



BRABANTS VERKEERSVEILIGHEIDSLABEL

BRABANT ROAD SAFETY LABEL: MAXIMUM EFFECT THROUGH SCHOOLS

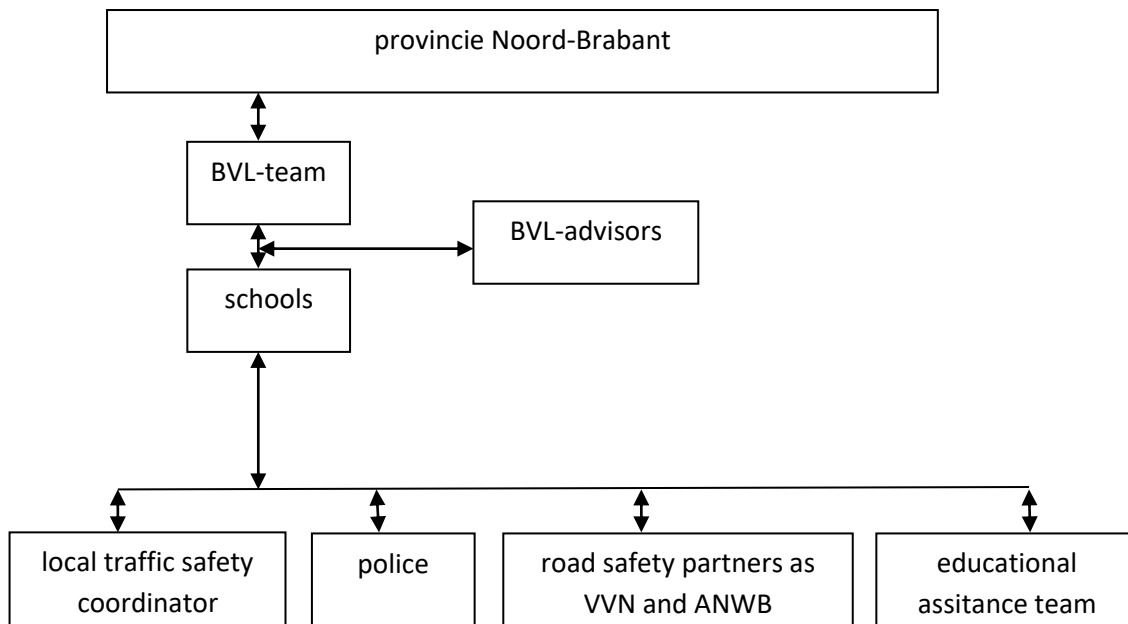
The Brabant Road Safety Label (BVL) has been introduced in Brabant in 1997: a project with the intention to improve road safety among children and youths by paying structural attention to traffic education in schools.

Since 1997 the province of Noord-Brabant has implemented the project Brabant Road Safety Label (BVL) to improve road safety among children by paying structural attention to traffic education in schools. For school-aged children in the Netherlands the bicycle is an important means of transportation. BVL is a road safety quality mark schools can obtain by meeting a number of criteria, both educational and extracurricular (e.g. safe school environment, practice-based traffic education and sufficient parental participation). Independent experts (employed in education) visit and judge the schools. The entire BVL process is audited. In order to obtain the label a school is checked twice: at intake and at assessment. Regular check-ups occur as well.

Local authorities that actively support the school(s) can become BVL authorities. They are assisted by the provincial BVL team with standard or made-to-measure material. In 2016, over 800 schools in Noord-Brabant were registered, of which 737 schools hold the Label (situation on 1-11-2016).

Introduction

The Netherlands is divided into 12 provinces designed to cover the gap between national and local government. Noord-Brabant is a province and a regional authority. Noord-Brabant is beside road safety active in a large number of fields: culture, economics, financial supervision, youth welfare, quality of life in the countryside, environment, nature development, accessibility of town and country, education, environmental planning, social issues, safety, water, building and care and road safety. Noord-Brabant has a strong educational emphasis, with 900 elementary schools. Nationally 15% of this type of education occurs in Brabant. For children aged 4 to 12 the province introduced the traffic education project BVL in 1997. The provincial BVL team is responsible for the project's organization. Within the project a number of parties actively participate in improving road safety for children, as represented in the diagram below.



