



Warsaw, 13 November 2020

His excellency

Mateusz Morawiecki

Prime Minister of Poland

Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland

Regarding: A joint appeal by tenants and landlords to restore full operation of shopping centres not later than on 30 November

Dear Prime Minister

The Polish Council of Shopping Centres, Związek Pracodawców Polskich Obiektów Handlowych i Partnerów (ZPPOHiP) [Association of Employers of Polish Retail Facilities and Partners], and Związek Polskich Pracodawców Handlu i Usług (ZPPHiU) [Polish Trade and Services Employers' Association] – **organisations representing owners and managers of retail properties, tenants, including more than a hundred Polish companies involved in the retail and shopping centre industry – are jointly appealing to the Polish Government to fully restore the operations of shopping centres by no later than 30 November 2020 to enable Poles to prepare for Christmas in safety and peace. Extending the restrictions on retail will lead to bankruptcies of numerous companies and the loss of thousands of jobs.**

Shopping centres have been and are prepared to serve customers safely, being one of the safest public places during the pandemic. **Both landlords and tenants have prepared themselves for the expected second wave of infections and for operating under a strict sanitary regime.** A number of investments have been made in safety measures (regular disinfection of places frequently touched by people, gloves or dispensers with disinfectant, and free-of-charge masks for customers), there is a constant monitoring of the visitor traffic in place, customer behaviour is enforced in accordance with regulations and recommendations (wearing masks, disinfecting hands, maintaining social distance). We have a possibility to reduce the number of people present in retail properties on an ongoing basis

The data collected by the PRCH indicate that the scale of infections among shopping centre employees has not exceeded 1 per mille since May. Importantly, no cases have been reported of virus transmission to co-workers or customers. The employed safety measures have been noticed by customers: the majority of them – 77% feel safe in shopping malls, as confirmed by Inquiry's research published on 10 November this year ([Inquiry - Safety](#)).

Consumer surveys as well as turnover and footfall data also show that customers have changed the way they use **shopping centres – they visit malls less frequently, but for very specific consumer purposes, trying to satisfy their shopping and services needs as quickly as possible.** The profile of the shopping centre customer has also



changed – **in the times of the pandemic, shopping is done by individuals, not by whole families or groups of young people. This trend has been visible since the beginning of the epidemic in March.**

Since the reopening of shopping centres on 4 May 2020, the subsequent weekly **footfall results were below last year's levels.** In October this year, with the increase in the infection rate, there were significant drops in visits to 50-60% before the pandemic (depending on the size of the city, the size of the scheme and the category of shops).

Conscious shopping distributed across 4 weeks will allow Polish families to prepare for Christmas, which is so important in the Polish tradition, in a safe and calm way. Extending the lockdown of shopping centres after 29 November will deprive Poles of this opportunity. **Christmas shopping cannot be done exclusively through e-commerce, as this channel accounts for only 20% of the average sales of shopping centre tenants. Moreover, there is practically no high street shopping in Poland, as the market was built from scratch on the basis of shopping centres. The fourth quarter is particularly important for the sectors such as fashion, children's accessories, and electronics and household appliances. It is the turnover in this period that determines the condition of these retail categories.**

Doing the shopping in a shopping centre under an appropriate sanitary regime is safe. We have analysed the recommendations of the WHO and Safe Shopping Centres, an organisation certifying the safety of retail schemes, which state that the sanitary procedures introduced by shopping centres in Poland and implemented since the beginning of the pandemic, also in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Development, Labour and Technology and the Chief Sanitary Inspector (GIS), are consistent with international recommendations and the highest standards. We are also open to consultations and discussions with experts appointed by the Ministry of Health, GIS or other centres recommended by the Prime Minister to fight the epidemic.

During the first lockdown, the shopping centre industry in Poland recorded a decline in net turnover of over PLN 17.5 billion in March-May 2020 alone. The restrictions on retail in November alone will mean a loss of turnover worth around PLN 8 billion for the industry. The extension of the lockdown onto December is another PLN 12 billion of lost turnover. Many companies, not only from the retail sector but also services related to, will be unable to withstand such losses.

In view of the dramatic situation of the industry and justified concerns about jobs as well as the impossibility of bearing the costs of the next lockdown, ZPPHiU, PRCH, and ZPPOHiP call for the full opening of shopping centres on no later than Monday, 30 November 2020, under conditions of a strict sanitary regime. This would be a very valuable form of support from the Government for the entire industry. It is also possible to extend the operating hours of shopping centres in order to further spread the visitor traffic.

Dear Prime Minister, we are asking you to meet as soon as possible and discuss with us the conditions for the full opening of the shopping centres as a matter of urgency, not



later than on 30 November 2020. We are ready to provide data and analyses to demonstrate the safety of retail locations and the difficult situation of the entire sector which, unless a reopening takes place in December, will face a destabilised situation of many tenants, shopping centre owners, service companies, suppliers and other entities cooperating with the industry and their employees.

Z wyrazami szacunku,

Zarząd Polskiej Rady Centrów Handlowych

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2. Mr. Adam Niedzielski, Minister of Health
3. Mr. Jarosław Pinkas, Chief Sanitary Inspector
4. Mr. Adam Abramowicz, Ombudsman for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises