Note before hand: This translation is done with a lot of help using the [Deepl translator](#) tool.

Snack Paradise

https://pointer.kro-ncrv.nl/zo-is-jouw-eetomgeving-veranderd-in-de-afgelopen-10-jaar

Interactive:

Short note on translating this interactive: after some intro blocks the reader can share his/her location or choose one of +/- 7000 neighborhoods. After this, the text (with coloured background and visualization) changes according to the chosen neighborhood. However, as a default we chose a neighborhood (Rotterdam, Carnisse) for you so you can just follow the story without interacting with it. The translation below is the text from this default neighborhood.

This is how your food environment has changed in the past 10 years

How fast food venues are springing up like mushrooms

Obesity is the biggest contributor to disease next to smoking and alcohol. Data research from Pointer shows that unhealthy food is more a part of the street scene than it used to be.

And that affects what we eat and how heavy we are. "There's really a proven link between how often you see fast food and how much you buy of it," says behavioral scientist Eva van den Broek.

What has changed in 10 years? If we look at fast food, we see that the number of locations nationwide has increased by over 1,000. That's a 20 percent increase.

If we look more broadly at unhealthy food and include, for example, ice cream parlors, pizza takeout joints, donut stores, the number of shops has actually grown by 3,000 in 10 years. That is a 30 percent increase in unhealthy food in our streets.

In addition, we see that nearly 1,200 fresh food stores have disappeared. Think bakeries, greengrocers and fishmongers. That's a decrease of about 15 percent.

Want to know if your neighborhood has turned
into a snack paradise in the last decade?

[Share my location]

We do not store your data

Or search:

[Rotterdam]   [Carnisse]

This is what the unhealthy food scene of Rotterdam, Carnisse looked like ten years ago.

10 outlets sold unhealthy food, such as fries, pizzas or sweets. Scroll on to see how your neighborhood has changed.

The red dots represent the current unhealthy food supply in your neighborhood.

Added together, 8 outlets have been added where you can buy unhealthy food. That's an 80% increase.

What you don't see on the map is that there were 9 smaller stores with fresh produce, such as vegetables, meat and bread. 1 store with fresh food disappeared.

How does your eating environment affect you? And what is it like growing up in a healthy or unhealthy neighborhood? We ask behavioral scientist Eva van den Broek of Utrecht University.

Video

Translation subtitles:

- We know from a study where a group of teenagers were followed for a year with those GPS trackers on their coats.
- That the longer they were in sight of outlets selling fast food.
- The more often they bought that kind of food.
- So there really is a demonstrated link between how long you see fast food and
- how much you buy of it.
- And it's also true because we know that the more often you're exposed to something the more you're going to like it.
- That's true of your boss's plans, but it's also true of fast food chains.
- Children are even more receptive to that which they normally see.
- Because children have yet to develop their habits so partly they look very much to their environment, especially to their parents.
- But therefore pick up much more quickly what is normal.
- And we know that in neighborhoods where a lot of fast food is on sale, there are children who are more likely to be overweight.
- We also know from experiments that the neighborhood where you live.

- That it has a lot of influence on how heavy you are.
- Of course it's very difficult to just pick people up and make them live in a different neighborhood.
- But that's still what scientists in America tried once.
- What they did was they asked people who lived in a poor neighborhood.
- Whether they wanted to participate in a lottery In that lottery there were three things that could come out of it.
- The first was: you could win a subsidy to move to a richer neighborhood....
- The second was: win a subsidy to move to whatever neighborhood you want....
- You could also stay in your own neighborhood.
- Option three was: you won nothing at all and stayed where you were.
- And then they followed these people and looked at how heavy they became.
- So what their abdominal circumference was.
- And it turned out that the people who were randomly selected were allowed to move to a wealthier neighborhood.
- That they were 5% less likely to be overweight
- And that's really a huge difference

What about in the whole municipality of Rotterdam? In 2021 we see 793 unhealthy shops there. In your neighborhood there are 18 unhealthy outlets. Your neighborhood therefore has a share of 2.3% of all unhealthy outlets in your municipality. Do we see this difference in the overweight figures?

