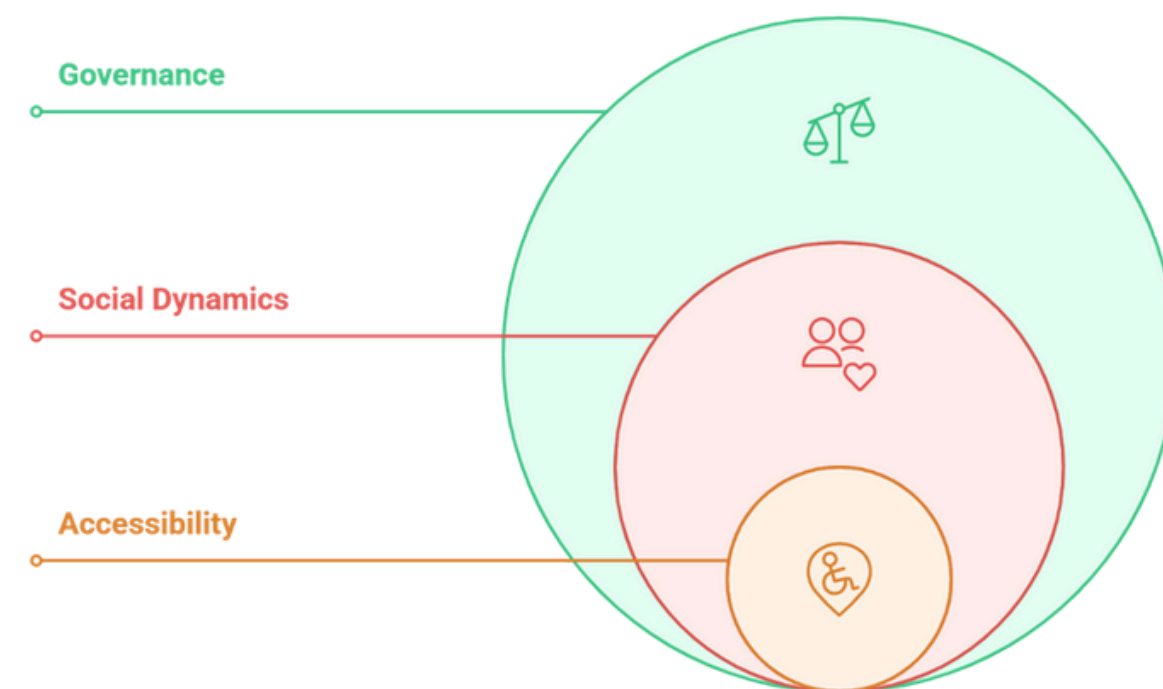
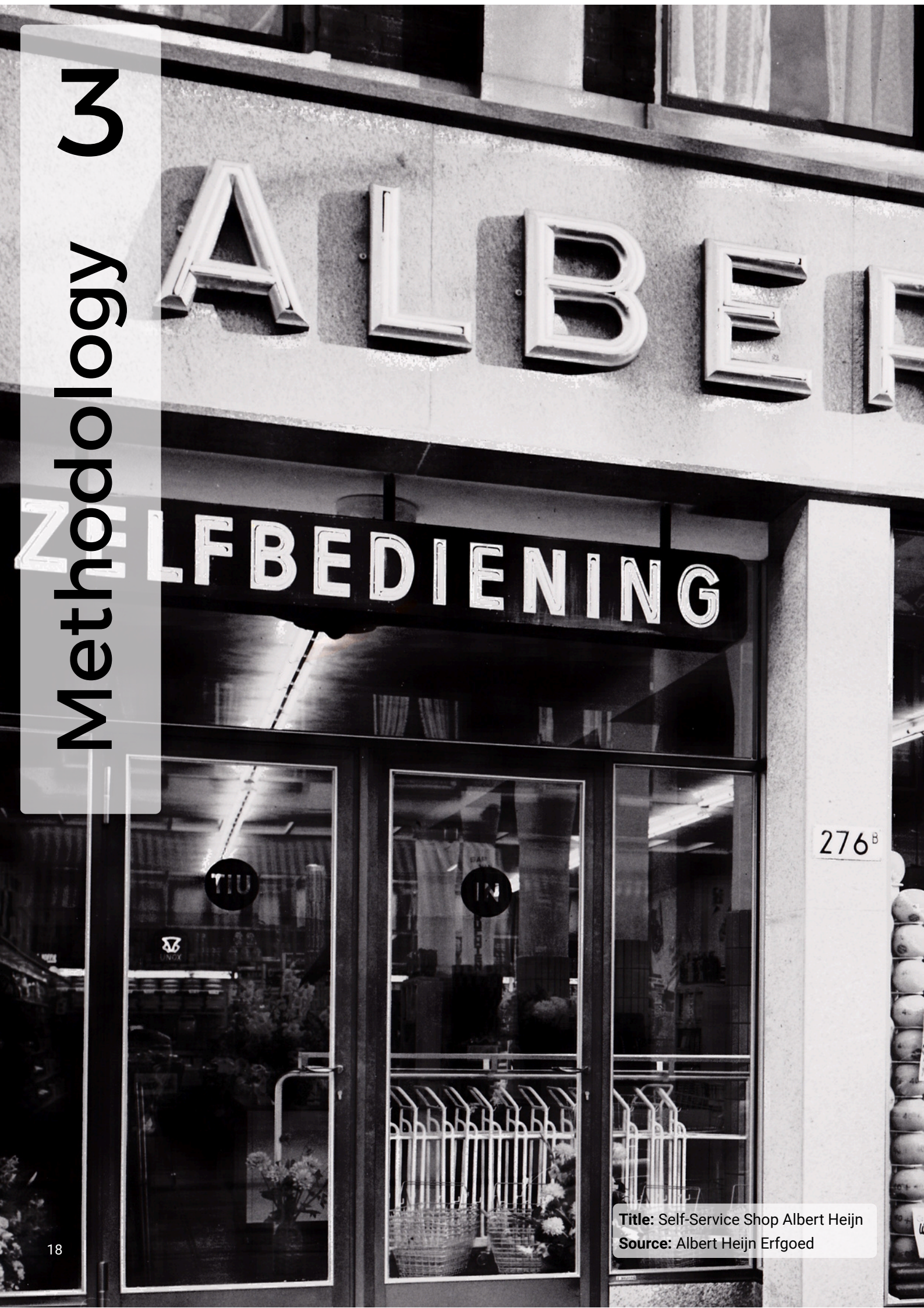


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (Own Image)



Title: Self-Service Shop Albert Heijn
Source: Albert Heijn Erfgoed

In the theoretical framework, three main layers were introduced and formulated from several theories. In this chapter, those layers will be made more tangible and tailored to each sub-question. Starting with the main research question, shown below.

How do rural food shop closures in the Netherlands impact population groups, and what strategies can either prevent closures or mitigate the effects of closures?

3.1 Sub-question 1

What are the spatiotemporal patterns of food shop closures in rural areas in the Netherlands and the socio-demographics of these areas?

Objective

This sub-question was built upon the layer of accessibility and aimed to identify which rural areas in the Netherlands have experienced a decline in food shop access over time, and the socio-demographic characteristics of these locations. I did this by visualizing the changes between 2016 and 2021, resulting in a map where closures have happened and why they closed.

Approach and Method

To answer this question, I conducted a geospatial analysis using QGIS. For this, I used data from CBS, specifically the 500x500 meter grid datasets from 2016 (CBS, 2019) and 2021 (CBS, 2024b). This data divides the Netherlands into squares of 500 meter x 500 meter, allowing for comparison across different years. I selected these years to have a five-year gap, and as datasets from 2022 and later do not include information on the average distance to the nearest food shop. The same goes for datasets before 2015. Each square contains several types of data, wherein the distance of to the nearest supermarket is described as "The average road distance for all residents in an area to the nearest supermarket. A supermarket is defined as a store offering various types of daily goods and with a minimum floor area of 150 m²." (CBS, 2024c).

Using Python, I created a new column in the 2021 dataset that has the difference in average distance to the nearest food shop between 2016 and 2021. Areas where this distance had increased were interpreted as locations likely affected by food shop closures. To better understand these locations and have a validation of my analysis, I further explored a selection of these locations. This was done by using online sources to identify closure reasons, such as news articles or municipal records

To focus more on the characteristics of affected populations, I used an additional grid dataset 2023 from CBS (2024d). This grid includes the number of residents aged 65 years and older. Instead of using absolute numbers, I calculated the percentage of elderly residents per grid cell by dividing the number of people aged 65 years and older by the total population in that grid cell. This allowed me to make better comparisons between rural areas with varying population sizes.

However, using the grid structure type of data creates the modifiable areal unit problem (MAUP), which can have an impact on the spatial accuracy of the results (Openshaw & Taylor, 1979). As the data is combined in geographic grid squares, smaller local differences may be hidden. This results in making it harder to see the actual impact on accessibility.

Output

This sub-question resulted in two maps. First, I created a national overview that shows where distances to supermarkets increased between 2016 and 2021. Second, I overlaid the changes with the percentage of elderly residents to identify areas where closures may disproportionately affect vulnerable groups. From the overview of closures, I analyzed why these food shops have closed. My analysis shows how food shop closures impact geographic accessibility and social equity in rural areas, by combining spatial and demographic data.

3.2 Sub-question 2

How do food shop closures in rural Dutch villages affect residents’ daily routines and access to food?

Objective

This sub-question aimed to understand the social impact of food shop closures on rural residents in the Netherlands. It captures the social dynamics that food shops bring to a village. I focused on how it affects residents' daily life, their social interactions, and the role of food shops as social hubs. Food shops in rural areas have a primary function (food access) and a secondary function (social function) (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021).

Approach and Method

For this sub-question, I researched the consequences in a structured way of primary and secondary functions, including the social and emotional meanings of food shops. As ‘Facilities and services can have functional, social and symbolic meanings for individuals and communities’ (Haartsen en Gieling 2021, p. 562).

To empirically explore the functional, social, and symbolic impacts of food shops, I conducted a content analysis using news articles from thirteen regional broadcasters across the Netherlands (Stichting Regionale Publieke Omroep, n.d.). I chose local news platforms as they tend to cover issues that may not be considered important by national media (Lai & Tang, 2015).

The following news outlets were analyzed.

- L1
- NH-Nieuws
- Omroep Brabant
- Omroep Flevoland
- Omroep Friesland
- Omroep Gelderland
- Omroep West
- Omroep Zeeland
- RTV Drenthe
- RTV Noord
- RTV Oost
- RTV Rijnmond
- RTV Utrecht

Based on their relevance, I selected articles on food shop closures in small towns and villages, with effects on daily life, social cohesion, and local identity resulting from food shop closures. I also considered articles about the opening of food shops and the effects these had, as they provided useful points of comparison. The search terms ‘dorp’ and ‘supermarkt’ were used, and only articles from 2015 and later were used. To systematically assess the consequences of closures, I structured an analysis around the three meanings: functional, social, and symbolic (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). These categories guided the content analysis and were used for coding.

To conclude, I examined the social impact of rural food shop closures, focusing on the effects on daily life, social interactions, and community well-being.

Output

This sub-question provides insight into how rural food shop closures affect residents, more than solely food access. The findings highlight disruptions to daily routines, a loss of informal meeting places, and declining feelings of community identity and livability. A combination of academic literature and experiences from local news is used for a better understanding of the social and symbolic consequences of food shop closures in rural areas.

3.3 Sub-question 3

What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to prevent closures or mitigate the effects of rural food shop closures?

Objective

This sub-question analyzed existing policies and initiatives that prevent closures or mitigate the effects of rural food shop closures. Focusing on strategies and policies at the provincial level in the Netherlands that address the issue of rural food shop closures. Furthermore, this is complemented by the initiatives mentioned in documents and during interviews. Overall, this sub-question was built upon the layer of governance and how things work with each other.

Approach and Method

For this sub-question, I used several methods to have a mixed-methods approach. Starting with a document review of the policy of the twelve provinces, desk research of initiatives that address the closure of rural food shops and complemented with interviews.

Policy Analysis

First, I conducted a document review of each of the provincial strategies on spatial planning and the environment (omgevingsvisie in Dutch). In total, I analyzed twelve documents (Table 1) for information on the decline of local facilities. For each province, I used the most recent version of the vision, whether finalized, in concept, or as a contour note. This was done to capture the most up-to-date perspective on the problem. In the table below, I created an overview of the different documents used, the year it was published, and if there are special remarks.

Table 1: Documents of Policy Analysis

Province	Year	Remarks	Source
Groningen	2025	This is a concept version	(Provincie Groningen, 2025)
Friesland	2020	There is a new version in development	(Provincie Friesland, 2020)
Drenthe	2024	This is a contour nota, a step before the full version	(Provincie Drenthe, 2024)
Noord-Holland	2018		(Provincie Noord-Holland, 2018)
Flevoland	2017	There is a new version in development	(Provincie Flevoland, 2017)
Overijssel	2024	This is a concept version	(Provincie Overijssel, 2024)
Gelderland	2018		(Provincie Gelderland, 2018)
Utrecht	2021		(Provincie Utrecht, 2021)
Zuid-Holland	2024		(Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2024)
Noord-Brabant	2018		(Provincie Noord-Brabant, 2018)
Zeeland	2021	This is revised in 2023	(Provincie Zeeland, 2023)
Limburg	2021		(Provincie Limburg, 2021)

The analysis focused on whether the provinces acknowledge the decline of rural services, what their vision is about livability and access to daily services in rural areas, and what strategies are proposed to prevent or mitigate the effects of closure.

Desk Research and Literature Review

To complement the policy documents, I identified additional strategies through targeted desk research and review of literature, including:

- Publications by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (Moerkamp, 2015)
- Practical examples mentioned during the interviews
- Initiatives published on the Katalys platform

Together, these provide examples of how communities and organizations are addressing food shop closures in rural areas.

Expert Interviews

Furthermore, I conducted semi-structured interviews (Appendix A) with representatives from rural support associations. These interviews provided insight into the types of initiatives being used, the challenges that arise in practice, and the strategies to address rural food shop closures.

Associations interviewed:

- Landelijke Vereniging Kleine Kernen (LVKK)
- Dorpshuizen en Kleine Kernen Gelderland (DKKGelderland)
- Brede Overleggroep Kleine Dorpen Drenthe (BOKD)
- Vereniging Kleine Kernen Limburg (VKKL)
- Groningerdorpen

Lastly, I transcribed interviews, and from these, strategies, challenges, and recommendations were identified.

Output

This sub-question resulted in an overview of how provinces address rural service decline in their policy visions and strategies. I used desk research and interviews to add practical examples from local initiatives, highlighting a range of community-led initiatives on maintaining food access. From these methods, I proposed a set of strategies aimed at addressing the decline of rural services and food access in small villages.

3.4 Research ethics

This research followed ethical guidelines that maintained the transparency of the data collected. Some interviews were conducted, therefore, participants were informed about the purpose of the study before the interview, and consent was obtained before data collection. Interviews were recorded with permission, transcribed, and anonymized. To protect participant anonymity, the interview transcriptions are not included in the appendix.

