

# Circular Practices in the Dutch Furniture Retail Market

and how to get started

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FUTURE OF FURNITURE 2024

**By 2050, we must be carbon neutral, with a 55% CO2 reduction by 2030. Achieving this requires changes in production, business models, and consumer habits. With new laws fostering this transition, retailers are key to close the loop and promote the sustainability story. This whitepaper explores the state of sustainable practices among Dutch furniture retailers, the key barriers and drivers they face. It offers practical advice to accelerate circularity and help meet the 2030 goals.**



# WHY

Global warming, a rapid decrease in biodiversity, and increasing stress on human habitats worldwide are only some of the sustainability issues we are confronted with today. The enormous amount of raw materials we use to make goods, energy and food is largely to blame for this; the strain this puts on the ecosystem steadily outpaces Earth's ability to replenish itself. Simultaneously, we need to ensure resilience to geopolitical shifts by becoming less dependent on other countries for the supply of raw materials.

One way we can be less dependent on newly sourced raw materials is by shifting towards a circular economy. Circular economy flows are made up almost exclusively of reusable and bio-based raw materials. Products are manufactured, distributed and consumed in closed-loop systems. As a result, the value of materials and products is retained as long as possible, virtually eliminating waste and minimizing the need to extract new raw materials.

Unfortunately, the current linear model being used in the furniture industry is resulting in high CO2 emissions and one of the biggest waste streams, primarily because the main consumption of furniture has been fast furniture. Fast furniture is the rapid production of inexpensive furniture of low quality with a short lifespan, drawing parallels with industries like fast food and fast fashion. Around 50% of all furniture is made in Asia, the majority in China, resulting in a high

number of fast furniture being shipped to the EU.<sup>1</sup> The expeditious nature of this sector raises environmental apprehensions, mirroring the challenges associated with other fast-paced industries. In the European Union, 80-90% of furniture waste meets its fate in incineration or landfills, and only 10% is recycled.<sup>2</sup>

New legislation will change things around and foster the transition from a linear furniture industry of take-make-waste to a circular one. Research indicated that the CO2 of the furniture industry could be lowered by almost 1/3 if the sector became fully circular.<sup>3</sup> This will bring the Dutch furniture sector closer to the target set in the EU Climate Law of being climate neutral in 2050 with an important milestone in 2030 when we have to have lowered our CO2 emissions by 55%.

# Learn which legislation is going to affect your business



Besides the current introduction of the CSRD (Corporate Social Responsibility Directive), a whole package of new legislation will be implemented in Europe in the upcoming years, all as part of the European Green Deal, to speed up the transition towards a circular furniture industry. These new regulations like the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation, Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation (Uitgebreide Producenten Verantwoordelijkheid (UPV) in Dutch) and Right to Repair legislation present both challenges and opportunities for furniture retailers. Compliance requires close collaboration with manufacturers to ensure products and

materials meet ecodesign and reparability standards and there's a need to have processes and systems in place that make sure products and materials will be re-used at their end of life. In the Netherlands, the National Circular Economy Programme (NPCE) 2023-2030 outlines 3 ambitious governmental objectives towards sustainability and circularity. Reducing raw material usage, substituting primary materials with re-used and sustainable alternatives, extending product lifetimes, and closing the loop with

high-grade recycling processes, aiming to establish a fully circular economy by 2050. Within this framework, specific objectives for the furniture sector have been delineated to be achieved by 2030. In this whitepaper, we will shed light on the current status of the implementation of these objectives, and the most important barriers and drivers, and offer practical advice and inspiration to furniture retailers (and the government) on how to speed up the circular transition to reach these objectives by 2030.

## OBJECTIVES NATIONAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROGRAMME (NPCE) 2023-2030

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READ NPCE](#)

**Objective 1:** By 2030, all furniture newly placed on the market will meet the highest achievable circular product requirements. This includes ensuring that circular design requirements are integrated into furniture production under the Ecodesign regulation.

**Objective 2:** By 2030, the lifespan of furniture will be extended as much as possible. Efforts to meet this objective involve promoting longer usage of furniture, supporting circular business models, and implementing an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme for furniture.

**Objective 3:** By 2030, the collection and recycling of furniture will be maximally improved. This entails making reuse and high-quality recycling of residual flows the norm and enhancing the processes for collecting and dismantling furniture waste.

# The Dutch Furniture Retail Market

## Research setup

To get a better understanding of the current position of circular practices within the Dutch furniture market we conducted research on the current state of adoption of circular practices by furniture retailers and the biggest challenges and opportunities they encounter. The survey includes insights into what level retailers are already offering sustainable brands and repair, and whether they offer secondhand options in their stores.

Both retailers, sustainable brands/producers and external service providers were interviewed to understand what challenges and opportunities implementing new circular practices presents. Besides interviews and focus group discussions, we tried to quantify the results as much as possible by sending out a survey to 60 retailers of which 19 answered,

having a response rate of 32%. Most of the respondents were part of the bigger retail chains and franchise formulas. The respondents had on average 19 stores each in the Netherlands, of which most targeted the medium to high budget segment.

and paint mainly use recycled or biobased material this is not yet the case when we look at the furniture brands mentioned.

Here sustainable often means high-end quality brands with a long lifespan, production in Europe and a focus on reducing the direct CO2 footprint of their buildings, fleet and logistics.