This is the percentage of overweight adults in:

Your neighborhood:
Your municipality:
The Netherlands:

We take the new figures from the Health Monitor 2020. These show that in Rotterdam, Carnisse around 51.7% of the adult population was overweight.
The RIVM has calculated the figures based on more than half a million respondents. Because there are often too few respondents per district or neighborhood, the RIVM uses a mathematical model with which the figures can be estimated. The actual percentage lies with 95% certainty between 49.4% and 55.2%.

The municipality percentages can be estimated more accurately because you really know the overweight of more people and don't have to model it. The number of overweight residents in your neighborhood is 0.4 percentage points higher than the rate for your municipality.

Just over half of the adult Dutch population is overweight. Your neighborhood is 0.9 percentage points away from that.

Will something also be done about all those unhealthy kilos? In 2017, the government signed the National Prevention Agreement together with some 70 other parties. This agreement states that they want to significantly reduce obesity in children and adults. RIVM calculated the agreement and came to the conclusion that the current agreements are not sufficient.

Famke Mölenberg previously researched the food environment in Rotterdam. According to her, it does not help if you can buy unhealthy food everywhere and there is still much to be gained.

"It's important to pay attention to our food environment and design it in such a way that it becomes easier to make a healthy choice." Experts recommend, for example, selling fast food in fewer places, as well as imposing additional taxes on sugary drinks and abolishing VAT taxes on products from the five basic food groups.

Mölenberg hopes that a new Prevention Agreement will focus firmly on reducing obesity. Not by putting the ball in the individual's court, but by looking at underlying factors, such as the eating environment. "Because with the current package of measures we won't get there."

More about VET!

In our data analysis, all kinds of choices are made that affect the final result. We explain those choices in the article below.

Data justification: a changing eating environment

Check out our project page on growing up healthy.

Want to know more about what your eating environment does to you? Watch our December 6 and 13 broadcasts at 10:15 p.m. on NPO2.

Data justification: a changing food environment

https://pointer.kro-ncrv.nl/dataverantwoording-een-veranderende-eetomgeving

The food environment on our streets is changing rapidly. In the last 10 years we have seen a rise in fast and fatty snacks. You may already have had that feeling, but we looked at some 28 thousand food locations in the Netherlands to give that feeling some more support. In our data analysis, part of the FAT! project, all sorts of choices are made that influence the final result. We will explain those choices here.

The research bureau Locatus travels the country collecting information on all stores and shopping areas. Valuable information if you want to know where to open a new store. But it is also valuable if you want to know what kind of stores have been added where.

In the production 'This is how your food environment has changed in the last 10 years' we look at data from all stores in the years 2011 and 2021 where food was sold. We compare these by neighborhood and municipality to calculate increases and decreases.

See how your neighborhood has changed
This is how your food environment has changed in the past 10 years

Because collecting retail data is Locatus' business model, we cannot disclose the raw data that forms the basis of our research.

When is an outlet unhealthy?
That is the first question we want answered in order to conduct our data analysis. We use the categories by Locatus and create our own classification. What unhealthy food outlets have been added? We divide Locatus' industry categories into fresh food stores and unhealthy. We classify fast food (which alone accounted for an increase of 1,000 stores in 10 years), grill shops, ice cream parlors, crepes/waffle/donut stores, pancake houses, stores selling confectionery and delivery and take-out tents as unhealthy.

The last category in particular is nuanced. It includes all outlets that sell food but are not eaten there. This may occasionally include healthy variants.In advance, we have not classified as unhealthy all vendors with "sushi" or "salad" in the name. But we did classify the majority of takeaway outlets as unhealthy. All the more so because 90 percent of the assortment of all takeaway restaurants is unhealthy. This was shown in research by Wageningen University.