A bias may be present in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Coming from a municipality where food shops have disappeared from villages, I recognize their importance to rural communities. This personal experience shapes my perspective, but I tried to maintain objectivity by relying on evidence-based analysis, diverse sources, and methodological transparency. To minimize bias, I used different sources (triangulations) such as cross-referencing policy documents, statistical data, and interviews.

3.5 Trustworthiness

This study relies on qualitative analysis, and maintaining trustworthiness is essential. Therefore, the pillars of trustworthiness are used (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is divided into credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

Credibility

To ensure that findings reflect the reality of rural supermarket closures, triangulation is used. This is done by incorporating multiple sources of data, such as policy documents, interviews, and literature.

Transferability

Although this study is focused on the Netherlands, the findings can be used in other rural areas. There needs to be kept in mind the cultural, economic, and policy differences in countries.

Dependability

To ensure methodological transparency and consistency, all research steps are documented in the methodology. Especially the keywords used during literature research and the steps used in the geospatial analysis.

Confirmability

To ensure that findings are based on data rather than personal biases, this research used multiple sources of data, including policy documents, interviews, literature reviews, and geospatial analysis. By using different types of data, conclusions are not reliant on a single perspective.

With these strategies applied, this study enhanced its trustworthiness, ensured that findings accurately represent the realities of rural food shop closures.



Title: Grocer in Zwanenberg (1958)
Source: Brabant in Beelden

4.1 Geographies of Closures

What are the spatiotemporal patterns of food shop closures in rural areas in the Netherlands and the socio-demographics of these areas?

This chapter addresses the accessibility layer of the conceptual framework by analyzing the changes in distance to the nearest food shop in the Netherlands over a period of five years (2016–2021). In particular, the chapter pays attention to elderly residents, who are more likely to experience difficulties in adapting to increased travel distances. To explore these patterns, a map was created to show the difference in distance to the nearest food shop. Based on this, specific locations with visible changes were selected for a closer analysis. In these cases, potential causes of closure are explored to better understand them. By combining spatial analysis with demographic indicators, this chapter provides insight into where food shops have disappeared, why they closed, and where the elderly are most affected.

Starting with the GIS analysis, where the grid structure of CBS is used from 2016 (CBS, 2019) and 2021 (CBS, 2024b). The map in Figure 3 shows the difference between the distances in 2021 and 2016. Areas with closures are visible as clusters of squares where the average distance to the food shop has increased. These clusters show orange on the map, with darker orange in the middle. A zoomed-in figure of Meddo (Figure 2) shows the disappearance of the local food shop. As a result, the distance to the nearest food shop has increased for these residents

Furthermore, based on this GIS analysis, several patterns can be seen. In the northern, eastern, and southern provinces, the average distance to the nearest food shop has increased, indicating a decline in accessibility. Especially visible in the province of Gelderland, near the borders with Noord-Brabant and Germany. This area lost a lot of food shops between 2016 and 2021. In contrast, the western part of the Netherlands shows little to no increase in distance, likely due to its higher population density. However, the distance to supermarkets decreased, such as in parts of Groningen and Drenthe. This may result in food shop openings, however, this is not part of the scope of this thesis.

To complement the spatial analysis, media articles were analyzed to understand the reasons behind food shop closures. In Figure 3, several villages are marked with a circle to show where information was found on closures. Table 2 on the next page shows the locations and reasons why the shops closed.

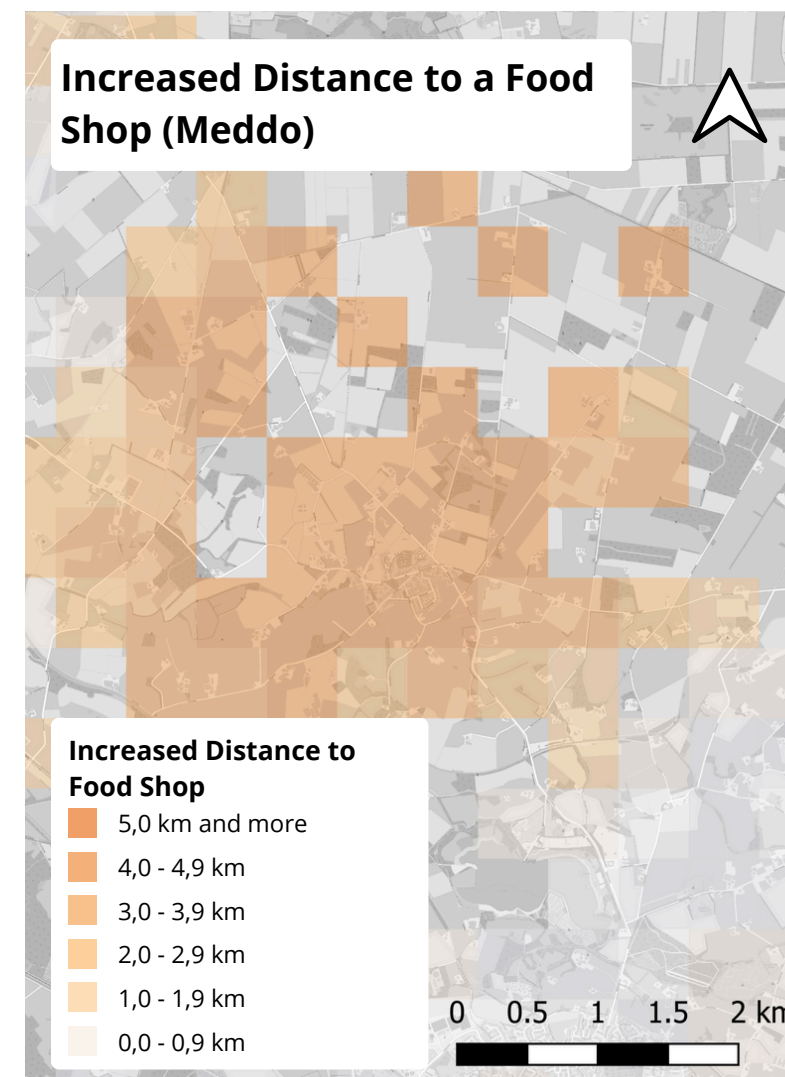


Figure 2: Increased Distance to a Food Shop Meddo (Own Image)

Increased Distance to a Food Shop

Increased Distance to Food Shop

- 5,0 km and more
- 4,0 - 4,9 km
- 3,0 - 3,9 km
- 2,0 - 2,9 km
- 1,0 - 1,9 km
- 0,0 - 0,9 km
- 0,0 km
- 0,0 - -0,9 km
- 1,0 - -1,9 km
- 2,0 - -2,9 km
- 3,0 - -3,9 km
- 4,0 - -4,9 km
- 0,5 km and more
- Closures in media

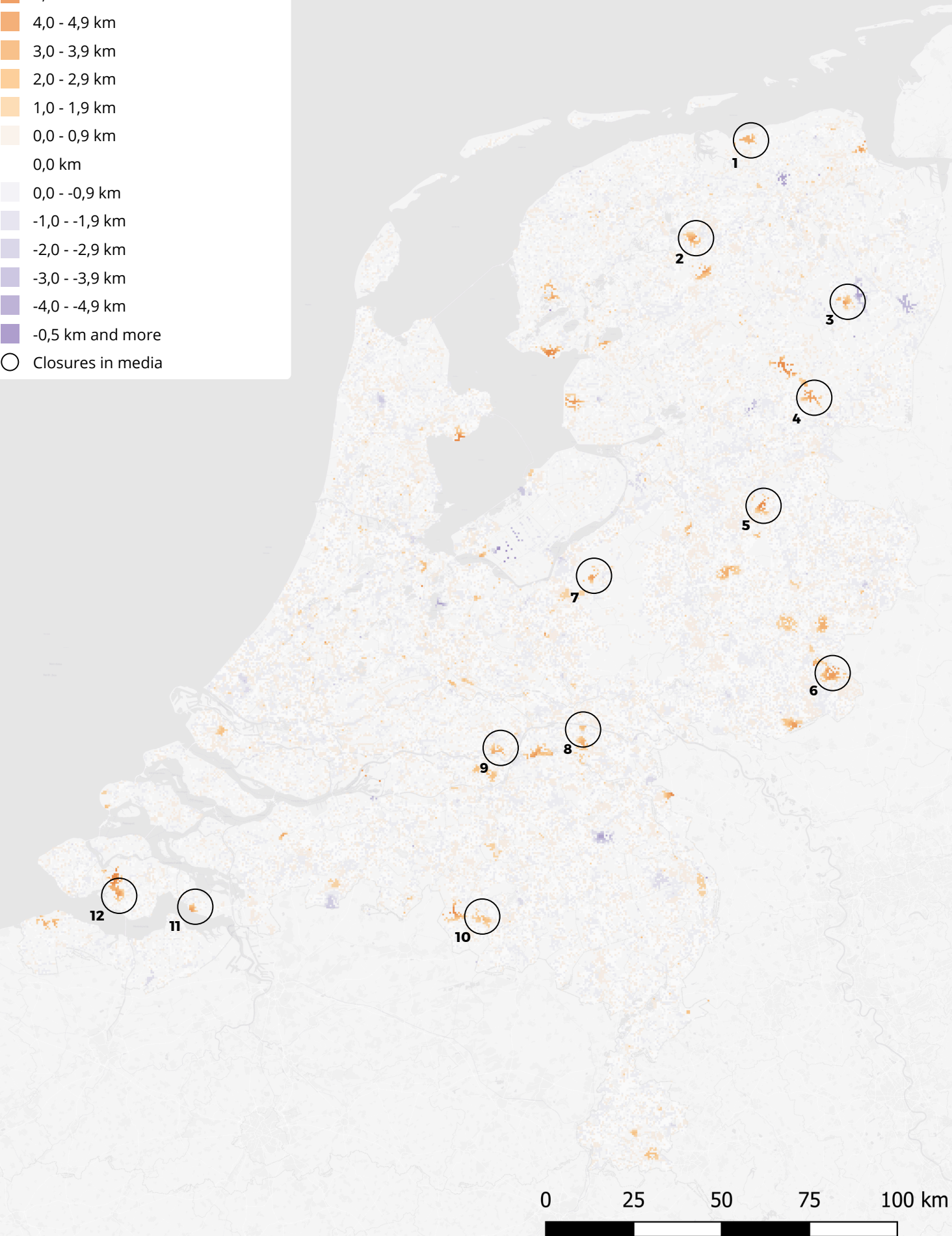


Figure 3: Increased Distance to a Food Shop Netherlands (Own Image)

Table 2: Reasons of Closures

	Village	Reasons	Source
1	Kruisweg	Shopping Elsewhere	(Ommelander Courant, 2020)
2	Drachtstercompagnie	Low Revenue, Shopping Elsewhere	(Omrop Fryslan, 2017)
3	Gasselte	Low Revenu	(RTV Drenthe, 2017)
4	Geesbrug	Shopping Elsewhere	(Dagblad van het Noorden, 2017)
5	Lemele	Shopping Elsewhere	(Ommenaar, 2019)
6	Meddo	Low Revenue, Shopping Elsewhere	(De Gelderlander, 2019)
7	Speuld	Low Revenue, Shopping Elsewhere	(Ermelo van Nu, 2017)
8	Deest	Low Revenue, Shopping Elsewhere	(De Gelderlander, 2020)
9	Opijnen	Shopping Elsewhere	(De Gelderlander, 2017)
10	Hoogeloon	Low Revenue, Shopping Elsewhere	(Eindhovens Dagblad, 2017)
11	Waarde	Rising Costs	(Omroep Zeeland, 2020)
12	's-Heerenhoek	Low Revenue, Rising Costs, Loss of Tobacco Sales, Shopping Elsewhere	(PZC, 2023)

In many Dutch villages, the food shops have been disappearing, which can be seen in Figure 3. In Table 2, several villages show where the food shop has closed and where articles were found with the reasons for closures. One of the main causes of food shop closure is the low revenue, which can be found in articles from PZC (2023), RTV Drenthe (2017), and De Gelderlander (2020). Small food shops often depend on regular weekly spending by residents, but when the population is small, the revenue needed isn't always reached. Shops in places like Drachtstercompagnie (2), Gasselte (3), Meddo (6), Speuld (7), Deest (8), Hoogeloon (10), and 's-Heerenhoek (12) struggled because revenue was too low to maintain profitability.

However, low revenue may be the main reason why a food shop closed, but many other reasons arise before. A much broader change in shopping behavior is visible, as residents prefer to shop in larger towns and cities. These bigger stores offer more variety in products and lower prices, as mentioned in articles from Ommenaar (2019), Ommelander Courant (2020), and De Gelderlander (2019). Villages like Kruisweg (1), Geesbrug (4), Lemele (5), and Opijnen (9) have seen their local shops become forgotten convenience stores, where they were used only for last-minute or emergency purchases. Over time, this resulted in less revenue and eventually the closure of these food shops. Rising operational costs added extra pressure. In places such as 's-Heerenhoek (PZC, 2023) and Waarde (Omroep Zeeland, 2020), energy prices became much higher, and older rental buildings were not suited to the needs of modern food shops. In addition, the ban on tobacco sales removed another source of income for small shops, as seen in 's-Heerenhoek, where tobacco is a large part of the revenue (PZC, 2023). In the interview with BOKD, it was added that rural food shops could close due to a lack of successors. For example, in Bornerbroek the food shop closed because the owner retired and could not find a successor for the food shop (RTV Oost, 2025). However, in Eext the owners retired, and the community eventually took over the store. Overall, this can be placed in a broader shift of an aging population, wherein they retire and fewer younger people to fulfill these functions.

In short, the closure of village food shops is rarely due to a single factor. Instead, it is the result of a combination, such as insufficient revenue, shifting consumer behavior, rising costs, and the loss of product groups like tobacco. As mentioned in the introduction, increased car ownership and mobility have reduced residents' reliance on local services. However, not everyone has this mobility, such as elderly or less mobile residents who often struggle to access alternatives. With the aging population in the Netherlands, the next analysis includes a focus on elderly residents to food shop closures.

Increased Distance to a Food Shop and Share of Elderly Above 65 Years old

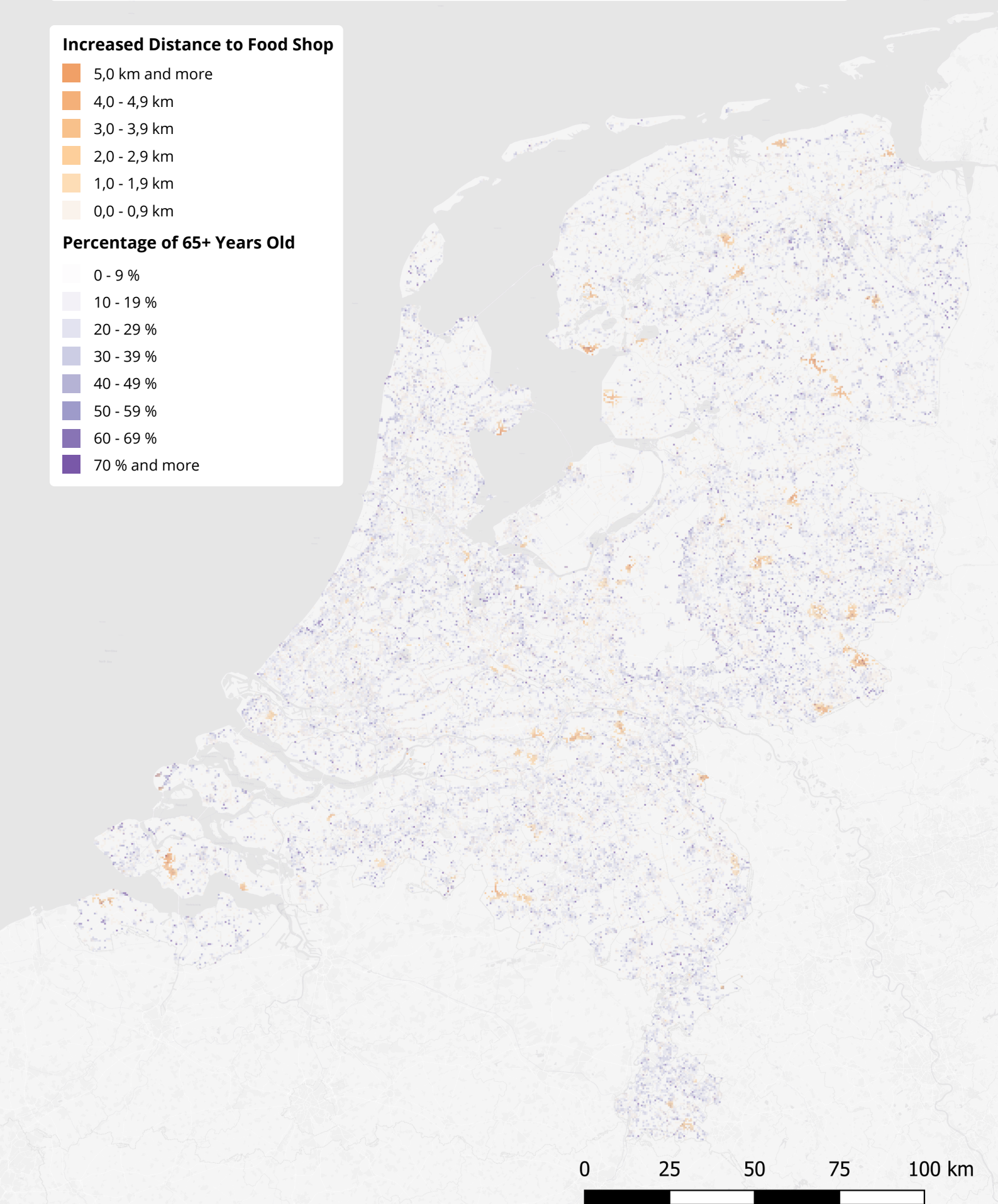
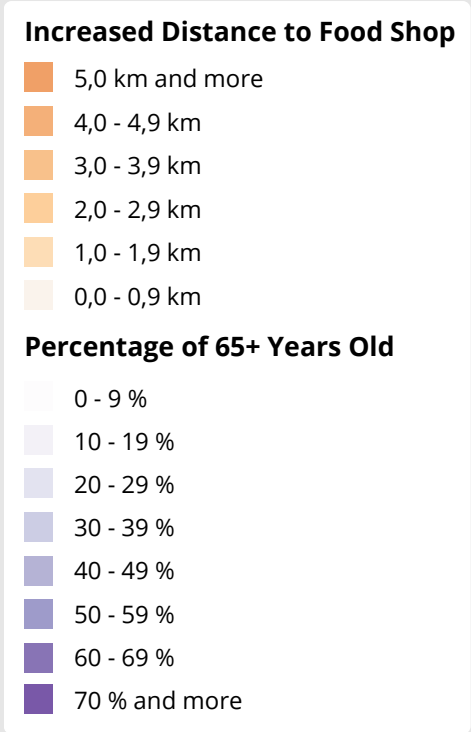


Figure 4: Increased Distance and Elderly Above 65 Years Old (Own Image)

The map on the left (Figure 4) shows the increased distance to the nearest food shop and the percentage of residents aged 65 and older per square grid. Many villages where a food shop closed have squares with more than the national average of elderly residents above 65. In the Netherlands, approximately 20,5% (RIVM, 2025) of the population is aged 65 or older, however in these affected areas, a percentage of 30% was often exceeded. This means that nearly every village that experiences increased distance to the food shop has at least one grid square where 30% or more of the population is elderly. This contrasts with places like Amsterdam and Utrecht, where almost all the squares are below 30% of elderly. In some cases, the percentage of elderly above 65 years old is even higher in areas where a food shop has closed. For instance, in some villages, one or more squares have a percentage of 50% or more elderly above 65 years old, such as Gasselte, Speuld, Meddo, IJzerloo, and Oudermirdum. A zoomed-in map of Gasselte is shown in Figure 5, where the food shop disappeared. The percentage of elderly people above 65 years old is shown, wherein several squares have 30% of elderly and even some more than 50%. This suggests that these closures may disproportionately affect elderly residents, who are generally more dependent on nearby facilities due to mobility limitations.

Summary

This chapter showed how accessibility has changed between 2016 and 2021, one of the layers of the conceptual framework. In this period, several rural villages experienced increased distances to the nearest food shop due to closures, such as in Gelderland, Drenthe, and parts of Limburg. While closures are often linked to low revenue, another factor is that residents prefer driving to larger, cheaper food shops with more variety. Even linked to broader demographic shifts such as population decline, aging, and reduced demand, households are smaller. These closures has led to a decline in accessibility, especially for elderly and less mobile residents. In affected areas, over 30% and sometimes 50% of the population are elderly, showing their disproportionate vulnerability. These trends reflect a growing spatial injustice, where essential services leave rural areas, increasing inequality and weakening local resilience.

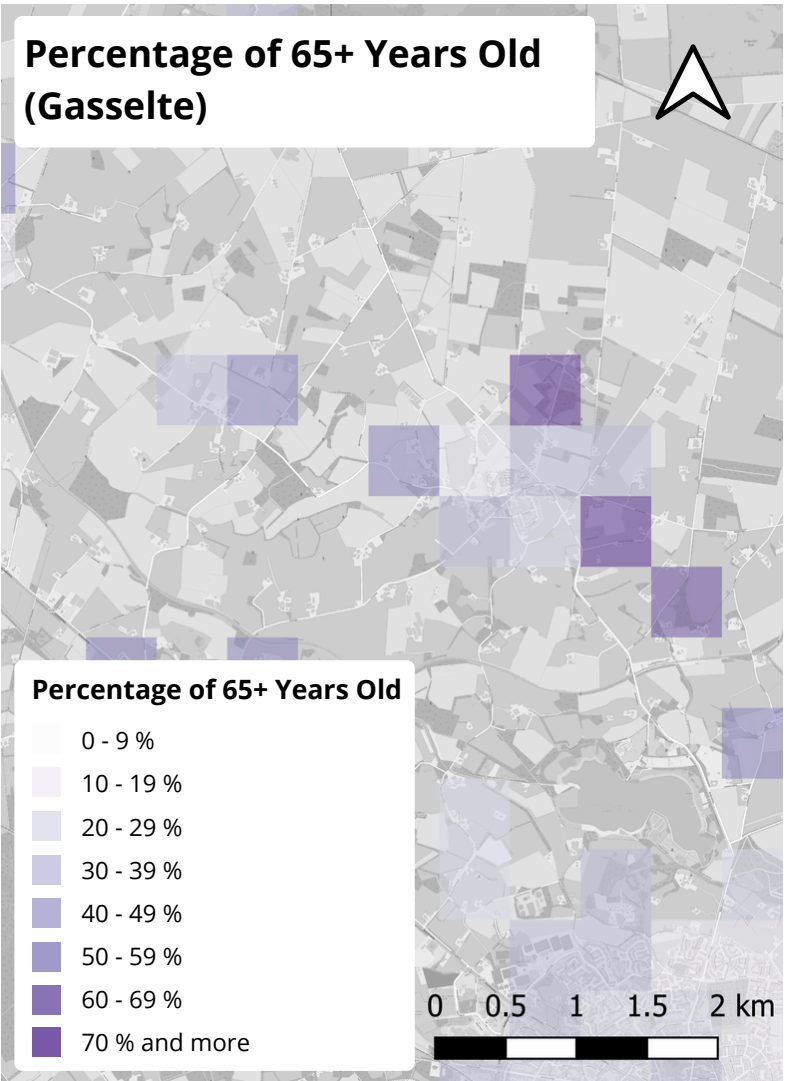


Figure 5: Elderly Above 65 Years Old Gasselte (Own Image)

4.2 Consequences of Closures

How do food shop closures in rural Dutch villages affect residents’ daily routines and access to food?

This section builds on the layer of social dynamics from the conceptual framework. It uses concepts of livability and the functional, social, and symbolic meanings of rural facilities to explore how food shop closures affect rural residents. When a food shop closes, it disrupts the daily life of residents, and they need to travel further for their groceries (Christiaanse & Haartsen, 2017). Although the Netherlands has alternative options relatively close by for people with personal transport, it becomes more of a problem for the less mobile (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). This part focuses uses the three impacts (functional, social, and symbolic) a facility can have according to Haartsen and Gieling (2021).

Analysis of Regional Broadcasters

Table 3 shows the main findings from the analysis of news articles published by thirteen regional broadcasters. It highlights recurring themes, regional differences, and the types of narratives used to report on rural food shop closures.

Table 3: Coding of Content Analysis

Broadcasters	General	Functional	Social	Symbolic	Total Segments	Articles
L1	-	-	-	-	-	0
NH-Nieuws	-	2	1	1	4	2
Omroep Brabant	-	2	1	3	6	3
Omroep Flevoland	3	3	2	1	9	4
Omroep Friesland	2	3	6	2	13	9
Omroep Gelderland	-	1	-	-	1	1
Omroep West	-	6	2	6	14	5
Omroep Zeeland	3	2	5	3	13	9
RTV Drenthe	2	10	4	3	19	14
RTV Noord	3	4	15	3	25	10
RTV Oost	-	2	3	6	11	5
RTV Rijnmond	-	-	-	-	-	0
RTV Utrecht	1	5	6	5	17	9
Total	14	40	45	33	132	70

The general code groups article segments that address functional, social, and symbolic impacts. These texts show a combined view of how closures impact daily life, communities, and local identities. Despite its separate coding, each of these impact types will be addressed to its dedicated impact.

Functional Impacts

Starting with the functional impacts, which are frequently reported (40 segments). These include increased travel distances, reliance on transportation, and practical inconveniences due to food shop closures. This has a big impact on less mobile groups, such as the elderly and disabled residents, who are strongly dependent on local facilities for daily needs. However, when a food shop opens, the travel distance decreases and makes it easier to buy groceries. Commonly mentioned in the articles is the need for residents to travel further away after closures. For most of them, this distance is relatively short and can be easily accessed, however, this becomes a problem for less mobile residents. For example, a resident interviewed by Omroep Flevoland explained her dependence on taxi services and the need to make a long trip to Lemmer or Emmeloord if she forgot an item (Omroep Flevoland, 2025).

Similarly, an elderly couple from Aldeboarn showed frustration over the closure of their local food shop. Although the nearest store was only five kilometers away, the distance is a big problem due to their limited mobility (Omrop Fryslân, 2022). In Noord-Brabant, another resident pointed out the inconvenience of having to leave the village for groceries, with the nearest food shop located in surrounding towns. In her case, a farm vending machine provided a limited backup option, but it was insufficient for daily needs (Omroep Brabant, 2023). These points show how the closure of a local food shop can disrupt everyday routines, particularly for residents who have limited mobility and cannot adapt easily. What might seem like a minor inconvenience might be a barrier to independence and well-being in practice.

Social Impacts

Social impacts appear the most in the articles (45 segments). Local food shops often act as community hubs, creating informal and spontaneous interactions between residents. Their closure disrupts these interactions, reducing daily social contact and potentially increasing isolation. Broadcasters from northern provinces such as RTV Noord, Omroep Friesland, and RTV Drenthe emphasize these consequences, indicating the role of food shops in maintaining social connections. Across the various regional broadcasts, the role of the food shop as a meeting place was often mentioned. For instance, RTV Noord highlighted the unique social role that village food shops have, particularly their function as more than just food shops. One shopkeeper noted that while rural food shops might not always offer the lowest prices, they compensate through personal attention, something often lacking in larger chain stores (RTV Noord, 2024a). Furthermore, a food shop owner described herself as almost a social worker, with customers regularly sharing personal news, from health diagnoses to pregnancy announcements (RTV Noord, 2021). This shows how much emotional and social value these everyday interactions hold. Similarly, RTV Drenthe reported on efforts made by shop owners to encourage social interaction, such as placing small tables by the window for customers to enjoy a coffee and chat with neighbors (RTV Drenthe, 2024). These simple initiatives were considered just as important as the shop’s retail function, showing again the idea that food shops in rural villages have an important social function as well. Together, these examples show that food shops often serve as informal third places that create casual, unplanned interaction and strengthen social cohesion within rural communities. Their loss affects more than just access to groceries, it reduces social contact, especially for those who depend on these places for their connection to others.

Symbolic Impacts

Symbolic impacts were also much reported (33 segments), however, these were mainly the same across the broadcasters. Residents often view food shops as symbols of community livability, resilience, and local identity. This is emphasized by broadcasters like RTV Oost (6) and Omroep West (6), highlighting the emotional and symbolic consequences for village communities. Residents commonly described the loss of their food shop as taking the soul out of the village and felt a decline in overall livability, mentioned by several broadcasts such as RTV Oost (2022), RTV Noord (2024b), and RTV Drenthe (2020).

Regional Differences

Besides the impacts of closures, regional differences can be observed in how these closures are reported. For example, northern broadcasters (RTV Noord, Omroep Friesland, RTV Drenthe) frequently highlight social and functional impacts, which might be that there is more dependence on local food shops. Eastern and Western broadcasters (RTV Oost, Omroep West) strongly focus on symbolic and functional aspects, suggesting varied regional views of food shops' roles as more than just practical needs. Minimal or no reporting from certain broadcasters such as RTV Rijnmond, Omroep Gelderland, and L1 might reflect either fewer problems in these areas or differences in reporting priorities or terminology used. The lower frequency of reported impacts in these regions does not necessarily mean fewer challenges.

Trends in general

Furthermore, some general patterns can be observed, such as situations where supermarkets repeatedly closed, reopened, and eventually closed again. For example, in Ammerstol where after 6 months the food shop closed again (Omroep West, 2024). This shows the underlying economic or demographic challenges despite community efforts to maintain local services. Almost all articles from broadcasters mentioned the impact closures have on elderly and less mobile residents, showing their dependence on local food shops. Overall, there is a consistent recognition across most regions that food shop closures impact rural community life, both socially and practically. These insights showcase the importance of local food shops more than their primary function, showing their role in maintaining social cohesion and the symbolic identity of rural communities.

Summary

The closure of rural food shops has a negative effect on the social dynamics. Functionally, they reduce access to daily needs, especially for less mobile groups like the elderly. Socially, it affects places for informal contact and decreases social cohesion. Symbolically, they represent a loss of identity and livability. These impacts confirm the framework by Haartsen & Gieling (2021) and illustrate how closures affect both objective and subjective livability. They also show spatial injustices, as vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by declining services in their area. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, food is a basic need according to Maslow (1943). However, this chapter shows that food provision can go further than only fulfilling basic needs, as it serves as a social meeting place as well. Overall, the closure of rural food shops results in a decline in livability.