## RESULTS

### 1. Sustainable Brands

#### Overview of current market

Already 84% of the retailers responded that they offer sustainable brands. This indicates that most retailers actively pursue a more sustainable collection. However, deeper analyses of the sustainable brands they sell indicate that there is a big difference in the level of sustainable practices within their collection. Where the brands mentioned for product groups like textiles (incl. curtains)



This is a good start but when we want to lower our CO2 emissions by more than half in 2030 we have to focus more on the (hidden) impact of our products, as this is 80-90% of the impact for a furniture brand.

## Benefits

Step by step changing your current collection with sustainable alternatives is one of the easiest ways to lower your impact. One of the most important motivators for retailers to adopt sustainable brands, besides the willingness to actively lower their impact, is that a sustainable collection offers retailers a unique selling point. Which leads to a competitive advantage

and the opportunity to target a new customer segment. As can be seen in the graph below, the willingness to buy environmentally friendly furniture and furniture from recycled materials is between 70-75% and is expected to increase in the coming years.<sup>4</sup>

Examples like outdoor brand Patagonia show that a focus on sustainability can also lead to commercial success. When Patagonia launched the “Don’t Buy This Jacket” campaign during Black-Friday, urging consumers to consider the environmental impact of their purchases and only buy what they truly need, their sales increased by about 30% despite their anti-consumerism message.<sup>5</sup>

EXAMPLE ON HOW TO INSPIRE YOUR TARGETGROUP

# DON'T BUY THIS JACKET



It's Black Friday, the day in the year retail turns from red to black and starts to make real money. But Black Friday, and the culture of consumption it reflects, puts the economy of natural systems that support all life firmly in the red. We're now using the resources of one-and-a-half planets on our one and only planet.

Because Patagonia wants to be in business for a good long time—and leave a world inhabitable for our kids—we want to do the opposite of every other business today. We ask you to buy less and to reflect before you spend a dime on this jacket or anything else.

Environmental bankruptcy, as with corporate bankruptcy, can happen very slowly, then all of a sudden. This is what we face unless we slow down, then reverse the damage. We're running short on fresh water, topsoil, fisheries, wetlands—all our planet's natural systems and resources that support business, and life, including our own.

The environmental cost of everything we make is astonishing. Consider the R2™ Jacket shown, one of our best sellers. To make it required 135 liters of water, enough to meet the daily needs (three glasses a day) of 45 people. Its journey from its origin as 60% recycled polyester to our Reno warehouse generated nearly 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, 24 times the weight of the finished product. This jacket left behind, on its way to Reno, two-thirds its weight in waste.

And this is a 60% recycled polyester jacket. Knit and sewn to a high standard, it is exceptionally durable, so you won't have to replace it as often. And when it comes to the end of its useful life we'll take it back to recycle into a product of equal value. But, as is true of all the things we can make and you can buy, this jacket comes with an environmental cost higher than its price.

There is much to be done and plenty for us all to do. Don't buy what you don't need. Think twice before you buy anything. Go to [patagonia.com/CommonThreads](http://patagonia.com/CommonThreads) or scan the QR code below. Take the Common Threads Initiative pledge, and join us in the 9th "R," to reimagine a world where we take only what nature can replace.

**COMMON THREADS INITIATIVE**

**REDUCE**  
WE make useful gear that lasts a long time  
**YOU** don't buy what you don't need

**REPAIR**  
WE help you repair your Patagonia gear  
**YOU** pledge to fix what's broken

**REUSE**  
WE help find a home for Patagonia gear you no longer need  
**YOU** sell or pass it on\*

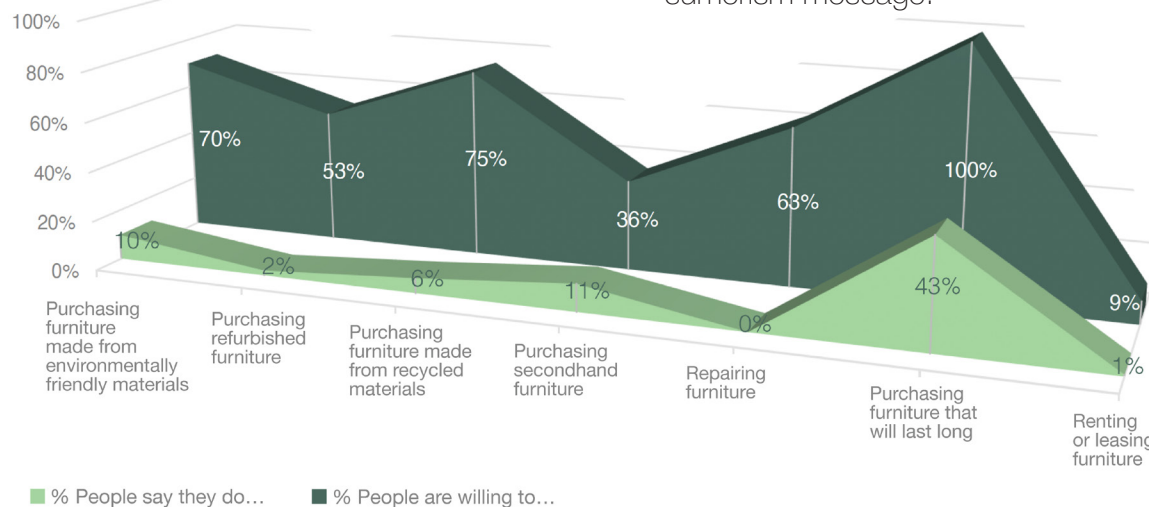
**RECYCLE**  
WE will take back your Patagonia gear that is worn out  
**YOU** pledge to keep your stuff out of the landfill and incinerator

**REIMAGINE**  
TOGETHER we reimagine a world where we take only what nature can replace

**patagonia**  
patagonia.com

**TAKE THE PLEDGE**

\*If you sell your used Patagonia product on eBay™ and take the Common Threads Initiative pledge, we will credit your product on patagonia.com for no additional charge.