Then there are a number of categories that we have not classified as unhealthy. Think of chains like Subway, the Coffeecompany or Bagels & Beans. This is something that can be debated. Because some will say, "At Subway you can also order healthy sandwiches," but experts will say, "Those sandwiches are way too big. Or: "At the Coffeecompany they only drink coffee", while at the same time the chocolate muffins look enticingly at you from the counter. You see: too much discussion. And unfortunately we cannot look into the sales figures of every food provider. That's why we left lunchrooms out of it. We also left supermarkets, and restaurants out of the analysis because they sell both unhealthy and healthy food.

How our children, despite it being forbidden, still see advertisements for unhealthy foods

Our research also shows that fresh produce stores have declined by nearly 1,200 outlets nationwide in 10 years. Under fresh food stores we include fruit and greengrocers, bakers,

cheese farmers, farm stores, poulterers, butchers and fishmongers. And as an exception, the providers who were listed under delivery/takeout and in which the name of the store contains the word "salad.

If you want to know more about the classifications Locatus makes, there are several overviews here.

How are the overweight figures calculated by neighborhood?
We took the neighborhood, municipal and national overweight figures from the most recent Health Monitor 2020. This was done by GGD Nederland, CBS and RIVM. The Health monitor 2020 is a survey with more than half a million respondents. Nationally, the sample is so large that you can safely call it representative. On a municipal level you also come a long way because in each municipality many residents participated in the survey. But because there are often too few respondents per district or neighborhood, the proportion of respondents is then not representative, RIVM uses the "SMAP" model to estimate the figures. This produces an estimate per neighborhood, sometimes with a large margin of error.

If you want to know more about the SMAP model, you can consult their documentation. Want to dive into the numbers yourself? Then you can go here.

Another interesting question for us is: in neighborhoods that are experiencing an increase in the number of unhealthy food locations, are we also seeing an increase in the number of overweight residents? We have spoken to several scientists in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Maastricht who are investigating this question. But we are not getting an unambiguous answer. In our production, behavioral scientist Eva van den Broek cites a study from the United States where this can be seen.

So we would like to know the increase in obesity by neighborhood. We ourselves are not yet able to conduct this research on the method we use. The first time the Health Monitor was conducted in this way was in 2012, but those figures cannot yet be compared with the latest figures for 2020 because of changing neighborhood classifications, as moving bounderies. The RIVM is currently working on figures in which you can compare Health Monitors of different years, but that is still some time away.

News on municipality data: In 8 out of 10 municipalities, the unhealthy food supply increased. What about in your municipality?

https://pointer.kro-ncrv.nl/in-8-op-de-10-gemeenten-steeg-het-ongezonde-voedselaanbod-hoe-zit-dat-in-jouw-gemeente

In 10 years, the number of unhealthy food stores in the Netherlands has increased by 30 percent, our data research shows. We see a rise across the country, but some municipalities stand out. We list all the municipalities. Where did the unhealthy food supply increase the most in relative terms over the past 10 years, and why?

Our country had 355 municipalities in 2020, and in 287 of them the number of unhealthy food shops increased over the past 10 years. Even if you look at the changing number of inhabitants within municipalities (due to shrinkage or growth) we see an increase in unhealthy food in 8 out of 10 municipalities. We pick out a few interesting municipalities.
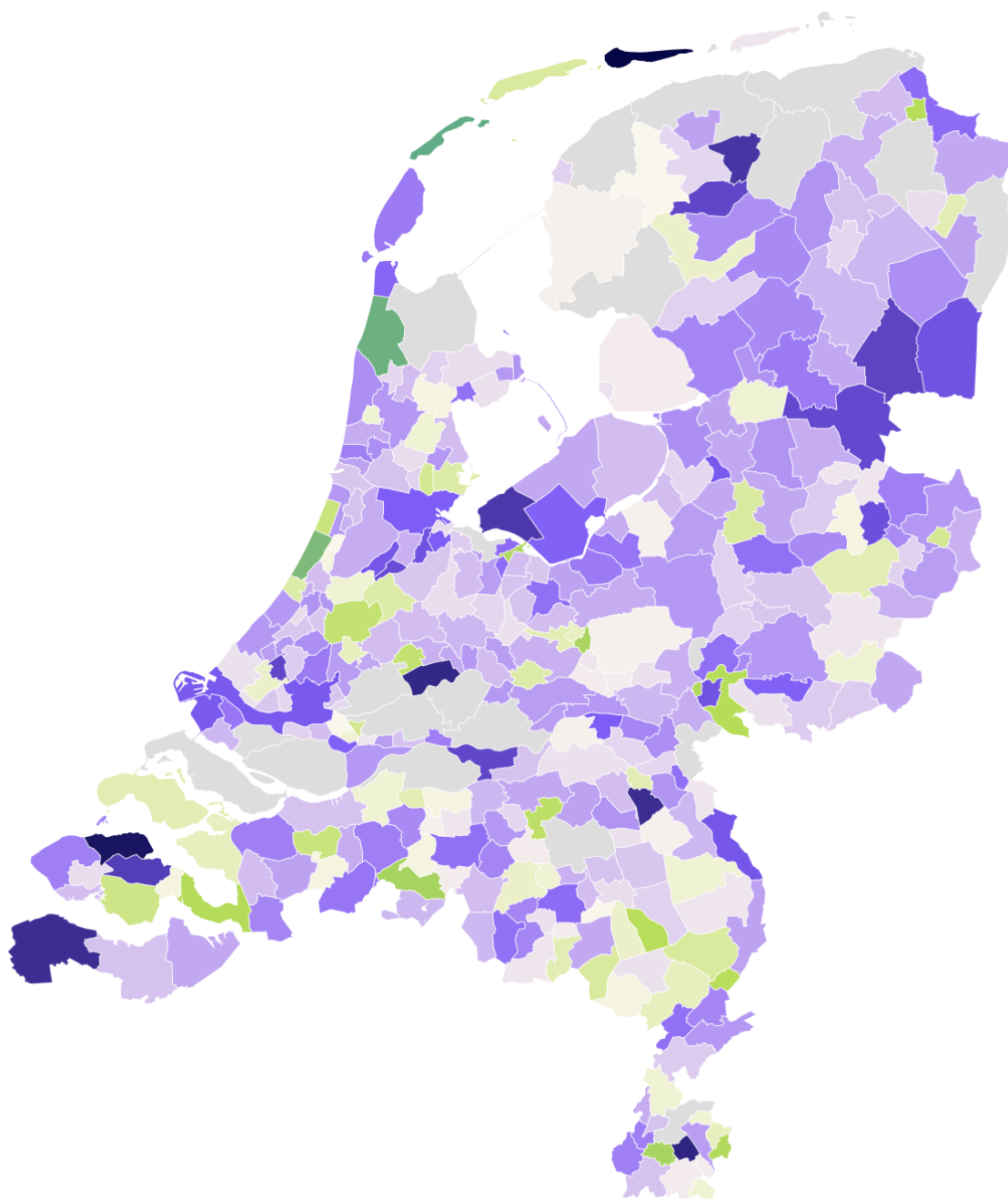
Scroll all the way down to look up all the figures for your own municipality.

Growth of unhealthy food stores in 8 out of 10 municipalities
For each municipality, here is the number of unhealthy locations that have been added per 10,000 residents in the last ten years.

Growth/decrease per 10,000 inhabitants

Groei/daling per 10.000 inwoners

−9   0   6

There are 21 municipalities that were not yet municipalities in 2011 (mainly in the north and mid-west of the Netherlands). These municipalities are shown in grey.

Created with Datawrapper

The obesity boulevard
We start with Goes. The unhealthy food supply there increased by no less than 84 percent. One of the causes is a new fast food boulevard along the A58 motorway. There was some grumbling about this in 2019, but the alderman at the time felt that the "obesity boulevard," as it was called, would not detract from the healthy image of the city. "We have had many positive reactions to the arrival of the fast food restaurants and only a few critical questions," the alderman told Omroep Zeeland at the time.