4.3 Policy and Strategy Responses

What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to prevent closures or mitigate the effects of rural food shop closures?

This chapter focuses on the governance layer of the conceptual framework. It takes the role of public institutions, policies, and community-led initiatives into account in addressing the closures. Starting with how Dutch provinces address the decline of rural food shops in their strategies on spatial planning and the environment. It explores how the problem is framed, what future is envisioned for small villages, and which strategies are proposed. Furthermore, practical examples and initiatives have been researched to create an overview of examples. To combine them, a set of strategies is proposed from the visions and examples.

Provincial Policy

Information from the twelve strategies on spatial planning and the environment is categorized into three main themes, starting with the problem. This captures whether the document acknowledges the decline of facilities and how this issue is described. Secondly, the vision, what future do the provinces envision for small villages, mainly focusing on the relation to livability and facilities. Lastly, for the strategies, what actions or approaches are mentioned to address them.

Problem

Several provinces acknowledge the problem in rural areas, such as an aging population, population decline, and shrinking household sizes. Provinces such as Provincie Friesland (2020), Provincie Utrecht (2021), and Provincie Limburg (2021) show how these trends have an impact on the local facilities. While most provinces mention the overall decline of facilities in villages, Provincie Zeeland (2023) even mentioned the closure of food shops in their document. They connect this to functional problems and the decline of social cohesion, especially affecting older, less mobile residents. Overall, the problem of declining rural services is widely recognized.

Vision

Nearly all reviewed documents include some form of vision of the future of rural areas. In some cases, the vision is described in general terms, while others are more concrete and tailored. Such as the one in Provincie Noord-Brabant (2018), where they want to ensure that living, working, and staying in Brabant will continue to be good in the future. On the other hand, Provincie Limburg (2021) mentioned having basic services and facilities to ensure attractive places to live, work, and stay, with special attention for small villages. Common themes include maintaining the level of facilities, ensuring accessible facilities, and supporting livable villages. Several provinces explicitly state that the livability of rural communities is a priority in their spatial planning strategies. The Provincie Zeeland (2023) document emphasizes inclusivity, stating that everything must be accessible. Explicitly including the poor and people with disabilities.

Strategy

Across provincial policy visions, several strategies are proposed to maintain livability and important facilities in rural areas. In Provincie Groningen (2025) and Provincie Zuid-Holland (2024), small-scale housing development is encouraged to sustain services and support the social connections of smaller villages. Provincie Zuid-Holland (2024) mentioned the concept of "een straatje erbij" (adding a small row of houses) to ensure that the population and facilities remain stable, especially in vulnerable areas. Provincie Friesland (2020), on the other hand, supports bottom-up initiatives, empowering local communities to take ownership in maintaining their livability. Another strategy, which can be found in the documents of Provincie Friesland (2020), Provincie Limburg (2021), and Provincie Zeeland (2023), is the clustering or integration of daily services for long-term sustainability. These include facilities like food shops, primary schools, village halls, general practitioners, and public transport.

Furthermore, Provincie Noord-Holland (2018), Provincie Zeeland (2023), and Provincie Zuid-Holland (2024) emphasize the possible role of tourism for maintaining rural livability, mentioning that the services provided by recreational parks can benefit nearby residents as well. Finally, Provincie Zeeland (2023) proposes enhancing accessibility through smart mobility solutions and digital connectivity, particularly for residents in villages without basic facilities.

Practical Examples and Initiatives

To further build on the insights from the policy visions, additional documents and examples are used from different sources. The first source is a publication from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, written by Moerkamp (2015). This document explains several food shop related strategies and highlights a pilot project focused on maintaining rural food access. Furthermore, the website of Katalys was used to find additional food shop-related initiatives. Katalys is a Dutch foundation that supports citizen initiatives aimed at strengthening social cohesion, local democracy, and sustainable community development (Katalys, 2024). In addition to this, several interviews have been conducted with associations supporting small villages in the Netherlands, including the LVKK (Landelijke Vereniging voor Kleine Kernen). These associations promote the livability of rural communities by providing knowledge, networks, and advice to residents (LVKK, n.d.). Below are several initiatives explained from the documents and initiatives, which are categorized in strategies for maintaining local food shops and alternatives when a physical food shop is no longer feasible.

Strategies for Maintaining and Strengthening Local Shops

As mentioned in the previous chapters, closures of rural food shops are often the result of economic pressures, demographic shifts, and changing mobility patterns. However, in some villages, local communities have come up with creative, practical initiatives to maintain or restore a local food shop. These initiatives focus on the social role of the food shop as a place for everyday interaction and its symbolic meaning as a village identity and livability, besides the functional need for groceries.

Oostwold

In the document of Moerkamp (2015), Oostwold is explained, a village where services and facilities began to decline. In response to this, a plan was created to combine several facilities into one multifunctional building to keep the costs down. The food shop in this building would primarily be run by volunteers to keep the food shop affordable. Besides that, it would work with people from a care organization that offers work opportunities to individuals with disabilities. Nearly all of Oostwold’s local services are now housed in this multi-functional building, including the community associations. The food shop already offers services such as dry cleaning and home delivery to create more revenue. Additionally, the village cooperative is exploring partnerships with local businesses for extra income, such as catering for company canteens. This approach prevents closure, supports social inclusion, and preserves the shop’s symbolic role as a central meeting place.

Oldeberkoop

In Oolderbekoop, explained in Moerkamp (2015), the food shop is operated by a care organization that provides employment opportunities for people who are distant from the labor market. The food shop brings together several services in addition to groceries, it has an ATM, a small pharmacy, a PostNL service point, and a dry-cleaning service. These services contribute to the store’s revenue model. However, its largest source of income is the delivery service to people with disabilities living independently or in supported housing. On the cost side, the food shop works with ten clients under the Social Support Act to keep the cost down. Overall, this initiative keeps access to essential services while creating social inclusion through employment and support for vulnerable groups.

Eext

In Eext, a village described by Moerkamp (2015), residents formed a cooperative to save their local food shop after the owner stepped down. Households bought shares of €100–€500, which funded the inventory. In return, they will receive an annual 8% interest as store credit. On top of this, most households pay a €20 per year fee to support operating costs, resulting in a stable income for the food shop. Additional income comes from renting property to a hair salon and supplying a nearby shop on a campsite. This cooperative model focuses on the continued operation of the food shop and strengthens social cohesion by creating a sense of collective ownership. Besides that, it strengthens the perceived village identity, as it still has a food shop.

Herwen

Furthermore, De Gelderlander (2025) mentions in an article the local food shop of Herwen, which came up during an interview with DKK Gelderland. This food shop has been run by volunteers for more than ten years. The shop serves as a place for daily groceries, and is a social meeting place as well. In addition to groceries, visitors can buy tickets for local events, use an ATM, or gather for informal interaction. Since 2013, the shop has also featured a coffee table offering free coffee, a pétanque (jeu-de-boules) court, and a covered outdoor area where local youth can hang out. Functionally, it provides essential services such as basic food items, ticket sales for local events, and access to an ATM. Socially, it serves as an informal meeting point and reduces isolation.

Sauwerd

Katalys (2023a) explained that the village of Sauwerd, where the closure of the last food shop in 2016 led to a loss of essential services. In response, residents started a petition that led to a new food shop run by a cooperative, with three-quarters of households contributing €20 annually to show local support. Functionally, the shop restores daily services by combining groceries with a post office, a coffee table, and plans for a medicine pick-up point. This clustering of functions is an important part of the revenue model. The shop focuses on local suppliers as well, which attracts residents who are interested in regional products. Besides restoring services, the food shop contributes to social cohesion within the village. It has become a place where people meet each other who otherwise would not connect. Besides some paid workers, the shop has roughly 60 to 70 volunteers. Most households contribute yearly, showing the shop’s role in bringing back both services and community feeling.

Alternatives

In villages where maintaining a food shop is no longer feasible, alternative solutions have started to restore food access. These initiatives mainly address functional accessibility, such as mobile food shops or unstaffed local shops. However, as seen in Chapter 4.2, they often fail to replace the social role and symbolic meaning of a food shop. The examples below show how these alternatives can help in practical ways.

De Blauw Tomaat

The initiative mentioned by Katalys (2023b) is De Blauwe Tomaat. This is a mobile food shop (SRV-van) that operates in several neighborhoods in Arnhem. It started to make healthy food accessible for people with low incomes, and at the same time reduce food waste. Although initially focused on food, the project has developed into a broader social meeting point for residents. Regular customers often engage in conversation and receive informal support, contributing to reduced loneliness and improved community connection. In addition to regular sales, the initiative delivers fruit packages to local businesses and offers subscriptions to generate stable income.



Figure 6: De Blauwe Tomaat (Rheden Nieuws, 2023)

Despite challenges like vehicle upkeep and finding volunteers, it shows how a mobile model can improve food access and create social connections. Overall, it provides some access to food in underserved areas but lacks permanent space for social interaction. While encounters may occur when the mobile food shop is present, these opportunities disappear as soon as it moves.

Pantry

The Pantry is an initiative that started in Wilp, which provides unstaffed local food shops in areas with limited access to daily groceries (Pantry, n.d.-a). These small shops have fresh, locally produced goods such as vegetables, fruit, dairy, and meat. The concept was developed to offer both convenience for residents in underserved areas and fair compensation for local farmers and producers. The pantry can be accessed using a mobile app, which is the payment system as well. Using the app may be a barrier for elderly people due to technological challenges, a concern that also emerged during the interview with DKK Gelderland. However, the Pantry cannot fully replace a food shop, as the social function is lost. It is only a viable option when a shop is no longer feasible. Overall, it improves food access in underserved areas but lacks opportunities for social interaction, as there are no staff present at the Pantry.



Figure 7: Pantry (Pantry, n.d.-b)

Strategies

Based on reviewed documents and interviews, this research identifies a set of strategies aimed at addressing the decline of rural services and food access in small villages. While many provincial visions remain conceptual, local initiatives show practical solutions. Across these initiatives, common patterns can be observed, which have been synthesized into strategies. Together, these strategies address different stages of rural food retail decline and the multidimensional role of the food shop, such as functional, social, and symbolic meaning. Three main categories of strategies are formed from the initiatives and provincial documents mentioned above. First are recognition-based strategies, focused on the importance of reacting to closures and tailored interventions. The second strategies are aimed at maintaining or restoring the food shop, focusing on its feasibility and integration into the community. Finally, where a food shop is no longer feasible, alternative strategies are created to maintain basic food access.

Recognition

These strategies focus on recognizing early signs of closure and developing village-specific responses. They focus on proactive action to prevent decline before it becomes irreversible, by involving residents and acknowledging the unique needs. The goal is to protect the shop's function and strengthen its social and symbolic meaning through local ownership and public awareness.

1. Raising Awareness of Possible Closures

One insight from interviews with BOKD and DKK Gelderland was the importance of early awareness of revenue decline. By making residents aware that a food shop is at risk of closing, residents are more likely to act in time to keep the food shop alive. Awareness helps restore the understanding that if a shop is no longer used, it will eventually disappear. It aims to keep the shop functional and keep its symbolic meaning.

2. Tailored Approaches per Village

Every village is different, therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all solutions. This was emphasized across interviews with various associations, highlighting the importance of developing plans *with* the community rather than *for* the community. When residents are actively involved with the initiative, it becomes *their* project and not just a project. This was emphasized during the interview with BOKD, that if they work on their own plan with support, they feel a stronger sense of ownership. Instead of top-down implementation, these approaches create social cohesion by providing solutions directly within local networks.

Maintain foodshop

If the strategies mentioned above are not enough, practical strategies can stabilize or restore food shops. These approaches focus on restoring the shop's economic sustainability, enhancing its social function, and preserving its symbolic meaning in a village. Strategies range from small-scale residential development and cooperative models to clustering services and engaging volunteers or care organizations.

3. Small-Scale Housing Development

One approach is small-scale housing development on the edge of villages. This helps to sustain the local population and results in more people who use and rely on these facilities. Eventually, this may lead to more possible consumers for the food shop. This strategy supports the shop's functional feasibility over time by having a bigger catchment area.

4. Community Driven

At the beginning of this chapter, several community-driven initiatives were explained. One example is a cooperative model, where community members collectively own and operate the food shop. A cooperative is a business or organization owned and managed by a group of people for their mutual benefit, such as having a local shop (KVK & CBS, 2025). However, as noted by a representative from VKKL, the long-term viability of such initiatives often depends on the presence of an entrepreneurial individual capable of managing the business. Furthermore, ensuring a stable income for the food shop makes it more viable. For instance, residents in Eext and Sauwerd contribute an annual fee of €20 to help sustain their local food initiatives. Other communities have started partnerships with local businesses and organizations to expand services. An example is Olderbekoop, where cooperative efforts include the delivery of groceries. Similarly, the initiative Blauwe Tomaat delivers fruit packages to nearby businesses, showing how collaboration can enhance both financial sustainability and service reach. These models strengthen social cohesion, provide a sense of symbolic value, and ensure access to a food shop.

5. Clustering Services

The clustering of local services is another way to be financially sustainable. This is mentioned in several policy documents from provinces, and an example can be found in Oostwold. Where the food shop, school, community associations, and other services were brought together in one building. In other cases, food shops include services such as a post office, ATM, dry cleaning, or delivery, thereby creating additional income. This approach is mentioned by several associations during interviews and even mentioned in the NahDa-project (SPES Zukunftsmodelle, n.d). NahDA is an initiative supported by the European Union focused on developing future-proof models for local food and service provision in rural areas.

Moreover, as highlighted by someone from VKKL, the facility needs to offer something unique. Since residents may still travel to nearby villages for shopping, creating a distinct identity can keep visitors, such as combining multiple functions in one location. A great addition is the placement of a small table where residents could meet and have a coffee, encouraging social interaction between neighbors. Clustering creates a multifunctional meeting space, strengthening both social networks and symbolic place identity, while keeping access to food.

6. Involving Volunteers and Care Organizations

To keep the cost of a food shop low, engaging with volunteers or care organizations can reduce costs. In Oostwold, for example, individuals with disabilities work in the food shop through a care provider. In Oldeberkoop, the shop is run by a care organization and supported by individuals within a distance to the labor market, contributing both to social inclusion and cost reduction. Although, as mentioned by someone from DKK Gelderland, working with volunteers comes with challenges. Continuity is a major concern, as such initiatives rely on dependable individuals for longer periods, and it is less flexible. Younger people and those with families are often less willing to have such a commitment, they prefer short-term and project-based involvement. Although it has some obstacles, it is feasible, as can be seen in Herwen. Overall, engaging volunteers or care organizations helps lower costs, making it more feasible, and creates social inclusion.

Alternatives

In some villages, maintaining a food shop is no longer feasible due to structural decline. In these cases, alternative models aim to have at least the functional need for food access. They often lack social interaction and the symbolic meaning previously offered by a local shop. Therefore, additional efforts to maintain informal meeting spaces are needed for social cohesion, especially for vulnerable groups.