## Challenges

Distinguish sustainable from non-sustainable brands

In our survey, 84% of the retailers are currently sourcing sustainable brands. However, the biggest challenge for retailers is knowing if a brand is truly sustainable. To be able to source sustainably, retailers need more insights into the impact of different materials and a better understanding of the different circular design principles and how they contribute to lowering

the impact. To help retailers with this challenge we highlighted 6 important questions to ask your supplier. You can also use tools like our [Keurmerkenwijzer](#). When you want to further develop your knowledge of sustainability in order to make a better selection we developed an [Educational Program](#) that provides you with all the tools and knowledge needed to make informed choices when selecting or designing sustainable furniture for your collection.



## 6 Questions

- 1 What raw materials and semi-finished products are used to make the product? How are these materials sourced?
- 2 Is it made of recycled/biobased material? What percentage of the content is recycled / biobased?
- 3 What does the production process look like?
- 4 Where was it made? And was it made under fair working conditions?
- 5 Can the product be easily repaired, and parts replaced?
- 6 What happens to the product and raw materials at the end of its lifespan?

# ARCO

## Knowledge sharing & open communication

Arco is a furniture brand with a 120-year legacy as producer of premium quality wooden furniture. Locally sourced biobased materials, durability, and refurbishment are at the heart of Arco's sustainable strategy and they offer certifications and product passports with all their furniture. Arco has a strong focus on educating consumers as well as retailers on the importance of sustainability and helps them in navigating the complex world of sustainability and certifications in order to distinguish sustainable from non-sustainable practices.

*"As an industry, we should redefine premium and focus on quality and durability over superficial perfection".*

Floor van Ast, Arco

Arco not only invests a lot in sustainability training for retail staff but is also an advocate for clearer industry standards on the definition of sustainability. For example, in defining the quality of certified wood, a lot of certified wood with a bit of coloring or a knot is perceived as lesser quality and for that reason not accepted as premium. While you could still make beautiful and high-quality products with it. As an industry, we should redefine premium and focus on quality and durability over superficial perfection.



# KAIROS

## A new way of working together

Kairos is an impact-driven brand that produces radical sustainable top-quality couches and armchairs. Their primary challenge is fitting into the traditional production and retail systems, as they constantly aim to innovate to be as sustainable as they can be given the developments in the market.

*“One of the biggest challenges for cooperation between sustainable brands and retailers is the retail margin”.*

Thijs van Bommel; Kairos

To overcome the retail margin challenge Kairos focuses on creating authentic collaborations rather than typical buyer-seller relations. Emphasising marketing, storytelling and knowledge sharing as a trade-off for a lower margin for the retailer. The lower margin of 25% also results from the fact that retailers can sell their sustainable products with minimal risk as they only need to buy a showroom model and sales are done directly via Kairos its own online interface. Providing the retailer with a sales commission for each sale they make via the system. As an extra service, Kairos offers its unique story as a marketing strategy, as well as social media content on sustainability and the latest developments concerning the circular transition to educate and engage both consumers and employees.





## Challenges

### High retail margins

When you start negotiating with your selection of sustainable brands, current retail margins, of around 50%, become the second hurdle perceived by both retailers and sustainable brands. Usually, sustainable brands are more expensive in comparison with non-sustainable brands. Better understood as: non-sustainable brands are often too cheap as the price is paid in unfair labour and non-calculated emissions during production and transport.

When a 'regular' retail margin of 50% is added, these brands easily become too expensive. Upcoming legislation will help create a fairer level playing field for sustainable brands and implementing a true pricing model could solve this problem completely. In the meantime, retailers, sustainable producers and brands should find new ways of defining their relationship and look at different ways to add value to their collaboration, rather than merely focusing on the profit margin. For example, sustainable brands can be great allies in the circular transition as they can offer a lot of value for retailers in knowledge

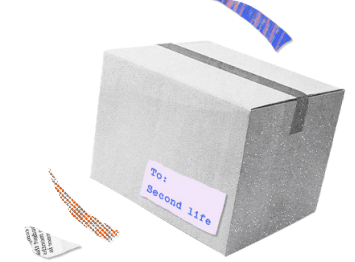
and provide beautiful content for storytelling. An inspiring example of working together to strengthen each other and add value is the way Kairos works together with their retailers.

### Tips for retailers

If we look at the first objective of the NPCE: "By 2030, all furniture newly placed on the market will meet the highest achievable circular product requirements", furniture retailers are open to selecting more and more sustainable brands for their collection. However, besides the margin, the biggest challenge for retailers is how to distinguish sustainable from non-sustainable brands. As most brands mentioned sustainable still limit their sustainable practices to high-quality, local EU production and lowering of their direct CO2 emissions.

But if we want to meet this objective furniture brands and producers also have to change the materials they use and start implementing circular design principles. Therefore, it is important for retailers to have transparent and

frequent communication with their suppliers and educate themselves in order to ask the right questions and make the right buying decisions. As indicated by the examples working with sustainable brands can be a great way to increase your knowledge of sustainable practices.