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Schools, parents, local authorities and other road safety partners, e.g. police and the Dutch traffic safety organization VVN, cooperate in providing structural and qualitatively excellent traffic education, practical training in schools and safe school environments. Following Noord-Brabant's lead, over half of all provinces in the Netherlands have introduced the Road Safety Label. In Belgium the province of Antwerp and the Vlaamse Stichting Verkeerskunde have partially adopted this project under the title '10 of 10'. This aims at improving the quality of road safety for children in a similar manner and with similar objectives. In the 10 of 10 project a school can earn a label, demonstrating the effort put in road safety to the outside world as well.

BVL and society: a higher objective

Since 1997 over 800 schools have joined BVL: clearly schools set great store by BVL and traffic education. Many people feel affected by antisocial behaviour in traffic due to increasingly crowded streets, individualisation and fading of standards of behaviour (nationwide a hot topic). Today's children are tomorrow's adults. If these children are taught correct traffic behaviour from day one, everyone will profit in the future. Good behaviour is a matter of repetition, consistent application of the regulations and practice. Thanks to the BVL approach children are taught a different way to handle do's and don'ts. This will turn them into traffic participants that differ from the majority of today's adults.



STARS

From 2013 BVL participates in the European STARS-programme as well, designed to promote and support active travel to school among children and young adults: <http://starseurope.org/index.php>

What is the Brabant Road Safety Label?

The Brabant Road Safety Label offers municipalities, primary, secondary and special-needs schools a helping hand for providing road safety education that is structural and more focused on daily practice. It is an umbrella project initiated by the province of Noord-Brabant [www.brabant.nl] for road safety education aimed at young people between the age of four and twelve.

Children are a vulnerable group in traffic. Hundreds of children are involved in road accidents every year. More than an entire class of school children lose their lives. Children have to learn how to get involved into traffic safely. A hallmark has been introduced to stimulate road safety education in schools and to ensure its high quality: the Brabant Road Safety Label (in Dutch, BVL = VerkeersveiligheidsLabel). With the Road Safety Label, a school shows that it provides high-quality road safety education and promotes road safety around the school. In addition, the Road Safety Label provides schools with handles for working on road safety in a structured manner.

A participating school has an intake interview with an independent Road Safety Label (BVL) auditor. Together, they map out the so-called zero situation. After this interview, the school receives a report and a completed score card. The score card is an important tool for the school to structurally approach road safety. The school subsequently sets to work to try and obtain the label. When the school indicates that it is ready for the label, an independent BVL auditor again visits the school to compare the new situation with the BVL criteria. If the school meets the conditions, it receives the Label as a 'proof' of structural and high-quality road safety in theory and in practice.



It is not easy for schools to obtain this label; the school has to score sufficiently on five points:

1. road safety is part of school policy;
2. pupils are given road safety lessons;
3. there are road safety projects with practical exercises;
4. the school environment and the roads leading to it are as safe as possible;
5. (traffic) parents or carers show commitment to road safety education.

The aforementioned points are detailed in the BVL criteria.

Once the school has the label, the BVL auditor randomly checks whether the school continues to meet all conditions for retaining the label. In 2017 BVL introduces digital self auditing.

Added value

By providing structure to road safety at schools, the expected yield (increased knowledge and changed behaviour) is larger than for incidental projects. For schools, the BVL is not 'another new thing'; it is an umbrella under which good projects and activities are undertaken coherently. The added value of the BVL for the school is twofold:

1. By applying structure, it is easy for a school to incorporate the BVL in the school work plan every year, enabling the teachers and parents to set to work with it. This way, everybody knows what is expected of them.
2. When BVL activities are mapped out properly, their costs can be budgeted.

The BVL organization

The BVL team is responsible for the project. Team members are qualified in education and communication. In addition there is an independent BVL commission, of which eight BVL advisors visit the schools and the chairman leads the quarterly award meetings. All participants are regularly informed by means of newsletters and a website.