7. Mobile Food Services

A strategy to enhance food accessibility and some form of community interaction is the use of mobile food services. Such as the Blauwe Tomaat in Arnhem, this former SRV-van brings food to neighborhoods and combines food access with social interaction. This is particularly valuable in areas where maintaining a permanent shop is not feasible. These mobile services provide functional access and can also function as temporary social meeting points, especially for people with limited mobility or income.

8. Smart Mobility and Digital Access

Another strategy mentioned is the use of smart mobility and digital access by the province of Zeeland, although specific plans remain vague. An example of this is the use of an app to access food at unstaffed locations, like Pantry. These strategies focus on functional needs but may exclude certain groups (e.g., the elderly), and do not replace the social role of a shop.

9. Ensure Informal Meeting Spaces

If maintaining a food shop in the village is not feasible, it is still important to have places where residents can meet informally, such as a school or, community center. This was especially emphasized by someone from Groningerdorpen. Overall, this is to still have informal meeting places for social cohesion, especially for vulnerable groups.

Summary

Most provinces recognize the decline of rural facilities and emphasize the importance of livability in their visions. However, concrete strategies to maintain or restore food access are often general. In contrast, local initiatives offer more practical and community-driven solutions, such as cooperatives, multifunctional buildings, and mobile services. This contrast shows that while policy acknowledges the issue, effective action often comes from the local level. The findings showcase the importance of combining provincial vision with local initiative, especially in efforts to maintain accessibility and support livability in small villages. Overall, the strategies proposed start with recognition, then move on to strategies on maintaining the food shop, and lastly, finding alternatives. To make it more visual, the next page includes a poster of the proposed strategies.

Strategies for Closures of Rural Food Shops

Recognition

These strategies are focused on early recognition of potential closures and the importance of case-by-case tailoring, that each village needs a unique approach.



Raising Awareness

When residents know a food shop is at risk, they are more likely to act in time to prevent closure.



Tailored Approaches

Every village is unique, so plans must be made *with* instead of *for* the community. When residents help with the initiative, it becomes their own.



Maintaining Food Shop

These strategies focus on maintaining or restoring a local food shop by strengthening its feasibility.



Small-Scale Housing

Small-scale housing at village edges can increase the local population and food shop use.



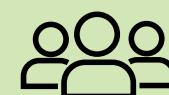
Clustering Services

Clustering services increases financial sustainability. Such as a shared building that has a food shop, a school, and associations. Or in shop services like ATMs, dry cleaners, or a coffee table to socialize. This works best when the facility offers something unique to keep locals from shopping elsewhere.



Community Driven

This focuses on bottom-up cooperatives with shared ownership. Supporting long-term feasibility through annual member fees and partnerships with businesses.



Involving Volunteers & Care Organizations

Using volunteers or care organizations can reduce shop costs and support social inclusion.



Alternatives

These strategies are for places where a permanent food shop is not feasible, having alternatives to ensure food access and social cohesion.



Mobile Food Services

Mobile food services improve access and create social interaction by bringing food directly to neighborhoods.



Smart Mobility & Digital Access

The use of smart mobility and digital access. For example, unstaffed food shops.



Ensure Informal Meeting Places

If a food shop is not feasible, other informal meeting places like schools or community centers are important.

Conclusion



Together, these strategies show several categories from recognition to maintaining a food shop to searching for alternatives. Begin with recognition strategies, if these are insufficient, continue with the next categories following the arrows.



Title: Fresh Company Koningsplein Amsterdam
Source: Albert Heijn Erfgoed

5.1 Reflection and Theoretical Connection

The findings of this research show that the closure of rural food shops is not just a matter of spatial distance. It needs to be approached through a multidimensional lens of livability, accessibility, and spatial justice, which helps explain how the different impacts are connected.

Starting with livability, where the closure of food shops reduces objective and subjective livability. Where objective livability is focused on the loss of access to essential services, particularly affecting those who do not have the mobility to travel to food shops located further away. On the other hand, subjective livability is about the closure of food shops disrupting daily routines, decreasing opportunities for informal interactions, and affecting community cohesion and identity (Haartsen & Gieling, 2021). Chapter 4.2 shows that these food shops are more than locations to buy food. They are social hubs that create connections and improve social cohesion, especially important for elderly and less mobile residents. As they have fewer opportunities for a social network outside their village, due to their mobility. These findings align with the multiple roles of rural facilities, having both practical needs and social well-being.

Moreover, accessibility is a multidimensional theoretical lens to look at the problem. Chapter 4.1 indicates this through the finding that geographic distances to supermarkets increased from 2016 to 2021 in several villages. Chapter 4.2 then builds on this by showing the individual characteristics that shape the impact of these closures, such as age and physical mobility. These results align with the people-based accessibility framework (Kwan, 1998), which recognizes that place-based accessibility does not fully capture access to food. The findings show that individual constraints and temporal limitations affect food accessibility in rural settings significantly.

In the content analysis of Chapter 4.2, the framework of Haartsen and Gieling's (2021) showcased that the effects of food shop closures can be functional, social, and symbolic. Starting with the functional impact, where residents must travel further for daily needs, limiting independence for elderly and less mobile residents. Socially, a closure results in the loss of "third places" that encourage informal interactions, increase social cohesion, and reduce loneliness. Symbolically, shops often serve as indicators of village sustainability, where the disappearance is perceived as a sign of livability decline.

This complexity shows that the idea of food deserts is too limited, as it mainly focuses on distance. The findings in Chapter 4.2 and the content analysis show that it is more complex than this. Even in cases where a food shop is nearby, residents may still experience food insecurity due to limited mobility. This is in line with the refinement of the concept of food access by Jansen et al. (2022), which shows the need to integrate social and personal characteristics when assessing food access. Therefore, food access should not only be seen as geographical but also with social and personal characteristics.

Finally, the findings show some forms of spatial injustice. The closure of rural food shops results in distributive injustice, as some communities have seen a decrease in access to food shops. This becomes especially clear when looking at urban versus rural areas. As Mahon et al. (2023) argue, rural communities often face distributive inequalities in services in comparison to urban areas. This research shows that rural food shop closures in the Netherlands disproportionately affect elderly and less mobile residents, reduce social cohesion, and increase spatial injustices. These closures are a result of demographic decline, mobility changes, and shifting consumer behavior.

By linking accessibility, livability, and spatial justice, this research provides a multidimensional understanding of rural food accessibility and shows how closures disproportionately affect already vulnerable groups. These insights form a set of strategies, based on the findings of the sub-questions and the theoretical framework. Those strategies consist of three categories: recognition, maintaining the food shop, and alternatives.

Recognition (S1 & S2)

The first category includes strategies that focus on recognition before further strategies need to be taken. Raising early awareness (S1) of decreasing revenue is needed to prevent closures, resulting in that residents can take action. This not only supports functional sustainability, but also symbolically restores the value of the shop as a main part of village life. Similarly, tailoring solutions to each village (S2) acknowledges local uniqueness and creates local ownership. This aligns with recognitional justice, acknowledging diverse community needs, and supports subjective livability.

Strategies to Maintain the Shop (S3–S6)

The second category focuses on maintaining or restoring the food shop. Small-scale housing development (S3) helps sustain the customer base. Community-driven initiatives like cooperatives (S4) create social cohesion and allow people to take ownership. Clustering services (S5) increase financial feasibility and create new multifunctional centers that serve both functional and social purposes. Engaging with volunteers and care organizations (S6) adds to both social inclusion and cost reduction. These strategies focus on accessibility and support livability by maintaining access to food, restoring community cohesion, and maintaining the identity of the village.

Alternatives (S7–S9)

When maintaining a shop is no longer feasible, alternative strategies need to be taken. Mobile food services (S7) and smart solutions like the Pantry (S8) aim to have some level of food access. However, the most important strategy is to preserve informal meeting spaces (S9). Even without a shop, informal interactions are important for social cohesion. Having places that can replace the social function of these food shops is necessary, such as community centers or schools. These strategies often focus on restoring basic accessibility.

5.2 Evaluation of Research

Although this study provides useful insights, this part reflects on the strengths and limitations of the research and the findings.

Strengths

A strength of this research is the use of triangulation, by combining geospatial analysis, content analysis of regional media, and provincial documents review. This methodological difference allows for a better understanding of the problem. This research links the increased travel distances (Chapter 4.1) with the consequences of food shop closures (Chapter 4.2), combining spatial trends with social consequences. Additionally, the integration of literature with policy documents and practical examples (Chapter 4.3) showcases the relevance of findings for policymakers and communities. Moreover, the study has an interdisciplinary orientation and shows practical relevance by proposing strategies for policymakers and communities. Focusing on the spatial part, but also taking the social and symbolic parts into account for a holistic overview of the problem.

Limitations

Despite these strengths, the research has several limitations. First, the available data resulted in some constraints. For example, the proximity to food shops was measured using CBS data, which only contains supermarkets larger than 150 m². Therefore, smaller shops that closed are not visible in the data. Furthermore, the data analyzed covers the years up to 2021, making it somewhat dated. The reason for this is the availability of data on the CBS website. Additionally, the data for the percentage of people above 65 years old might be a misrepresentation of reality. For example, a square with five elderly residents could show up as 100%, even though the absolute number is minimal.

Second, the content analysis of regional broadcasters may have introduced selection bias, as the articles included could be different if they were repeated. While the study included all 13 regional media platforms, some produced few relevant articles around food shop closures, like Omroep Gelderland. Even though this region experienced many food shop closures, as mentioned in Chapter 4.1. This gap may reflect differences in reporting focus or terminology rather than the absence of social impacts in those areas. Besides that, this could also be the case with the selection of policy documents, some of them are concepts or much shorter, others are dated. Therefore, these policy documents might not be a full representation of a province. Finally, qualitative coding has some subjectivity and bias from the researcher. Despite systematic categorization, it may introduce subjectivity.

To address these limitations, several recommendations can be made. First, for data providers such as CBS, expanding datasets to include smaller food shops under 150 m² would improve the accuracy. Regular updates to supermarket accessibility data are also recommended, especially given the regularly changing retail landscape. Second, for researchers, combining grid-based data with point-based geospatial methods could improve precision. Regarding content analysis, future studies could complement regional media sources with interviews or local newsletters to reduce regional reporting bias. Together, these improvements would create more depth, comparability, and reliability of future research.

5.3 Implications for Knowledge Users

The findings of this research have implications for several knowledge user groups, particularly policymakers, rural communities, and academic researchers. The groups can use these insights from this research to create more equitable solutions and approaches to rural food access.

Policy Makers

For policymakers, this study shows the importance of looking further than the spatial part when addressing food accessibility. The disproportionate impacts on elderly and less mobile residents show the need for more approaches that take them into account as well. Besides that, the problem of food provision is much more than only functional and cannot be seen alone from the social and symbolic aspect. This is especially the case when creating strategies and visions. While provincial policy visions often acknowledge the decline of rural services, concrete strategies are generally vague. This research provides practical examples of bottom-up initiatives, such as cooperatives, multifunctional buildings, and mobile food services, which could result in more specific policy responses.

Rural Communities

For rural communities themselves, this research offers insights into the broader consequences of food shop closures. The analysis of local initiatives shows that community-led responses are both feasible and impactful. Examples such as shops with volunteers, clustering of services, or cooperatives show how communities can maintain the food shop. This study shows the symbolic and social roles of food shops as places for informal contact and village identity. By understanding these aspects, communities may gather support when facing potential closures. Communities must recognize the signs of a potential closure early, so they can respond before it is too late.

Academic Researchers

With this research, a set of strategies is proposed. Academic researchers could build on this work by further exploring the long-term effectiveness of local strategies or extending the temporal part of food shop closures.

5.4 Theoretical implications

This study aligns with Dutch research by Haartsen & Gieling (2021) and Christiaanse (2020), confirming that rural supermarkets fulfill symbolic and social roles beyond their functional role. Which can be found in Chapter 4.2. Closures disrupt convenience, social cohesion, and the village identity felt by villagers. It contributes new insights by combining regional spatial patterns (via GIS) with qualitative experiences (via content analysis), understanding rural service decline. In contrast to urban-focused food desert studies (e.g., Helbich et al., 2017; Janssen et al., 2022), this research shows that in rural areas, distance to food shops alone is insufficient. Personal mobility, income, and social isolation are more important in terms of food access, challenging assumptions that physical distance is the main problem.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This research makes several contributions to the academic understanding of rural food access. It develops a multi-dimensional framework that integrates accessibility, social dynamics, and governance, offering a holistic view of the consequences of food shop closures. By combining GIS-based spatial analysis with qualitative methods, the study combines quantitative data with experiences in rural areas. This approach shows how closures impact accessibility, livability, and spatial justice. Finally, the research adds practical value by proposing a set of strategies, offering examples that can inform both academic and policy.

5.6 Future Research

While this research provides an analysis of rural food shop closures in the Netherlands between 2016 and 2021, several parts remain open for future research. Below are several future research ideas proposed.

Data

This study was limited to the years 2016–2021 due to data availability. Future research could have a longer time frame to better capture rural food access. Furthermore, future studies could explore point-based geospatial methods to improve precision in identifying closures.

Digital Grocery Solutions

Digital food access, such as home delivery, mobile apps, and unstaffed stores (e.g., The Pantry), was not fully explored in this study.

Effectiveness of Strategies

While this thesis proposed a set of strategies, their long-term feasibility remains unclear. Future research could focus on the effectiveness of these strategies and what lessons can be learned.

Local Solutions

This thesis provided an overview of local initiatives but did not explore them in full detail due to scope limitations. Future studies could conduct in-depth case studies of these initiatives.

Social Functions

Future research could focus on innovative ways on how the social function can be preserved in places where food shops are no longer feasible.

Conclusion 6



Title: Dirk van den Broek Amsterdam
Source: Kruideniersmuseum

How do rural food shop closures in the Netherlands impact population groups, and what strategies can either prevent closures or mitigate the effects of closures?

This thesis addresses the research question and finds that the closures of rural food shops in the Netherlands disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, resulting in reduced access to food and social cohesion. The strategies proposed focus on recognition, maintaining a food shop, and alternatives. Overall, strategies should also consider the symbolic and social functions of shops, besides the functional of providing food.

Regarding Chapter 4.1, this research mapped spatiotemporal patterns of closures between 2016 and 2021, showing a decline in rural areas in the North, South, and East of the Netherlands. Over this period, many rural communities in these places saw an increase in the distance to the nearest food shop. The socio-demographics of these areas show a high percentage of people above 65 years old living in those villages, often exceeding the average of the Netherlands. Elderly and less mobile residents are disproportionately affected because of their limited mobility when food shops disappear from rural areas. Youth migration and declining household sizes have resulted in reduced local demand for food shops. Furthermore, changing consumer habits have reduced demand as well. As residents shop at larger food shops, small rural stores lose revenue and will eventually close.

Chapter 4.2 showed how closures of food shops in rural Dutch villages impact both the daily routines and well-being of residents. Even small increases in distance can cause difficulties for those without access to a car or public transport, particularly elderly and less mobile residents. Besides access to healthy food, closures reduce access to important social meeting places. Chapter 4.2 identified three impacts to explain the effect of a closure, consisting of functional, social, or symbolic impacts. When a food shop closes, it results in an increased distance to food (functional), disproportionately affecting elderly and less mobile residents. Furthermore, informal meeting places that support social cohesion will be gone (social). The symbolic impact results often in a perceived decline of a village's identity and livability. These impacts show the role of rural food shops, highlighting their functional, social, and symbolic importance to rural communities. These shops provide food while being important social places as well.

The findings from SQ3 proposed a set of strategies for preventing closures or mitigating the effects of closures. At the provincial level, the decline of rural facilities is recognized, but concrete policies are often missing. Local and citizen-led initiatives provide more practical, bottom-up initiatives. From these initiatives, a set of nine strategies is proposed, grouped into three overarching categories. First are focused on recognition (S1 & S2), such as awareness of potential closures and the importance of case-by-case tailoring. Second are strategies aimed at maintaining a food shop (S3, S4, S5 & S6), such as bottom-up initiatives and the clustering of services within a single building. Overall, these strategies aim to keep the food shop available in the village. Finally, in situations where a conventional food shop is no longer feasible, alternatives become necessary (S7, S8 & S9). The most important one is the preservation of social meeting places to maintain informal social contact. Innovative solutions, such as app-based unstaffed food shops, also offer ways to have some form of food access.

The findings of this research confirm that food shop closures are not isolated events but are part of a broader trend in rural areas. This includes the decline of local services in rural villages and the aging population. In rural areas, physical distance, mobility, and social meaning are interconnected, confirming the proposed conceptual framework that everything relates to each other. Even where food shops are nearby, they may be inaccessible to some, due to age or personal mobility. Therefore, addressing rural food access needs to be addressed with tailored and inclusive approaches, instead of a one-size-fits-all approach. Overall, food shop closures are not just about food access, it is about social cohesion, community identity, and spatial justice in rural areas.

Looking back, supermarkets did not exist in the Netherlands before the 1950s. In the next few decades, a whole new food retail landscape could emerge where supermarkets are not the same as nowadays. However, it remains important to have places where people can connect and strengthen social cohesion.

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Appendix A Interview Questions

Introductie

- Wat is uw functie binnen de organisatie?
- Wat is de rol en het doel van uw organisatie?
- Heeft uw organisatie specifiek aandacht voor supermarktvoorzieningen in kleine kernen?

Probleem

- Ziet u de sluiting van dorpssupermarkten als een groeiend probleem in bepaalde regio’s?
- In welke gebieden speelt dit probleem het sterkst volgens u?

Strategien

- Welke initiatieven ziet u die effectief zijn in het behoud of herstel van supermarktvoorzieningen in dorpen?
- Wordt er gewerkt met coöperaties, multifunctionele gebouwen of samenwerking met zorginstellingen?
- Zijn er ook andere initiatieven die uitgevoerd kunnen worden, zoals een rijdende supermarkt (SRV-wagen)?
- Speelt digitalisering (bijvoorbeeld online bestellen en afhaalpunten) een rol bij het behoud van voorzieningen?

Successen en Challenges

- Wat zijn volgens u de belangrijkste succesfactoren voor een dorpssupermarkt?
- Wat zijn veelvoorkomende valkuilen of risico’s bij burgerinitiatieven gericht op dorpsvoorzieningen?

Extra Informatie

- Heeft u voorbeelden van projecten of initiatieven waar ik meer over zou kunnen lezen?

Appendix B Content Analysis

Added on the next few pages below

ID	Artikel	Omroep	Datum gevonden	Link	Tekst	Code
8	1.5	RTV Noord	21-mrt	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-21-mrt dorp	Nu fiets ik naar de buurtsuper in Ezinge en ga ik met de auto naar Aduard of Zuidhorn. Het is een heel gedoe.	Functional
21	1.7	RTV Noord	21-mrt	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/206874/dorpssupermarkt-mede-dankzij-15-jarige-jongen-weer-open-niet-te-beschrijven	'Het is belangrijk dat de supermarkt er weer is', legt Niels uit. 'Hier in het dorp wonen ook oudere mensen die niet zomaar even naar Musselkanaal kunnen. Juist voor hen is een supermarkt in het dorp belangrijk. Ook daarom heb ik het gedaan.'	Functional
23	1.9	RTV Noord	21-mrt	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/170863/gasselternijveen-komt-in-actie-voor-terugkeer-supermarkt	De supermarkt wordt gemist in Gasselternijveen. "t Is lastig. Als je iets vergeten bent moet je naar Stadskanaal",	Functional
25	1.10	RTV Noord	21-mrt	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/165535/buunermond-in-actie-voor-een-eigen-supermarkt	Meijer wil met zijn actie bereiken dat de winkel weer open gaat en dat Tingen het bedrijf gaat runnen. 'Het is toch van de zotte dat inwoners van Nieuw-Buinen, nota bene het grootste dorp van Borger-Odoorn, naar Stadskanaal moeten om een postzegel te kopen.'	Functional
29	2.3	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt	https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/331436/inwoners-bant-vinden-het-heel-erg-jammer	Een andere buurtbewoner zegt: "Ja, dat is jammer. Want het is mooi in de buurt natuurlijk om even snel je boodschapje te doen of wat op te halen voor het eten als je wat vergeten bent bij je wekelijkse boodschappen in Emmeloord. Dus dat is wel lastig."	Functional
31	2.4	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt	https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/417217/serieuze-plannen-voor-een-nieuwe-supermarkt	"Ik ben afhankelijk van een taxi. Als ik dan wat vergeten ben, kan ik niet zomaar naar Lemmer of Emmeloord", zegt een bewoonster.	Functional
32	2.4	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt	https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/417217/serieuze-plannen-voor-een-nieuwe-supermarkt	Hij geeft aan dat er relatief veel ouderen in het dorp wonen. "Die zijn echt afhankelijk van zo'n buurtsuper."	Functional
36	3.1	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt	https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1226567/inwoners-aldeboarn-hebben-weer-een-supermarkt	Annie Punter vond het ook heel vervelend zonder winkel in de buurt. "Als je geen vervoer hebt, dan ben je de klos. Het is moeilijk om altijd anderen te vragen, dus ik vind dit heel mooi."	Functional
38	3.2	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt	https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1202023/de-supermarkt-verdween-en-daarom-opent-supermarkt	Voor veel ouderen was het bovendien een mogelijkheid om zelfstandig nog boodschappen te doen en niet afhankelijk te worden van bijvoorbeeld kinderen.	Functional
39	3.3	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt	https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1172441/aldeboarn-wil-weer-een-supermarkt-anderzwaag	"Het is voor ons een groot probleem dat de supermarkt weg is," zegt Gerrit Hofstra. Hij woont al jaren in Aldeboarn, maar wil nu mogelijk toch verhuizen. "Mijn vrouw en ik zijn niet zo mobiel meer, op onze leeftijd. Toch moeten wij naar Akkrum om boodschappen te doen." Dat is 'maar' zo'n vijf kilometer. Maar als je niet meer kunt fietsen of autorijden, dan is dat een eind. Hofstra: "Mijn vrouw heeft geen rijbewijs meer en dus zijn we afhankelijk van anderen. Dat is niet wat we willen en dat moet echt anders. Op onze oude dag verhuizen is ook niet wat wij willen."	Functional
48	4.1	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/17152244/zussen-sanne-19-en-ilse-16-heropenen-supermarkt	"Een supermarkt in het dorp is handig voor de kleine dingetjes. Je hoeft niet meer helemaal naar Assen of Beilen.	Functional
50	4.2	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/16795304/supermarkt-in-hooghalen-verdwijnt-er-zit-niets-er	Boer wijst ook naar de mensen die minder mobiel zijn in het dorp. Zij gaan hun plek missen waar ze zelf naartoe kunnen gaan. De dichtstbijzijnde supermarkten zitten in Beilen, Smilde en in Assen.	Functional
51	4.3	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/16672739/supermarkt-schijff-in-barger-oosterveld-gaat-er	. Een deel is niet mobiel genoeg of digitaal handig om buiten het dorp hun boodschappen te halen of te bestellen. Dus zijn ze blij met een winkel zoals die van Schijff. Want de boodschappen worden ook wel eens thuis bezorgd.	Functional
52	4.4	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/16307253/dorpswinkel-met-vrijwilligers-dat-is-de-uitkomst	"Er is in het dorp ook echt een groep inwoners, voor wie het niet zo eenvoudig is om elders boodschappen te doen. Ik denk aan senioren die wat minder goed ter been zijn, bijvoorbeeld."	Functional
55	4.5	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/15072683/supermarkt-barger-compascuum-sluit-vanwege-corona	Koopman betreurt deze uitkomst. "Het is echt jammer. Ook voor het dorp en mensen die echt afhankelijk waren van deze winkel voor hun boodschappen."	Functional
57	4.6	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/164160/buurtsuper-wijster-geopend-ik-heb-een-traantje-w	Als je naar Beilen gaat om te winkelen dan vergeet je altijd wat. Dan is het toch mooi dat zo'n winkeltje er is."	Functional
58	4.7	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/158757/dorpssupermarkten-hopen-op-blijvend-effect-corona	Tijdens corona. "Ik merk heel duidelijk dat mensen de grote supermarkten mijden en de dorpswinkels opzoeken. Ze hebben hier wat meer ruimte en kunnen wat rustiger winkelen.	Functional
61	4.10	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/121124/gasselternijveen-blij-met-naderende-opening-supermarkt	Inwoners van Gasselternijveen zijn blij dat de supermarkt weer opengaat. "Waar moet je anders heen als je een pakje boter vergeten bent", stelt een voorbijgangster.	Functional
64	4.13	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/116325/heropende-supermarkt-geesbrug-maakt-vliegende-start	De afgelopen maanden moest ik steeds naar Nieuwlande. Nu kunnen we gelukkig hier weer terecht. En ze hebben heel lekkere broodjes", zegt een vrouw bij de kassa.	Functional
66	4.14	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt	https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/115784/gasselternijveen-in-actie-voor-terugkeer-supermarkt	"t Is lastig. Als je iets vergeten bent moet je naar Stadskanaal", zegt een inwoner die in de buurt van de supermarkt woont.	Functional
67	5.1	NH-Nieuws	24-mrt	https://www.nhnieuws.nl/nieuws/345800/geruchten-kloppen-laatste-buurtsuper-in-koedijk-s	Het verdwijnen van de buurtsuper heeft volgens Maurice Boerman grote impact op de hele buurt, maar met name op ouderen en mensen die minder mobiel zijn. "Zij zijn afhankelijk van deze supermarkt voor hun dagelijkse boodschappen, omdat alternatieven zoals Winkelcentrum De Mare en de Jumbo simpelweg te ver weg zijn."	Functional
70	5.2	NH-Nieuws	24-mrt	https://www.nhnieuws.nl/nieuws/337631/minisuper-ilpendam-vreest-sluiting-nu-ze-geen-tab	En daarbij is de eerstvolgende supermarkt een heel stuk verder, dat moet dan met de auto.	Functional
71	6.1	RTV Oost	24-mrt	https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/3301112/en-weer-sluit-een-buurtsuper-de-deuren-dit-keer-spar	"Met name ook voor de oudere mensen hier natuurlijk. Als ze eventjes iets nodig hebben, bijvoorbeeld, kunnen ze hier vaak lopend naartoe. Dat kan straks niet meer."	Functional
76	6.3	RTV Oost	24-mrt	https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2141753/supermarkt-kuinre-sluit-plotseling-de-deuren-drama-v	"Vroeger ging ik met mijn vrouw wel naar de Albert Hein in Emmeloord, maar zij is er niet meer en ik mag geen auto meer rijden. Ik heb ernstige hartklachten, ik kan toch niet naar Emmeloord met de scootmobiel?"	Functional
84	9.1	Omroep Gelderland	25-mrt	https://www.gld.nl/nieuws/2307954/meneer-de-waal-verkoopt-zijn-huis-bij-gebrek-aan-een-s	'Mijn vrouw heeft geen rijbewijs en is ook op de fiets niet zo zeker. Ze is bang dat mij iets gebeurt. Dan kan ze geen kant op.' De Waal gaat op zoek naar een appartement in een naastgelegen dorp, waar wel een supermarkt in de buurt is.	Functional
86	10.1	Omroep West	25-mrt	https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4939354/dorp-dreigt-enige-supermarkt-kwijt-te-raken-or	Ik heb geen vervoer en dan zou ik met de taxi naar Leiderdorp moeten om boodschappen te doen. Dat is niet te doen.	Functional
87	10.1	Omroep West	25-mrt	https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4939354/dorp-dreigt-enige-supermarkt-kwijt-te-raken-or	'De winkel in Leiderdorp is niet heel ver hier vandaan, maar zeker voor mensen die slecht ter been zijn is het een probleem als er hier geen winkel meer zou zijn.'	Functional
93	10.4	Omroep West	25-mrt	https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4679264/enige-buurtsuper-in-dorpje-sluit-deuren-doet-t	'Hier komen mensen bij elkaar, het is een plek waar ouderen zonder vervoer naartoe kunnen, maar het is ook een plek waar verstandelijk gehandicapten werken', zegt Meike	Functional