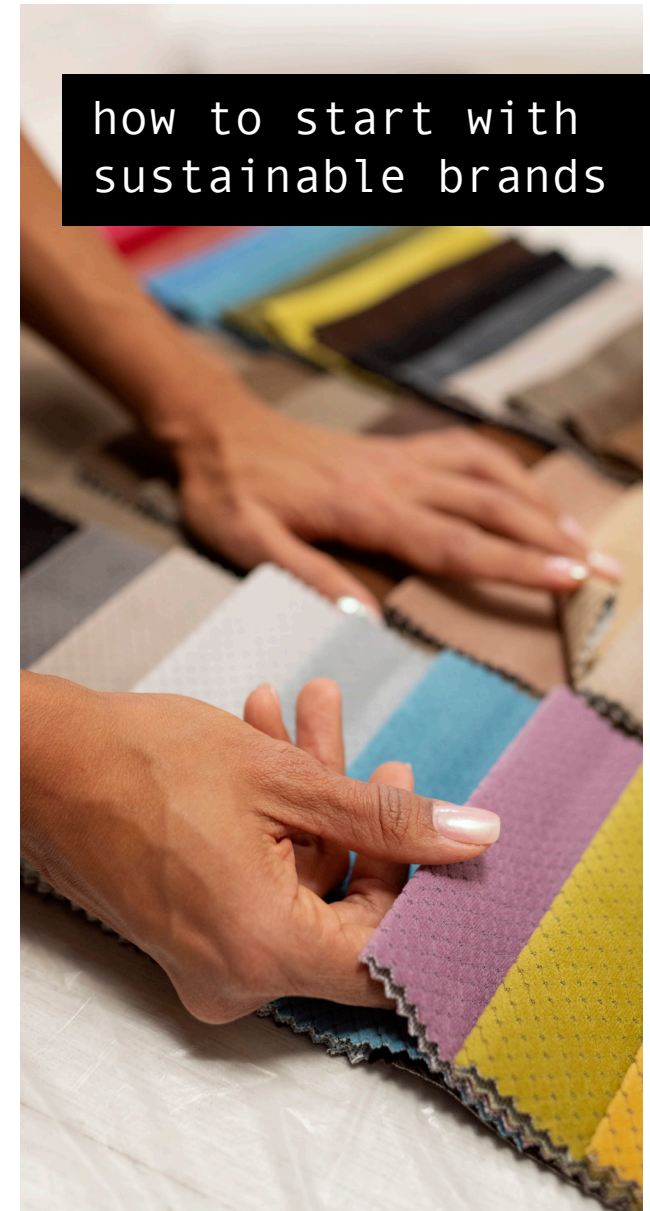


## Tips for implementation

1. **Start small:** Begin with a limited selection of sustainable brands and expand based on consumer demand and feedback. This allows retailers to manage costs and gauge market interest effectively.
2. **Look for new ways of cooperation;** don't focus on financial value only, but build a relationship with added value in the form of knowledge sharing and engaging content.

## Tips for communication and storytelling

1. **Tell the brand's story:** Highlight the stories behind sustainable brands and emphasise the positive impact they make both instore as via the content on your online channels.
2. **Put a spotlight on brands that use recycled or biobased materials** and promote their lower environmental impact. If possible, offer sustainable materials or products for the same price as traditional ones and experience yourself that consumers choose the green option when given the choice.
3. **Transparent communication:** Share openly how the furniture is made. It's positive impact but also the struggles it faces or were improvement is still needed. Consumers prefer honest and open communication and it will also prevent you from greenwashing. Use certifications and product passports when available to build trust.



# 2. Repair Services

## Overview of current market

Offering repair services can significantly extend the lifespan of furniture and contribute to a circular economy. While 32% of retailers provide repair services within the warranty



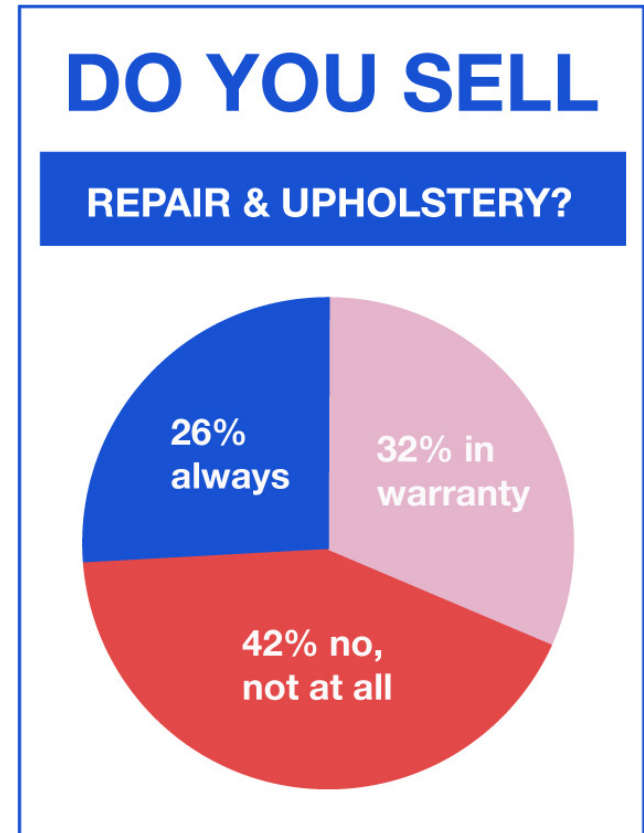
period, 42% do not offer repair services at all, and only 26% offer repair services in and outside of the warranty. The main reason to offer repairservices is because of the legal obligation to offer repairs or a new product within the warranty period.

## Benefits

Repair services help extend the lifespan of furniture, reduce waste and support a circular economy. Besides the legal obligation to offer repair services, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are mentioned by the retailers as two of the main benefits of also offering repair services outside of warranty. Therefore, you currently see this extended service more in the high-end customer segments.