Costs

Local authorities: approximately 100 hours a year and a budget for traffic education.

Schools: small number of hours, thanks to various granted subsidies (50% - 80%) costs of e.g. educational material are minimal. Province: project team of 3,0 fte and accompanying budget, approx. €250.000 a year. In addition judging requests for subsidies.

What does BVL entail?

BVL is an initiative of the province of Noord-Brabant. It is aimed at structural improvements in road safety for young traffic participants. BVL approaches this issue on all fronts: from local policy to traffic education in the classroom. From traffic behavior in and around school grounds to support by the police and traffic safety organisations. The BVL team assists local authorities and schools in improving the quality of traffic education. BVL also awards a quality mark to schools meeting the criteria for an enduring and safe way of providing traffic education in schools. The SEEF is a mascot (see picture): the national safety logo for nine Dutch provinces. The name derives from 'Safe'.

Education and numbers

Road safety is expressed in numbers of dead and wounded. Measures to improve road safety are often judged by the amount of reduction in the numbers of dead and wounded. For soft measures like permanent traffic education the rule of thumb in the Netherlands is that it may lead to a 20% reduction in victims. This fall a study will be conducted into actual effects of BVL. At a young age good (traffic) behaviour can be learned and in older children behavioural changes can be effected. Permanent traffic education is therefore a prerequisite for safe behaviour. The permanent nature of traffic education implies that activities for a certain age or target group will often only later bear



fruit. Traffic education in the Netherlands is part of the Duurzaam Veilig covenant, designed to improve national road safety. Besides infrastructure and enforcement, education is the third pillar of traffic safety policy. Many infrastructural measures and new traffic regulations are pointless if road users don't understand or apply these. BVL targets children aged 4 to 12. These are elementary school pupils. The BVL approach is successful. At the basis of this success are in particular regional and local cooperation, shared responsibility, permanent attention to education and opportunities for subsidy. Continuously and structurally.

BVL and schools

For schools BVL is not 'a new project'. Existing projects and activities are structurally and coherently incorporated into BVL. The added value of BVL for schools is twofold:

- the structuralisation enables the school to include BVL easily into the curriculum each year.

Teaching staff and parents both know what they are required to do;

- a good overview of BVL activities allows a long-range budget to be made by school and local authorities.

The BVL activities in schools are subsidisable by province through local authorities.

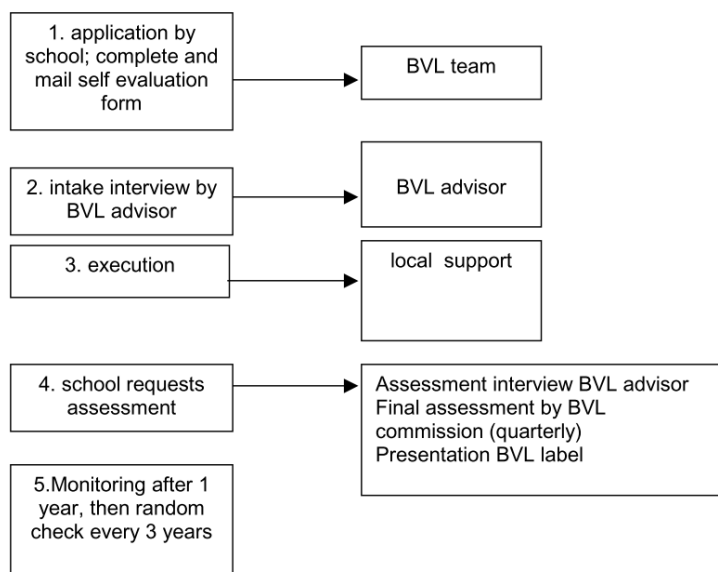
BVL process

The Brabant Road Safety Label is a quality mark for schools that structurally address road safety. The criteria are divided into six main categories:

1. school organization;
2. traffic education in the classroom;
3. traffic educational projects;
4. practice in the school grounds and street;
5. school environment;
6. communication with and involvement of parents.