94	10.4	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4679264/enige-buurtsuper-in-dorpje-sluit-deuren-doet-1-kilometer-lopen	Als de supermarkt sluit, moeten buurtbewoners boodschappen doen in de omliggende dorpen Bergambacht of Schoonhoven. 'Mensen die geen vervoer hebben of niet kunnen fietsen, moeten met de bus of het is één à twee kilometer lopen.'	Functional
96	10.5	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/3983704/zwammerdam-heeft-na-zeven-jaar-weer-eigen-gewoon-goed-voor-het-dorp	Heel fijn dat de supermarkt weer terug is in het dorp. Vooral in het begin was het lastig, want je moest er echt bij nadenken wat je in huis haalde. Nu stap je toch makkelijker naar de winkel als je wat vergeten bent. En dit is ook gewoon goed voor het dorp.	Functional
98	10.5	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/3983704/zwammerdam-heeft-na-zeven-jaar-weer-eigen-gewoon-goed-voor-het-dorp	Een medewerkster van de zorginstelling is al even blij. 'Superhandig dat hier weer een supermarkt is. Als we gaan koken, of als we bijvoorbeeld feestjes hebben, dan kunnen we hier die boodschappen halen', zegt ze.	Functional
101	11.2	Omroep Brabant	25-mrt https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4479555/na-vele-jaren-raakt-dit-dorp-zijn-supermarkt	"Dat betekent dat ik met de auto naar Boxtel of Vught moet om mijn boodschappen te doen. Maar ook voor medicijnen, de krant of een pakketje kan je straks niet meer in het dorp terecht."	Functional
104	11.3	Omroep Brabant	25-mrt https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4341721/al-een-jaar-geen-supermarkt-in-de-rips-voor-buurt-biedt-in-geval-van-nood-nog-uitkomst-voor-wat-groenten	"Als je iets vergeten bent, moet je al meteen het dorp uit", vertelt Nicole van Kuringen, die pal naast de oude buurtsuper woont. "Je moet voor een supermarkt naar Gemert, Sint Antonis of Deurne. De boerderijautomaat in de buurt biedt in 'geval van nood' nog uitkomst voor wat groenten."	Functional
105	12.1	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3832526/ad-vindt-opvolger-in-de-skilift-maar-woont-nog-al-melk-uit-de-koeling-pakt	"Dit is voor ons de dichtstbijzijnde mogelijk om toch wat boodschapjes te doen", zegt een vrouw terwijl ze een pak melk uit de koeling pakt. "Dus ik ben blij dat ie gebleven is."	Functional
112	12.6	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3567660/is-er-nog-toekomst-voor-de-kleine-supermarkt-ik-kan-nog-fietsen-en-autorijden-maar-als-je-met-een-rollator-zit-ben-je-snel-uitgelopen	"Want als deze winkel er niet meer is, moeten we naar Loenen. Dat is al gauw een kwartiertje rijden. Dat kost toch een paar euro, net als bezorgen. En je bent er meer tijd mee kwijt."	Functional
117	12.8	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3475133/van-kassa-draaien-tot-schappen-vullen-inwoners-hierheen-kunt	Ook zien deze klanten in dat voor hen een belangrijke voorziening verdwijnt als de enige supermarkt dichtgaat. "Ik kan nog fietsen en autorijden, maar als je met een rollator zit, ben je snel uitgelopen. Dan is het fijn dat je toch hierheen kunt", zegt een klant.	Functional
120	12.9	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3469240/door-de-giga-gasprijzen-moet-ad-zijn-supermarkt-omdat-het-best-een-eindje-rijden-is-naar-de-volgende-supermarkt	Klanten reageren geschrokken. "Dat zou ik écht erg vinden. Het is zo'n belangrijke winkel voor het hele dorp, zeker omdat het best een eindje rijden is naar de volgende supermarkt."	Functional
121	12.9	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3469240/door-de-giga-gasprijzen-moet-ad-zijn-supermarkt-omdat-het-best-een-eindje-rijden-is-naar-de-volgende-supermarkt	Een oudere dame zegt: "Ik heb toevallig nog m'n rijbewijs, maar er zijn hier veel mensen die dat niet meer hebben. Wat moeten zij dan? Dat zou een ramp zijn voor Schoonrewoerd. Er is hier al niet superveel meer, dus dat betekent ook wat voor het gevoel binnen het dorp."	Functional
122	13.1	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/17309027/jaar-na-optimistische-start-verliest-buurtsuper	De dichtstbijzijnde supermarkt is na deze maand in Heinkenszand. Of ze moeten de boodschappen laten bezorgen.	Functional
125	13.3	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/16392984/heropening-dorpswinkel-zorgt-voor-leven-in-het-heel-erg-fijn-dat-er-een-buurtsuper-is-op-het-dorp	"Eerst moest je toch weer naar Heinkenszand of naar Goes en dat is toch weer een stukje verder. Dus we vinden het heel erg fijn dat er een buurtsuper is op het dorp."	Functional
3	1.3	RTV Noord	21-mrt https://www.rtvnoord.nl/economie/1150385/enige-supermarkt-in-wagenborgen-verdwijnt-het-plaatje-is-niet-meer-rond-te-rekenen-helaas	Dorpsbelangen Wagenborgen noemt het verdwijnen van de enige supermarkt in het dorp desastreus	General
12	1.5	RTV Noord	21-mrt https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	'Iedereen in Oldehove ziet het belang van een supermarkt voor de leefbaarheid en de sociale samenhang. Als we samen de schouders eronder zetten, moet er iets mogelijk zijn', zegt Barenkamp.	General
18	1.7	RTV Noord	21-mrt https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/871939/eka-en-albert-vieren-50-jarig-jubileum-van-hun-dorpswinkel-in-meedhuizen	'De samenhang in een dorp is prachtig. De winkel, de voetbalclub. Als je dat in stand houdt, blijft een dorp heel leefbaar.'	General
28	2.3	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/331436/inwoners-bant-vinden-het-heel-erg-jammer	Ook Dorpsbelang Bant vindt het spijtig dat de Troefmarkt verdwijnt: "Zeker voor ouderen en minder valide mensen was de buurtsuper een verrijking voor het dorp."	General
30	2.3	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/331436/inwoners-bant-vinden-het-heel-erg-jammer	Eén van de vaste klanten zegt: "Ik vind het heel erg jammer. Het dorp heeft een supermarkt nodig. Als die weg is, dan is het zeker voor mensen zonder vervoer en voor ouderen buitengewoon lastig om te voorzien in hun boodschappen. Ik vind het een basisbehoefte voor een dorp."	General
33	2.4	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/417217/serieuze-plannen-voor-een-nieuwe-supermarkt	Daarnaast geven meerdere inwoners aan dat een supermarkt ook zorgt voor levendigheid. "Je ziet en spreekt elkaar dan wat meer."	General
41	3.4	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1061604/wijnjewoude-krijgt-na-drie-jaar-weer-eigen-dorp-kunnen-doen	We zijn echt heel blij dat het na al die tijd gelukt is. Het was stil in het dorp, je treft niemand meer. En je moet voor alles weg. Vooral voor ouderen en voor jonge gezinnen is het handig dat ze straks alle boodschappen gewoon in het dorp kunnen doen."	General
46	3.8	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/801027/dorpswinkel-in-oudega-compleet-geregeld-door-ouderen	'De voorziening van een supermarkt is niet alleen belangrijk voor ons in het dorp zelf - en dan voornamelijk de ouderen -, maar ook voor toeristen die met de boot naar het dorp komen"	General
53	4.4	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/16307253/dorpswinkel-met-vrijwilligers-dat-is-de-uitkomst-voor-mensen-te-spreken	Voor mij is deze winkel een uitkomst. Ik heb geen auto, dus ik ben niet zo mobiel. Bovendien is de winkel meteen een mooie plek om mensen te spreken."	General
62	4.11	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/117871/hebben-buurt-supers-in-de-veenkolonien-toekomst-voor-dorpswinkels	De initiatiefnemers geven vaak aan dat een supermarkt in het dorp belangrijk is voor de leefbaarheid in het dorp, maar volgens krimpcoach Jacob Bruintjes valt dat wel mee. "Mensen kijken ook naar hun portemonnee en wat ze op tafel willen zetten", vertelt hij. "Dan maken ze toch vaak de keuze om een stukje verder te rijden. Dus het is voor dorpen misschien nog wel veel belangrijker dat je een plek hebt waar je elkaar kunt ontmoeten, bijvoorbeeld een dorpshuis."	General
89	10.1	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4939354/dorp-dreigt-enige-supermarkt-kwijt-te-raken-omdat-er-geen-plek-voor-alleen-boodschappen-doen	Een gevoel dat door Elstgeest wordt herkend. 'Een supermarkt is veel meer dan alleen boodschappen doen. Het is ook je plek waar je elkaar ontmoet en een stukje leven in het dorp.'	General
90	10.2	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4834788/buurtsuper-sluit-al-na-zes-maanden-de-deuren-hier-in-de-winkel-centraal-stonden	Ook voor de vaste klanten die slecht ter been zijn, is het jammer dat de winkel sluit en voor de sociale contacten die hier in de winkel centraal stonden', zegt Steenbergen tot besluit.	General
111	12.5	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3608029/buurtsuper-van-henk-gered-dankzij-massale-steun-voor-leveren	"We vinden het belangrijk dat deze winkel blijft bestaan dus daarom moeten we daar allemaal een beetje inspanning voor leveren."	General
123	13.2	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/16969844/spar-supermarkten-in-de-problemen-in-knipsel	Volgens haar is deze Spar onmisbaar. "Ik kan niet meer zo ver rijden. En ik maak nog leuk een praatje met de mensen hier. Ik zou het vreselijk vinden als deze supermarkt zou verdwijnen."	General
126	13.4	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/16179910/vanaf-maart-heeft-borssele-weer-een-supermarkt-in-het-dorp	Een nieuwe supermarkt zou de leefbaarheid van Borssele ten goede moeten komen. De winkel is namelijk niet alleen een plek waar mensen boodschappen kunnen doen, maar ook een ontmoetingsplek. "Het is een centrale plek in het dorp", zegt Joosse daarover.	General

129	13.6	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/15429907/kleine-supermarkten-vallen-om-en-dit-is-n	"Deze supermarkt in Lewedorp betekent heel veel voor me. Ik kom hier gemiddeld zo'n twee keer per week mijn boodschappen doen en dat ga ik straks ontzettend missen", aldus Marijke Welvaart.	General
1	1.1	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/economie/1272444/kleine-buurt-supers-hebben-moeite-om-te-overleven-het-is-niet-meer-rendabel	Verweij: 'Deze ondernemers dragen in een dorp bij aan de sociale samenhang, ze sponsoren de lokale voetbalclub en hun supermarkt is een ontmoetingspunt in het dorp. Dat moeten we koesteren.'	Social
2	1.2	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/economie/1233645/het-is-aanpoten-voor-de-buurt-super-maar-het-mooiste-vak-dat-er-is	Want de buurtsuper is misschien niet het allergeodkoopst, maar daar staat persoonlijke aandacht voor de klant tegenover. Een buurtsuper is ook een sociale ontmoetingsplek. Kom daar eens om bij de grote supermarkten. 'Daar is de klant vaak een nummer, wij kennen onze klanten.'	Social
4	1.4	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/economie/1143576/nieuwe-kans-voor-supermarkt-in-oldehove-werkgroep-zoekt-beheerder	Ook de gemeente Westerkwartier en de provincie Groningen zien de waarde en sociale functie van een dorpswinkel in Oldehove	Social
6	1.5	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	De Ruiter beaamt dat: 'Als ik hier boodschappen deed dan praatte ik zo met vijf of zes mensen. Die gesprekken en contacten mis ik. De ziel is uit het dorp.'	Social
7	1.5	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	Vooral ouderen in het dorp hadden een loopje naar de supermarkt. Het was hun dagelijkse wandeling. In de winkel maakten ze een praatje met deze en gene. Nu laten ze hun boodschappen bezorgen door de buurtsuper in Ezinge of door de Jumbo in Grijskerk. Er wordt wel een mouw aan gepast, maar het sociale aspect is helemaal verdwenen.'	Social
9	1.5	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	Bovendien houd ik niet van die grote winkels. Die hebben niet de sfeer die hier in onze eigen supermarkt hing	Social
10	1.5	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	Het is heel spijtig en het valt niet mee, want de supermarkt was de ontmoetingsplek van het dorp.	Social
11	1.5	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	'Het was niet alleen de supermarkt', vult medebestuurslid Gerwin Luiken aan. 'Er zat een OV-oplaadpunt in de supermarkt, er was een rustpunt voor wandelaars en fietsers, en PostNL had er een afhaalpunt. Het klinkt misschien vreemd, maar ook het prikbord waar inwoners mededelingen plaatsten, spullen te koop aanboden of om hulp vroegen is er niet meer. Dat is een groot gemis.'	Social
13	1.5	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/973487/oldehove-zit-zonder-supermarkt-de-ziel-is-uit-het-dorp	'Ik mis de supermarkt heel erg', zegt Femmie de Ruiter terwijl ze een brood en een rol beschuit in haar fietstas stopt.	Social
15	1.7	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/871939/eka-en-albert-vieren-50-jarig-jubileum-van-hun-dorpswinkel-in-meedhuizen	'Eigenlijk ben ik een soort maatschappelijk werkster', vertelt ze. 'Klanten vertellen van alles. Dat ze bericht krijgen van het ziekenhuis dat ze niet meer beter worden, of dat ze in verwachting zijn van een kleintje.'	Social
16	1.7	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/871939/eka-en-albert-vieren-50-jarig-jubileum-van-hun-dorpswinkel-in-meedhuizen	'Eka is altijd in voor een praatje. Ik vind het belangrijk, omdat best veel mensen zich eenzaam voelen. Dan is zo'n klein winkeltje ideaal.'	Social
17	1.7	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/871939/eka-en-albert-vieren-50-jarig-jubileum-van-hun-dorpswinkel-in-meedhuizen	Het is misschien iets duurder dan een Jumbo, een Aldi of een Lidl, maar er is maar één Eka. Het is een begrip.	Social
19	1.7	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/871939/eka-en-albert-vieren-50-jarig-jubileum-van-hun-dorpswinkel-in-meedhuizen	Soms ben ik voor de wekker al wakker.' En als vaste klanten 's avonds na sluitingstijd toch nog wat nodig hebben, kunnen ze altijd komen.	Social
20	1.7	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/871939/eka-en-albert-vieren-50-jarig-jubileum-van-hun-dorpswinkel-in-meedhuizen	'Dan bellen ze dat ze een feestje hebben en nog een kratje bier of metworst willen. Nou, de achterdeur draait hier altijd naar binn'n tou.'	Social
22	1.8	RTV Noord	https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/181619/dorpswinkel-sauwerd-draait-succesvolle-proef-met-vrijwilligers	"We zien al dat het een echte groep is. Als iemand ziek is dan wordt er aandacht aan besteed. Of als er iets te vieren is", vertelt Van den Bos. 'Vrijwilligers besteden hun tijd aan de winkel omdat ze dat leuk vinden en belangrijk. Dus we moeten ook zorgen dat het zo blijft'.	Social
26	2.1	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/134513/enige-supermarkt-in-dorp-gesloten	Het was vlak voor de sluiting niet druk in de winkel maar de klanten noemen het vertrek van de supermarkt wel een groot gemis. De winkel had volgens hen ook een sociale functie in het dorp.	Social
34	2.4	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/417217/serieuze-plannen-voor-een-nieuwe-supermarkt-in-dorp	Ook geeft één van de bewoners aan dat het sinds de sluiting van de vorige supermarkt erg rustig was in de buurt.	Social
35	3.1	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1226567/inwoners-aldeboarn-hebben-weer-een-supermarkt	Een winkel is er niet alleen voor de dagelijkse boodschappen, maar ook als sociaal ontmoetingspunt om een praatje te maken of een kopje koffie te drinken.	Social
37	3.2	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1202023/de-supermarkt-verdween-en-daarom-openen-wij-het-winkel	Want voor de inwoners betekent het niet alleen het missen van boodschappen, maar ook het missen van een ontmoetingsplek.	Social
40	3.3	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1172441/aldeboarn-wil-weer-een-supermarkt-ander-dorp	Het is meer dan alleen een onderneming. Het is ook de ontmoetingsplek van het dorp en brengt leven.	Social
43	3.6	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1006350/lokale-supermarkt-is-meer-dan-een-winkel	We vinden het belangrijk dat mensen weten dat het niet alleen om boodschappen gaat, maar dat we voor de gemeenschap vee doen. Zoals sponsoring, je zit in besturen, werkgelegenheid en sociale contacten",	Social
44	3.6	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1006350/lokale-supermarkt-is-meer-dan-een-winkel	Eén van de klanten laat weten dat hij de familiale sfeer mooi vindt en dat ze geen nee verkopen. Een ander is blij dat het dorp nog een supermarkt heeft en hoopt dat dit zo blijft.	Social
47	3.9	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/678546/minnertsga-krijgt-de-supermarkt-terug	"Het is van levensbelang voor een dorp. Een winkel is meer dan alleen een plek om boodschappen te doen. Het is ook een plek om elkaar te ontmoeten, vandaar dat wij erin investeren," zegt een van de ondernemers die niet bij naam genoemd wil worden.	Social
49	4.2	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/16795304/supermarkt-in-hooghalen-verdwijnt-er-zit-niets-hijken	"Het is ook belangrijk voor de sociale contacten. Zonder winkel in het dorp wordt het een dooie boel, kijk naar Hijken."	Social
54	4.4	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/16307253/dorpswinkel-met-vrijwilligers-dat-is-de-uitkomst	"Hier aan de raamkant hebben we twee tafeltjes neergezet, waar mensen even een kopje koffie kunnen drinken en kunnen bijpraten. Die functie is minstens zo belangrijk als de winkel."	Social
59	4.8	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/152468/dorpswinkel-van-weerman-in-odoorn-sluit-definitief	"Het leek hier wel een bruine kroeg." Iedereen uit het dorp die even een praatje wilde maken kwam langs", zo weet Harm.	Social
60	4.9	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/121356/nieuwe-dorpssupermarkt-gasselternijveen-officieel-open	"Het is superfijn. Je ontmoet mensen die je anders niet ziet", vertelt een klant.	Social
69	5.2	NH-Nieuws	24-mrt https://www.nhnieuws.nl/nieuws/337631/minisuper-ilpendam-vreest-sluiting-nu-ze-geen-tabak	Onze winkel is een sociaal punt voor iedereen, vooral voor ouderen. Die komen altijd even een praatje maken.	Social
72	6.1	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/3301112/en-weer-sluit-een-buurt-super-de-deuren-dit-keer-spar	Draaijer en zijn vrouw hopen nog lang van hun oude dag te genieten, maar ze zullen het klantcontact missen. "Ik kende bijna iedereen."	Social