## Dutch Consumer Legislation on Repair

Did you know that consumer rights concerning repair are quite strong in the Netherlands? Most people think there is a warranty period of only 2 years like in most of the EU. But in the Nether-



lands it is as long as the product can be realistically expected to perform and not break. For example, a good quality couch is expected to last much longer than 2 years, hence by law, so the customer has a much longer warranty than 2 years on a couch.

# VITRA CIRCLE

## Inhouse repair service as a successful business case

Vitra, with Vitra Circle Store, has successfully implemented an inhouse repair and refurbishment service that addresses consumer demand for sustainable options and reduces furniture waste. Their initiative involves taking back damaged or unsold furniture, showroom models and furniture returns. Repairing it, and reselling it through the Vitra Circle store. Providing a solid businesscase for an in-house repair service that can also be used by customers who want their own furniture to be repaired.

With Vitra Circle they not only build an additional revenue stream for Vitra but they also offer a higher service level to their retail network as they lower their costs on furniture returns and unsold or damaged goods.

*“Back in the day, you could find furniture repair stores in every city, now the furniture market is a monoculture, only selling new furniture. We really have to work together, share knowledge and educate the younger generation to rebuild this repair eco-system again.”*

Maarten Kruijthof; Vitra Circle



# REPAIRSTREET

## A joint approach to repair

The RepairStreet is an innovative concept by The Substitute that provides repair and re-use services for retailers and their customers. The initiative aims to extend the lifespan of furniture, reduce furniture waste, and enable high-quality product and material reuse. At the same time, it creates valuable job opportunities for refugees and individuals distanced from the labor market. Furniture that is unsuitable for repair or resale is disassembled into mono-material streams for recycling.

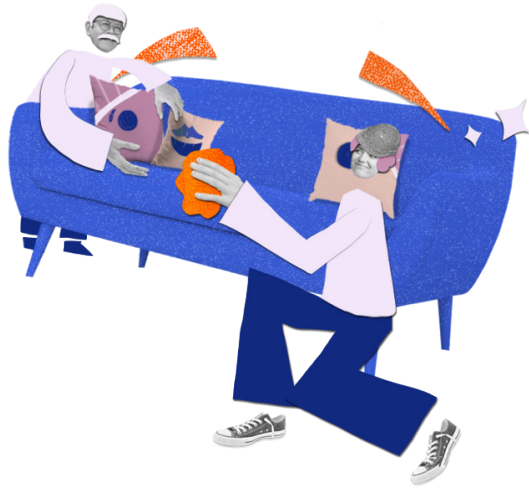
As a retailer, you can participate in this initiative by:

- Offering repair services to your customers through a Repairloket, using The RepairStreet as your external service provider.
- Offer a free pick-up service for old furniture when delivering new pieces to your customers.

The Substitute plans to launch the RepairStreet as a pilot project in collaboration with De Waardering, starting in 2025. The pilot will take place in the IJssel region. A consortium of stakeholders is being formed and the new ecosystem is beginning to work together.

Additional pilot projects for a Local Repairstreet are already being planned in other regions. If you are interested in joining this initiative, please contact Machteld Rijnten by [mail](#).





## Challenges

Retailers often lack the resources, such as repair workshops or storage space, to offer these services and it is difficult to make a good business case out of repair services. Often it is too expensive to set up a repair facility yourself as it goes against your core business and logistical processes of selling new furniture and you need economies of scale to make it worthwhile.

Besides these organisational challenges, there is also still the public opinion that 'new is better' and/or 'more hygienic' resulting in consumers demanding new products instead of asking for repair.

## Tips for retailers

If we look at the second NPCE objective:

"By 2030, the lifespan of furniture will be extended as much as possible." Retailers can play an important role in reaching this objective by offering repair and refurbishment services inside and outside the warranty and ma-

king it easy for consumers to take care of their furniture and obtain spare parts, which also supports the upcoming Right-to-Repair act.

Set up your own in-house repair service as a circular practice is great but also has a lot of impact on your current way of working, so what more can you do?

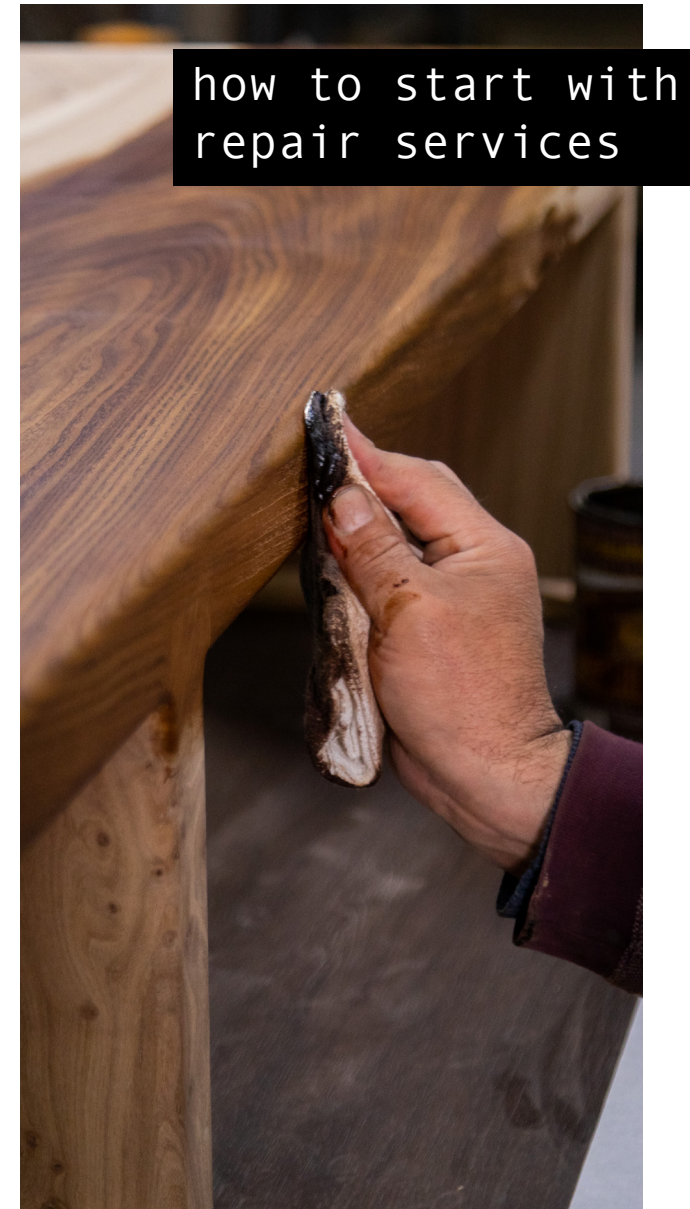


## Tips for the implementation of repair services

1. **Start small** Make spare parts and maintenance products available on your website.
2. **Work together**
  - Help your customers with DIY- repair manuals. [Jafix](#) is a specialised service provider who can support you in setting up this service for brands.
  - Work with an external service provider e.g. POS service group or your own repair network to offer extra services like (at home) repair and cleaning.
  - Or set up a repair hub with other partners or join one of the Repairstreet initiatives that will be set up in the coming years.
3. **Set up in-house repair service** learn from the previous steps and investigate if it is interesting to set up your own in-house repair service as a separate concept as Vitra Circle did.
4. **Make reparability a selection criteria** when selecting brands for your new collection ask about reparability and availability of manuals and spare parts.

## Tips for communication and storytelling

1. **Educate consumers** (*and employees*) on maintenance of furniture and give them options in repairs, using in-store information and your digital channels.
2. **Highlight the availability** of spare parts repair manuals and repair services both within and outside warranty as many consumers stated that they are unaware of their repair options and where to find more information.
3. **Use campaigns to emphasise the sustainable impact** Highlight that repair extends the lifespan of furniture and reduces waste.
4. **Focus on additional benefits when promoting repairs** Market the emotional value of repair, as furniture pieces with sentimental value or generational furniture pieces can be repaired and made to look as new instead of discarding cherished memories.



# 3. Second Hand

## Overview of current market

Only 16% of the retailers indicate they sell secondhand furniture in their stores. Of the ones that do sell secondhand furniture only one buys back furniture from their clients and re-sells this in their own store.

The other 2 indicate they sell their client's secondhand furniture for a sales commission.

## Benefits secondhand

Introducing a secondhand 'furniture corner' in regular retail stores is the circular strategy that

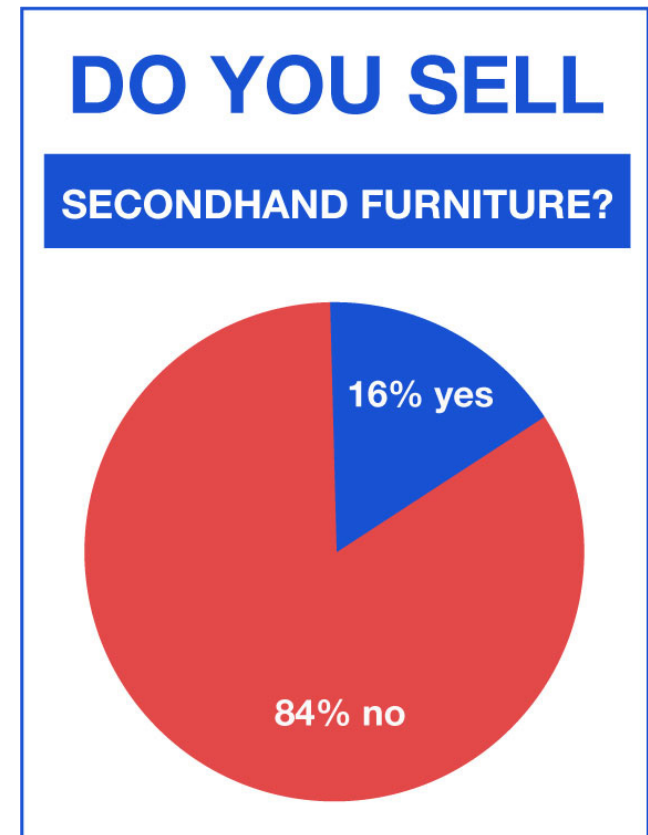
has the most positive environmental impact. Besides the positive impact, the perceived benefits of selling secondhand indicated by retailers are targeting new customer segments and diversifying your revenue streams.

This is important for the future as demand for secondhand and repaired/refurbished furniture and Recommerce, the reselling of used products is becoming a growth market.

## Challenges

A common challenge mentioned by retailers was a lack of resources, mainly a lack of storage space and logistical support, and a steady supply to offer secondhand furniture in

their stores. Some retailers also indicated that they perceive secondhand pieces to be of lower quality, or not align with the brand image. The first also being a common reason for consumers not to buy secondhand.



## Recommerce market is booming

[READ ARTICLE CLICK HERE](#)

Did you know that the market for Recommerce in Europe is growing from €75 billion in 2021 to €120 billion in 2025? This is a growth rate of 60% in 4 years! In the fashion industry, the secondhand market is a growing market with more and more

retail chains, like Zalando and H&M offering secondhand clothing in their shops. Want to know more? Read this column of Geert-Jan Smits former CEO and founder of Flinders.



# TRENDAHOPPER

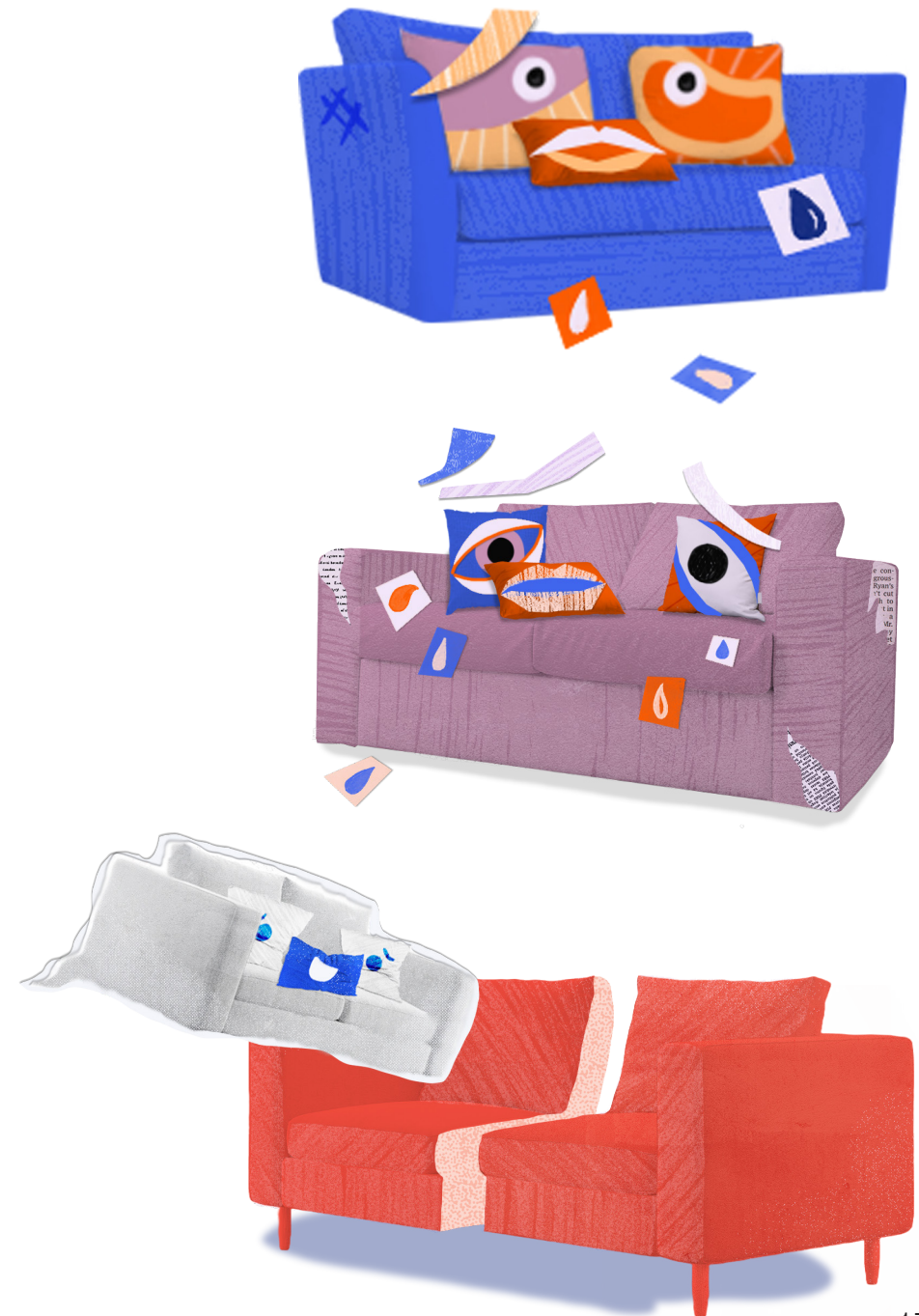
## TRENDAHOPPER, JUST DO IT

Trendhopper Sliedrecht implemented a take-back service for their customer's old furniture.

Together with an external service provider 'The Couch Corner' they offer a service where they take back an old couch when they deliver a new one. The old couch is then repaired and resold by the external service provider, providing a service to their customer while at the same time saving furniture from incineration. At Trendhopper the consumer pays €50 for the pick-up service to cover the costs for the logistics and twice a month (or when needed) the external service provider passes by and picks up the couches, cleans and repairs them and sells the couches via his own sales canals, mainly via Marktplaats.

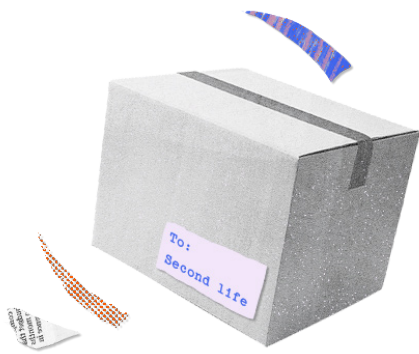
*"After following the educational program with The Substitute I got inspired to take a first sustainable step. My cooperation with the Couch Corner doesn't require much handling or investments but has big impact".*

Jolanda Romeijn, Trendhopper Sliedrecht



## Tips for retailers

Another way retailers play an important role in reaching objective 2 of the NPCE “By 2030, the lifespan of furniture will be extended as much as possible.” is by extending the product lifecycle of furniture by reusing and reselling pre-owned furniture. By promoting pick-up services for old furniture and collaborating with pick-up services such as the Couch Corner or the Kringloop, almost 50% of the furniture can be directly saved from landfills and find a new owner. Actively contributing to objective 3: “By 2030, the collection and recycling of furniture will be maximally improved.” And lowering the amount of furniture waste. So, were to start as a retailer?