How does the current alderman of Sport, Youth and Economy Joost de Goffau see this, now that he has earned a place in our top ten with this? We get an answer from his communications advisor: "The municipality of Goes does not regret having allowed these entrepreneurs to settle here. As a municipality we have many different tasks and represent the interests of many different target groups." Stimulating the vitality of the residents, but also of the local economy, is one example of this, according to the communications consultant.

So don't they see a relationship between the unhealthy food offerings and obesity in their municipality? "Goes has an obesity rate that is comparable to the national average," the communications consultant believes. The municipality of Goes does not necessarily establish a link with the unhealthy food offer. Several causes are conceivable: "The adult health monitor of the GGD showed, for example, that many working adults experience stress. This is partly a cause of obesity and during the corona period sport has not always been possible."

People encounter more and more tempting food in their environment

Data justification: a changing food environment

Where there are tourists, there is unhealthy food
Neighboring municipality Noord-Beveland is also in the top ten with an increase of over 5 unhealthy tents per 10,000 inhabitants. This municipality is not only notable for its high place (2) in the top ten; in the municipality of Noord-Beveland we also see that relatively many people are overweight: 57 percent of Noord-Bevelanders are overweight where the national average is 50.8 percent. Does the municipality see a relationship between the increase in unhealthy eating and the number of overweight residents? "Noord-Beveland is a small tourist municipality where there are about one and a half million tourist overnight stays each year. We are also surrounded by three different bodies of water that attract many day tourists. This means that the demand for unhealthy food from recreationists is many times higher than that from our own residents."

Yet our own residents are also above average in weight? "We are working on that. Exercise is encouraged. The elementary school are all engaged in movement or outdoor learning, and every week school fruit is distributed at the Noord-Beveland schools. But we see that corona has an impact on public health, also in Noord-Beveland. Smoking and obesity are on the rise." And does the neighboring fast food boulevard in Goes have an impact? "It is unknown if many residents of

Noord-Beveland go there. Positive for our young people who go to secondary school there is that the fast food boulevard is not located near the schools but at an exit from the A58."

Then on to the only Wadden Island in the top ten: Ameland. In 2011 this municipality still had 13 unhealthy outlets; in 2021 there were 16. Not a mega increase in the number perhaps, but if you look at the increase per 10,000 inhabitants (where we could measure the increase in 334 municipalities) it is the largest of all. Can the municipality explain this? Spokesperson Heidi Bunicich: "The supply of unhealthy food is so high because we receive an increasing number of tourists. About 650,000 every year. The supply responds to a demand." And are they proud of this number one position? "We think this is unfortunate, but also look at it in the context of tourism and would also like to nuance the figures. We are a small municipality with only about 3,700 inhabitants. The number of tourists who come to the island every year is many times greater than the number of inhabitants."

Gemeenten hebben (nog) geen juridische instrumenten
om hiertegen op te treden
Gemeente Lopik

700 percent increase in Lopik
Another eye-catching name in the list is Lopik: a small municipality in the province of Utrecht that has less than 15,000 inhabitants. In 10 years time, the Lopikkers went from one snack bar to no less than eight unhealthy eateries. This makes this municipality the fastest riser with an increase of 700 percent in unhealthy offerings. We ask the alderman if he can explain this increase? Spokesperson Hanriëtte Bergstra responds: "It has not escaped our attention that in recent years more outlets for unhealthy food have established themselves in Lopik-dorp in particular." She refers to the possibility of free establishment for all entrepreneurs, including snack bars, pizzerias, ice cream parlors. "Municipalities do not (yet) have legal instruments to act against this." In addition, explains Bergstra, there is the question of whether it is the task of the municipality to determine what kind of food "the store on the corner" sells. "After all, the municipality does not decide what is on the supermarket shelves either." This does not detract from the fact that the municipality of Lopik naturally considers the health of its residents of great importance. Bergstra: "Ideally, we would also like to see as varied a range of stores as possible."