Schools can score points and stars in these categories. They decide for themselves the pace and emphasis within the education. BVL is aimed at more than simple traffic education. A participating school is visited by an independent BVL advisor for assessment by the BVL commission after having finished a specific process. The label is awarded when enough criteria have been met. The school is regularly monitored afterwards. During the entire process the school is assisted by the provincial BVL team, local authorities and local partners.

BVL stages. In 2017 BVL introduces digital self auditing for schools.



BVL-activities

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To state some examples of actual BVL activities in schools:

- acquisition of modern educational material: each week attention is paid to traffic matters in every classroom;
- school-home projects: together with local authorities the school environment is made safe and children practice on the route from and to school, under supervision;
- the campaign 'School has started again': at the start of the school year children in traffic are emphasised by way of banners and media messages;
- 'national play in the street day': school closes the street in front once a year to allow children to play and practice safely;
- attention to parental transport behaviour: by constructing a kiss & ride area children can be safely dropped off at school;
- 'blind angle project': by means of a video and lorry in the school grounds children become aware of the risks of walking/cycling beside lorries. The importance of eye contact with the driver is stressed;
- keeping parents up to date on traffic activities: particularly traffic parents play a crucial role in the school organization;
- frequent appearances by police in classrooms and support of school activities by enforcement.

Moreover, this leads to local cooperation in traffic safety platforms or taskforces. Projects and activities occur in all schools and there is a division of labour.

BVL and municipalities

Besides schools, municipalities play an important part in the BVL approach. Together with the schools and the most important road safety partners, they build on the BVL objectives. The municipal road safety coordinator has a general idea of the road safety education activities in the participating schools. The municipality can advance road safety around schools and on the main school routes. The coordinator encourages local parties such as the Dutch Road Safety Association, police, education advisory services and active parents to support schools in obtaining (and retaining) the BVL. In concrete terms, this means that this coordinator steers the local BVL network and is the regular point of contact for the province. All 65 Brabant municipalities participate in the BVL. A provincial BVL team was set up to support all stakeholders locally. This team helps the municipalities and schools wherever necessary.

BVL and the province of Noord-Brabant

Within the Netherlands, the province of Noord-Brabant wants to lead the way; the Provincial Traffic and Transport Plan expresses the ambition to be the safest province in the country. We make an excellent contribution to this mission by jointly continuing to work on the Brabant Road Safety Label. Participation in the BVL is not an objective in itself here, but an important tool to promote road safety amongst young people. Besides its continuous focus on Sustainable Safety through road layout, the province has intensively promoted the so-called people-oriented approach for years: information and communication, education and enforcement. For all Permanent Road Safety Education target groups, an approach is developed and offered to the municipalities in the Area-Targeted Approach regions for further development after a test phase. This facilitates permanent training in the area of road safety education. The BVL is a strong link for the target group 4-12-year-olds.



Go for 0

In 2012 the province, in cooperation with all its traffic-safety partners, started a new public campaign: Help Brabant to zero traffic deaths (www.nulverkeersdodenbrabant.nl) . All the cooperating partners believe that they can dramatically decrease the number of traffic deaths in Brabant. They can only achieve this through making people aware of their own behaviour in traffic. The elementary schools in Brabant and 'traffic parents' really enhance traffic safety, and so, put a lot of effort into 'reaching the 0'. They make sure that pupils/students get lessons, do traffic projects (like the 'dode hoek' assignment). They practice this together with the students to make the roads, together with the congregation, safe for their usage.



Success factors BVL

The success of BVL is easily attributable. Active and involved people take their responsibilities seriously and perform their task well. BVL is not alone in this. Not only active participation in public services and the field are crucial, but also political commitment, professional support by the BVL team and BVL advisors and opportunities for subsidies.

Continuity is essential. Withdrawal of a manager, teacher or traffic parent may cause stagnation at school level. Jobs rotate frequently within local authorities and police organizations. A strong network can deal with these events and is the best guarantee for structural continuity in the BVL process. Local traffic safety coordinators coordinate and manage this network. Educational assistance teams can play a role in tailoring projects to specific schools. Some local authorities have good experiences with this approach.