## Tips for implementation

- 1. Start small:** picking up the old furniture of your clients by partnering with external providers like the “Couch Corner” or your local Kringloop. This is a great first step when you have limited storage space, and you can even outsource the logistics. You provide a service for your customers and save furniture from landfills.
- 2. Diversify your revenue streams:** experiment with
  - Selling your customer's old items in your store for a sales commission.
  - Setting up a cooperation with a producer with a refurbished line.
  - Buy your customers' old pieces and sell them again at a discount in your own store.

# START SMALL EXPERIMENT!

## Tips on communication and storytelling



- 1. Economic benefits:** Promote the affordability of secondhand furniture. This aligns with the Dutch culture of looking for unique items for a more affordable price.
- 2. Environmental benefits:** Promote the eco-friendliness of secondhand furniture. Highlight how purchasing secondhand reduces waste and supports the circular economy.
- 3. Unique pieces:** Highlight the uniqueness, designer and / or area and the thrill of finding unique pieces you can't find with traditional furniture.



# FIX IT IN 6!

As indicated in this research we are only at the beginning of the circular transition in the Dutch furniture market. If we want to reach the first target of 55% lower CO2 emissions by 2030 and meet the objectives in the NPCE all the players in the sector have to change their way of working.

In this whitepaper, we shed light on the current status of the implementation of circular practices in the Dutch retail market, and the biggest challenges and opportunities retailers encounter. But most importantly we provided inspirational examples of the frontrunners in the market and gave practical advice on where to start as a retailer.

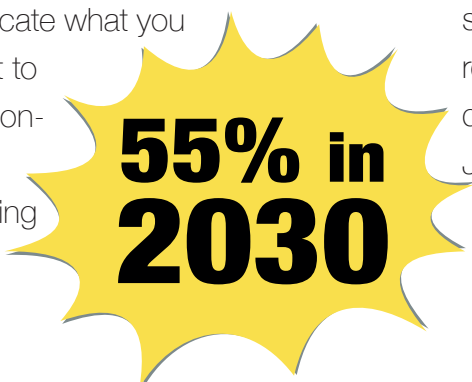
In addition to these tips, two very important insights came up in every interview and focus group discussion we had. To speed up the circular transition in the furniture market we have to share knowledge and work together.

## Share knowledge

As a retailer this starts with gaining knowledge and insights on the circular transition. Educate yourself and your employees on the impact of the furniture market and ways to lower this impact by making other choices with respect to materials and circular design strategies. Also make sure you stay updated on the new legislation that is coming up and what you should do to align with it.

Share knowledge with your suppliers. Ask questions and truly understand where and how a product is made. To save time partner up with sustainable brands as they can be great sources of information for getting a better understanding of the impact of certain sectors and what can be done to lower this impact.

Also, communicate what you learn and use it to educate your consumers and help them making better choices.



**55% in  
2030**

## Work together

The other tip is work together. It's a big shift we have to make from a linear to a circular way of working. And closing loops all by yourself is complex and costly. So partner with your suppliers and/or other retailers that want to be come more sustainable and share knowledge and best practices so you can learn together. Partner with external service providers to offer repair services or service the secondhand market. This can be done independently, such as Vitra Circle or it can be a collaborative effort such as Trendhopper with the Couch Corner or the RepairStreet. Use these examples to illustrate successful models to others who want to start repair or secondhand practices. So, the costs, time, people, logistics and storage can be shared among retailers. And remember; start small! Any small change in the direction of sustainability is a positive change. Just do it, we've got to fix it in 6!

# The Substitute

## Your guide in the Circular Transition




The Substitute connects the key players in the interior industry—producers, retailers, repair initiatives, and recyclers—to drive the circular transition. We inspire action, foster collaboration, and provide the tools and knowledge needed to accelerate sustainable change. Whether you're a furniture brand, manufacturer, buyer, or retailer, we're here to guide you at every step of your journey.

Want to be part of an active network shaping a circular future? Join The Substitute Community and gain insights, access practical tools, and collaborate with like-minded professionals.

**JOIN OUR COMMUNITY**

Ready to take meaningful steps toward a sustainable future, but not sure where to start? Let us help you navigate the transition with tailored strategies and hands-on support. From planning to execution, we're here for every step. Whether you need an workshop to inspire your team, help with measuring impact, or a custom sustainability strategy, we've got you covered. Plus, we've designed an hybrid [educational program](#) to get your whole company on the same page. Let's start small, dream big, and create a sustainable future together!

## Your sustainable journey starts here

<b>Getting Serious</b> 	<b>Internal Transformation</b> 	<b>Sustainable Growth</b> 
Ready to start your circular journey? Gain inspiration, understand your impact, and meet CSRD requirements. Take control to make better decisions for the future.	Transform insights into action: tackle key impacts, empower your team, and innovate with sustainable strategies that drive controlled but meaningful change.	Scale your sustainable impact! Showcase your sustainable collection, collaborate with industry leaders, share better practices and ensure your business is future-proof.

**Get in touch, we'd love to tell you more and be your guide!** [www.thesubstitute.nl](http://www.thesubstitute.nl)

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### Sources:

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