



DEAR READER,

Without a doubt, 2020 was an extremely tough year. The Covid-19 pandemic massively restricted the private and professional lives of Europeans as one lockdown followed another. Unfortunately, 2021 has not gotten off to a discernibly better start. However, vaccination programs are currently underway all over the world. There is light at the end of the tunnel. That light also shines for the European placemaking industry, as our periodic expert survey revealed. The who's who of the sector are extremely optimistic about the current financial year. Statements and opinions that substantiate the positive outlook can be found on pages 31 to 49.

Christoph M. Achammer, CEO of ATP architekten ingenieure, opines, for example: "The government-imposed measures have resulted in little good for retail. However, from the perspective of an optimistic placemaker, they have shown consumers what they would lose if brick-and-mortar retail ceased to exist. There is no one in my circle who does not desperately miss the allure of the social interactions that take place at shopping centers. Whether in a high-street environment or at a shopping center, being able to meet one another and shop have proven to be basic needs that cannot be replaced by digital 'experiences'."



IMAGE: ACROSS

Apropos of Christoph M. Achammer: As a member of the ACROSS Advisory Board, he is scheduled to participate in the next round of ACROSS Retail Talks Online at 4:00 PM CET on February 25, 2021. The ACROSS Advisory Board has been invited to present its forecast for the current fiscal year, using audio and visual components, and to discuss it with the group under the "Outlook 2021" banner. In addition to Christoph M. Achammer, Joanna Fisher and Jonathan Doughty (both ECE), Henrike Waldburg (Union Investment), Silvio Kirchmair (umdasch The Store Makers), Markus Porvari (HyperIn), Scott Dwyer (Atrium), Thomas Reichenauer (ROS Outlet Shopping), Ben Chesser (Coniq), Peter Tonstad (Placewise Group), and Yurdaer Kahraman (FIBA Commercial Properties), among others, have accepted the invitation. Please take the time to tune in to the discussion. It will be worth your while. Participation is free of charge.

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