79	6.4	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2050255/super-lettele-draait-op-vrijwilligers-dit-is-de-ziel-van-het-dorp	"Het is veel meer dan dat. Ik noem het Super Lettele, zo staat het ook op de voorgevel. Het is een combinatie van een winkel waar je levensmiddelen kunt halen. Maar ook cadeautjes. Of gewoon lekker een kop koffie kunt drinken aan de tafel voor in de winkel", zegt Munster.	Social
80	6.4	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2050255/super-lettele-draait-op-vrijwilligers-dit-is-de-ziel-van-het-dorp	"Mijn schoonmoeder komt hier volgens mij drie keer in de week met haar rollator boodschappen halen. Dat is heel goed voor haar sociale contacten, voor haar zelfredzaamheid ook en ze heeft de nodige beweging. Dit is echt meer dan een winkel."	Social
85	10.1	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4939354/dorp-dreigt-enige-supermarkt-kwijt-te-raken-omdat-de-winkel-een-verbinder-is	De dorpsraad baalt: 'Een supermarkt is ook de plek waar je elkaar ontmoet.'	Social
88	10.1	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4939354/dorp-dreigt-enige-supermarkt-kwijt-te-raken-omdat-de-winkel-een-verbinder-is	Ook omdat de winkel een verbindende rol in het dorp speelt. 'Het is toch even je dagelijkse loopje', vertelt een bewoonster. 'Het is de plek om even een praatje te maken en mensen tegen te komen.'	Social
91	10.3	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4761415/bewoners-regelen-dat-buurtsupermarkt-terugkomt	Het was naast een winkel, ook een ontmoetingsplek en dus baalde iedereen van de sluiting.	Social
92	10.3	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4761415/bewoners-regelen-dat-buurtsupermarkt-terugkomt	Een andere belangrijke toevoeging is de koffiehoeke. Daar kan men socialiseren.'	Social
95	10.4	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4679264/enige-buurtsuper-in-dorpje-sluit-deuren-doet-het-dorp-veel-voordelen	'Je komt binnen en wordt gelijk aangesproken, je ziet geen chagrijnige gezichten, het zijn hele vrolijke mensen. Het doet je goed om hier naartoe te komen.'	Social
97	10.5	Omroep West	25-mrt https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/3983704/zwammerdam-heeft-na-zeven-jaar-weer-eigen-winkel	Ze voegt eraan toe: 'Het is ook een sociaal gebeuren, je komt elkaar weer tegen in zo'n winkel. En weet je, hoe fijn is het dat je gewoon in je dorpje boodschappen kan halen en dat je niet iedere keer naar Bodegraven hoeft? Het is niet ver, maar het is toch even makkelijker.'	Social
102	11.2	Omroep Brabant	25-mrt https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4479555/na-vele-jaren-raakt-dit-dorp-zijn-supermarkt-verdwen	"Alles waar ik op misgrijp, haal ik in het dorp. Het zou jammer zijn als de buurtsuper, waar je ook komt voor een praatje, verdwijnt."	Social
106	12.2	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3800892/hoe-ons-kent-ons-een-levensstijl-werd-in-austerlitz	"De praatjes, het leren kennen van de mensen van het dorp, ik vond het allemaal heerlijk. We willen hier met ons gezin blijven wonen, dus dan wil je ook echt bij het dorp horen".	Social
108	12.3	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3700241/wie-wil-de-supermarkt-van-ad-het-is-een-makkelijke-initiatieven	De Dagwinkel in Schoonrewoerd is dan ook wel bijzonder. Iedereen kent iedereen. Het barst van de sociale initiatieven.	Social
110	12.4	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3674852/de-supermarkt-in-baambrugge-werd-gered-door-vrijwilliger	Vrijwilliger Anco sluit zich daarbij aan. "Het is een soort buurtcentrum aan het worden. Mensen komen hier ook gewoon om een bakkie koffie te drinken of met elkaar te kletsen."	Social
113	12.7	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3544702/verdwijnt-de-laatste-supermarkt-uit-baambrugge	De Dagwinkel is dan ook méér dan een supermarkt, vertelt Henk. "Het is een sociale plek, jong en oud komt hier samen. Er wordt gelachen, er wordt gehuild, er worden verhalen verteld."	Social
114	12.7	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3544702/verdwijnt-de-laatste-supermarkt-uit-baambrugge	"Dit is het sociale centrum van het dorp. De laatste voorziening die we hebben in dit dorp. En het is gewoon heel gezellig."	Social
119	12.9	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3469240/door-de-giga-gasprijzen-moet-ad-zijn-supermarkt	"Je moet het zo zien: zij zijn een soort lijm in het dorp. Hier komen mensen elkaar tegen, maken een praatje. En kun je ook nog je boodschappen halen. Als dat wegvalt... Dat zou vreselijk zijn."	Social
127	13.5	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/15638650/buurtsuper-borssele-wil-doorstart-met-vrijbankzaken	"We willen ook een koffiehoeke in de winkel en sociale hulp. Zoals mensen helpen met de computer of bij hun bankzaken. Dat de één de ander helpt", zegt Van Eijzeren.	Social
130	13.6	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/15429907/kleine-supermarkten-vallen-om-en-dit-is-niet-alleen-voor-de-klanten	Maar ook voor de eigenaar. "Het is een plek in het dorp waar veel mensen samenkomen"	Social
131	13.7	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/15383296/na-94-jaar-sluit-louis-de-deuren-van-de-erkwijt	Sanderse denkt dat de inwoners van Grijskerke vooral het contact gaan missen: "Mensen raken het sociale punt kwijt. Het praatje, de lach, de traan. Mensen komen elkaar in de winkel tegen."	Social
132	13.8	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/12786229/supermarkt-waarde-verdwijnt-zo-jammer-dan	"Vooral het sociale gedeelte. Even een praatje maken met mensen. Dat is natuurlijk ook je rol als supermarkt in een dorp. En dat vonden we ook leuk."	Social
134	13.9	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/0C592ED6F2F2D0D8C1257EAC005298CB/waarde-niet-voor-een-praatje	De dorpswinkel creëert verbondenheid. En dat was afgelopen maanden een gemis, vertellen de bewoners. "Gewoon voor een praatje. En voor de ouderen", zegt Lillian Goud.	Social
5	1.4	RTV Noord	21-mrt https://www.rtvnoord.nl/economie/1143576/nieuwe-kans-voor-supermarkt-in-oldehove-werkgroep-zoekt-beheerder	Dat was een flinke aderlating, buurtbewoners zeiden dat de ziel uit het dorp ging.	Symbolic
14	1.6	RTV Noord	21-mrt https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/971903/supermarkt-in-meerstad-geopend-heel-belangrijk-voor-de-levendigheid	Sandrina Scholte van Bureau Meerstad noemt de komst van de supermarkt 'heel belangrijk voor de levendigheid in de wijk'.	Symbolic
24	1.9	RTV Noord	21-mrt https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/170863/gasselternijveen-komt-in-actie-voor-terugkeer-supermarkt	'Een supermarkt is belangrijk voor de leefbaarheid in het dorp', zegt Jan Willem Koops van de stuurgroep die de supermarkt weer open wil krijgen.	Symbolic
27	2.2	Omroep Flevoland	21-mrt https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/259161/creilenaren-blij-met-open-supermarkt-op-zondag	Een supermarkt is essentieel voor dit dorp. Er is meer levendigheid en sfeer als er wat open is.	Symbolic
42	3.5	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/1080810/verbouwing-nieuwe-supermarkt-wijnjewoude	Het is voor veel dorpsbewoners goed dat het dorp weer een supermarkt krijgt, want de dichtstbijzijnde supermarkt is zo'n 5 kilometer weg.	Symbolic
45	3.7	Omroep Friesland	24-mrt https://www.omropfryslan.nl/nl/nieuws/826437/supermarkt-wijnjewoude-verkeerde-al-in-zwagerland	"Deze supermarkt is eigenlijk een kernwinkel voor het dorp. Wijnjewoude heeft meer winkels, maar als er geen supermarkt meer is, krijgen die het ook moeilijk."	Symbolic
56	4.6	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/164160/buurtsuper-wijster-geopend-ik-heb-een-traantje-weg	"Als je geen buurtsuper hebt, heb je ook geen dorpje."	Symbolic
63	4.12	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/117009/supermarkt-nieuw-buinen-gaat-weer-open-het-hart-van-het-dorp-gaat-weer-kloppen	Supermarkt Nieuw-Buinen gaat weer open: 'Het hart van het dorp gaat weer kloppen'	Symbolic
65	4.14	RTV Drenthe	24-mrt https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/115784/gasselternijveen-in-actie-voor-terugkeer-supermarkt	"Een supermarkt is belangrijk voor de leefbaarheid in het dorp", zegt Jan Willem Koops	Symbolic
68	5.1	NH-Nieuws	24-mrt https://www.nhnieuws.nl/nieuws/345800/geruchten-kloppen-laatste-buurtsuper-in-koedijk-schiedam	Naast een mogelijk faillissement voor de winkel blijkt uit onderzoek dat de verdwijning van kleinere supermarkten ten koste kan gaan van de leefbaarheid in het dorp.	Symbolic
73	6.2	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2237946/buurtsuper-terug-in-kuinre-ik-woon-in-het-dorp-ik-weet-wat-ik-veel-voordelen	Het werd omschreven als 'een drama voor het dorp'. De sluiting van buurtsuper Centerrr, vorig jaar oktober.	Symbolic
74	6.2	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2237946/buurtsuper-terug-in-kuinre-ik-woon-in-het-dorp-ik-weet-wat-ik-veel-voordelen	Ik woon zelf ook in een dorp, dus ik weet hoe belangrijk het is dat de leefbaarheid op peil blijft. Mensen waren emotioneel toen ze gisteren binnenkwamen. Eindelijk is er weer een supermarkt."	Symbolic
75	6.3	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2141753/supermarkt-kuinre-sluit-plotseling-de-deuren-drama-van-het-dorp	"Dit is echt een drama, het is het hart van het dorp."	Symbolic
77	6.3	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2141753/supermarkt-kuinre-sluit-plotseling-de-deuren-drama-van-het-dorp	Plaatselijk Belang Kuinre maakt zich grote zorgen over de leefbaarheid als er geen supermarkt meer is in het dorp.	Symbolic
78	6.4	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/2050255/super-lettele-draait-op-vrijwilligers-dit-is-de-ziel-van-het-dorp	"Het is de ziel van het dorp."	Symbolic
81	6.5	RTV Oost	24-mrt https://www.oost.nl/nieuws/237184/enige-supermarkt-van-rouveen-sluit-de-deuren	Klanten van de supermarkt balen flink van de sluiting van 'hun' winkel, want het opdoeken van de kleine super is een klap voor de leefbaarheid van Rouveen.	Symbolic

99	11.1	Omroep Brabant	25-mrt	https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4573225/in-de-buurtsuper-van-christ-jan-en-kara-wo	"Als er geen supermarkt meer is, is het dorp levenloos."	Symbolic
100	11.1	Omroep Brabant	25-mrt	https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4573225/in-de-buurtsuper-van-christ-jan-en-kara-wo	"Je bent naast supermarkt ook postkantoor, bank en apotheek. Je houdt het dorp leefbaar."	Symbolic
103	11.2	Omroep Brabant	25-mrt	https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4479555/na-vele-jaren-raakt-dit-dorp-zijn-supermark	"Een supermarkt is cruciaal voor de leefbaarheid van het dorp.	Symbolic
107	12.3	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt	https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3700241/wie-wil-de-supermarkt-van-ad-het-is-een-makkie	Maar zo'n dorp heeft wel wat nodig. "Er moet wat levendigheid zijn, winkels zijn daar een onderdeel van."	Symbolic
109	12.4	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt	https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3674852/de-supermarkt-in-baambrugge-werd-gered-door-	"Als deze winkel weggaat, wordt dit een spookdorp", sprak Henk begin dit jaar nog onheilspellend.	Symbolic
115	12.7	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt	https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3544702/verdwijnt-de-laatste-supermarkt-uit-baambrugge	Zij zou de winkel niet alleen missen voor de boodschappen, maar ook voor het dorpsbeeld. "We hebben een school, een winkel, een café – dat zorgt er ook voor dat het hier aantrekkelijk blijft om te wonen. Als alles weggaat sterft het hier toch een beetje uit."	Symbolic
116	12.7	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt	https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3544702/verdwijnt-de-laatste-supermarkt-uit-baambrugge	"Als dit verdwijnt wordt Baambrugge een slaapdorp. Dit dorp bruist nog, daar willen we graag onderdeel van blijven."	Symbolic
118	12.8	RTV Utrecht	25-mrt	https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/3475133/van-kassa-draaien-tot-schappen-vullen-inwoners	"Ik vind het gewoon heel belangrijk dat de dorpswinkel op het dorp blijft", zegt een andere klant.	Symbolic
124	13.3	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt	https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/16392984/heropening-dorpswinkel-zorgt-voor-leven-i	"Het was echt een beetje uitgestorven", vertelt inwoner Lea van Liere. "Nu is er weer leven in de brouwerij."	Symbolic
128	13.6	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt	https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/15429907/kleine-supermarkten-vallen-om-en-dit-is-r	Volgens Oudesluijs is het zelfs een aanslag op de leefbaarheid van een dorp. "Met het verdwijnen van een supermarkt, verdwijnt ook de cohesie van zo'n dorp."	Symbolic
133	13.8	Omroep Zeeland	26-mrt	https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/12786229/supermarkt-waarde-verdwijnt-zo-jammer-	Voor de leefbaarheid van Waarde kan het verdwijnen van de winkel grote gevolgen hebben, denkt ze. "Een supermarkt speelt een grote rol voor mensen. Er gaat steeds meer weg en dat is jammer voor een dorp als dit."	Symbolic
82	7.0	RTV Rijnmond	24-mrt	Niks		
83	8.0	L1	24-mrt	Niks		