The municipalities in our top ten are spread across the country, we see on the map. In Drenthe we find the municipality of Coevorden where 13 unhealthy marquees were added. In Limburg we find the municipality of Voerendaal where 6 unhealthy eating locations were added. And also the Frisian Achtkarspelen is in the top ten; that municipality went from 10 to 22 unhealthy outlets. In North Brabant we have the small Mill and Sint Hubert with about 11,000 inhabitants, which went from 2 to 7 junk food locations.

We also asked these municipalities for a response. The municipality of Achtkarspelen cannot explain the relatively large increase and would like more insight into the figures. "If this is so," says spokesperson Hanny Durkstra, "then this should definitely be a point of attention in our municipality." Coevorden nuances the increase: the number of inhabitants has also increased, spokesman Gert de Groot tells us, and: "We have a large outlying area." But he also writes: "An increase in the number of points of sale is at odds with the commitment to lifestyle and exercise." The municipalities of Voerendaal and Mill en Sint Hubert have not yet been able to respond.

The only large municipality in the top ten
These medium-sized and smaller municipalities come out on top in our top ten because we include the number of inhabitants in the calculation. If we look at the absolute increase in the number of unhealthy eating places, the big cities of course head the list: in Amsterdam 362 unhealthy eating places were added, in Rotterdam 240 and in The Hague 144.

Yet we also see one large municipality in our top 10: Almere. In 10 years time we see a big doubling of the number of unhealthy places. The number went from 85 unhealthy establishments to no less than 184. The number of fresh food stores also increased, but only by two locations. Can Almere explain this? We ask Alderman for Economic Affairs, Maaike Veeningen. Her spokesperson lets us know that they don't know an immediate cause: "In part it can be explained by the set-up of Almere as a young city with modern shopping centers that are economically leased by chains."

The overweight rate is also above the national average in Almere at 55 percent. Do they see a relationship and are they working on it? "We're definitely working on it, but it's not just related to the unhealthy food offerings." Earlier this year, Almere came up with a food strategy, the spokesperson reveals. "Among other things, minima get the chance to order weekly fruit and vegetable bags for a low price and we are active in schools and in the school environment to make the food supply healthier."

Would they like to have a say in which food providers set up shop in the city? "We are working hard to see how we can influence that, but it is difficult. Partly because of limited legal steering."

Want to know how the supply has changed in your municipality? In the table below you will find the absolute figures from your own municipality. You can find the overweight figures per municipality here.

How many unhealthy food shops have been added in your municipality?
In 21 municipalities, per capita growth could not be calculated because these municipalities did not exist in 2011.

[INTERACTIVE TABLE]

Columns: Municipality | 2011 | 2021 | Growth percentage | Growth per 10.000 inhabitants

	Gemeente	2011	2021	Procent groei	▼ Groei per 10.000 inwoners
1	Ameland	13	16	23,1%	6,0
2	Noord-Beveland	5	9	80,0%	5,5
3	Voerendaal	5	11	120,0%	4,9
4	Lopik	1	8	700,0%	4,8
5	Sluis	24	34	41,7%	4,6
6	Mill en Sint Hubert	2	7	250,0%	4,6
7	Achtkarspelen	10	22	120,0%	4,3
8	Almere	85	184	116,5%	4,2
9	Goes	19	35	84,2%	4,0
10	Coevorden	16	29	81,2%	3,8

Tabel Pointer • Gegevens ophalen • Gecreëerd met Datawrapper

Do you want to know more about what our unhealthy food environment is doing to us and our children? Watch the broadcast here:

Beschermen we kinderen wel genoeg tegen ongezond eten?

TV broadcast: Living in a land of plenty

Are we protecting children enough from unhealthy foods?
https://pointer.kro-ncrv.nl/leven-in-luilekkerland

Pizzerias, hamburger stores and doughnut shops are sprouting up like mushrooms. The number of unhealthy stores in the Netherlands has increased by 30% in the past ten years. At the same time, we see the obesity rates among teenagers rising; now one in six teens is overweight. Can you still speak of personal choice when you are tempted on every street corner to eat unhealthy food? Or is it time that we start protecting young people better against an environment that makes them fat and sick?