

# Healthy built environment in the Netherlands

Erna van Balen, MSc., MPhil

IFEH 2010 Healthy Built Environment workshop  
September 8, Vancouver



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Outline

- Introduction
- Part I: HBE in the Netherlands
- Part II: assessing best practice
- Conclusion



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Introduction

- EH: ministry of housing, spatial planning and the environment
- National program environment & health:
  - Improve quality of indoor environment
  - **Healthy built environments**
  - Improving information & communication on local environment
  - Emerging topics
- National Institute for Public Health & the Environment responsible for scientific background



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Topics within HBE

spatial planning      safety

climate change      transport

physical activity      facilities      sustainability

childfriendly cities      healthy buildings

green space



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Example: healthy mobility in Houten

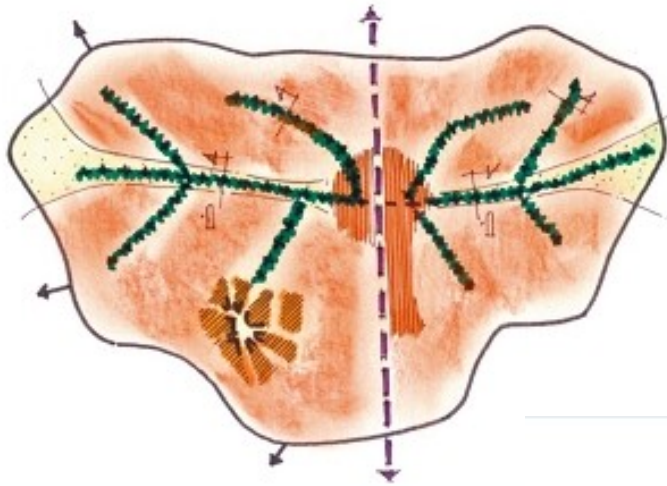


National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

Source: [www.vrom.nl](http://www.vrom.nl)

# Houten



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

[www.vrom.nl](http://www.vrom.nl)

# Facts & figures

- Modal split: 50% by bike (~30% average)
- Shorter bike trips
- 50% near train station
- Less noise & air pollution
- More freedom & safety for children

But:

- Car use similar
- Car trips are longer



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Example: Kindlint ('child line')





# Facts & figures

- Safer crossings for children
- Streets are more attractive

But:

- Not all destinations included
- Need for communication!



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

Source: <http://www.otb.tudelft.nl/live/pagina.jsp?id=569d69e8-fb73-40b3-8b95-6926eb791103&lang=en>

# Part II: assessing best practice

- THE PEP: Transport, Health and Environment, a Pan-European Program
- Aim: to identify, assess and disseminate best practice examples of interventions or measures on environmentally friendly and healthy transport



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Problems with 'best practice'

- Health not included
- No pre and post evaluation
- No evaluation criteria
- # of examples is indefinite
- Examples are transferable/comparable

Conclusion: 'best practice' does not exist



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# Promising practice in THE PEP

- Health is made explicit
- Impact measurements on: awareness, environment, behaviour, health
- Indicators estimated or measured

for more information, visit

<http://www.healthytransport.com>



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

# From THE PEP to HBE

To assess a healthy built environment:

- Intervention is in *physical* environment
- Integrated approach ('win-win situation')
- No hard evidence, but 'inspiring' example



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale

Thank you for your attention!



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health

---

Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale