

Sint Eustatius: cultural participation and cultural education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

In 2021, Gregory Richardson mapped out the core data on the cultural infrastructure (arts and heritage) for cultural participation and cultural education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. His study was commissioned by the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA). In this article, we share the information he compiled about Sint Eustatius. To find out more about Gregory Richardson's research, [please visit our website](#).

Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten and the European Netherlands form the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (collectively abbreviated as BES) are special municipalities within the Kingdom. Together they make up the Caribbean Netherlands. These six islands as a whole form the [Caribbean part of the Kingdom](#).



1 Key population data

Population composition

- Native to Sint Eustatius: 34.5% (1,100)
- From Central or South America: 29.8% (936)
- Other backgrounds: Aruba or Curaçao: 16.3% (approx. 200)
- Sint Maarten: 13.4% (420)
- Dominican Republic 9% (291)
- The Netherlands (European): 6% (189)

Languages: Dutch, English

Spoken and official languages:

- Monolingual 47.5%
- Multilingual 52.5%
- English 80.3%
- Spanish 13.1%
- Dutch 3.0%
- Papiamentu 1.4%
- Other 2.2%

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2 Cultural policy

It is the aim of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) to ensure that everyone on Sint Eustatius receives a good education and is able to prepare themselves to be an autonomous and responsible member of society. This has been the Ministry's responsibility since 10 October 2010. The schools are funded directly by the Dutch government and since 1 August 2011, the Education Act for the Caribbean Netherlands has been in force.

Culture comes first

The Department of Culture seeks to put culture first in the development of the island of Sint Eustatius. It places culture at the heart of the community by developing a more collaborative approach that encompasses all sectors: art, film, heritage, education and the island's traditions. These include Statian linguistic, oral and folkloric traditions as well as social, economic and communal core values.

The department develops and preserves Sint Eustatius' rich cultural identity to ensure that its cultural resources are protected and kept alive.

National pride

Creativity in the arts is recognised and promoted. The public entity of St Eustatius believes that cultural education is essential: not only is it beneficial and fruitful for the island, but it also fosters a sense of national pride.

A culture that is strong and vibrant, and an active community that participates in social cohesion and nation building is an outstanding resource that we believe should be developed and maintained.

Contact

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[Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland](#)

[Government Sint Eustatius](#)

[Statia heeft een nieuwe regeringscommissaris en plaatsvervangend regeringscommissaris](#)

[More information](#)

Quality Cultural Education

In the period 2021-2024, primary schools in the Caribbean Netherlands will also start working according to the Quality Cultural Education programme. A good cultural education helps children develop into creative and critical adults who are well-prepared for what they will encounter in life. This is why more than half of the primary schools in the European Netherlands work with the Quality Cultural Education programme. The Caribbean Netherlands



followed in the period 2021-2024.

With this in mind, lead coordinator Rosabel Blake identifies two main goals for cultural education on Sint Eustatius: (1) awareness of your history, your environment and yourself and (2) equality of opportunity. The introduction of Quality Cultural Education is therefore being launched under the banner *Stepping back and moving forward*.

[Kansengelijkheid en cultureel bewustzijn - CmK Cariben](#)

3 Education

Primary schools

Number of primary schools: 4

Number of pupils: 338

- [Golden Rock School](#)
- [Governor de Graaff School](#) [Bethel Methodist School](#)
- [Seventh Day Adventist School \(SDA\)](#)

[More information](#)

Secondary schools: 1 (216 pupils)

Gwendoline van Putten School

(prevocational secondary education, VMBO / senior general secondary education, HAVO / senior secondary vocational education, MBO)

Percentage of [school dropouts](#)

No reliable figures available.

4 Cultural sector

In the field of culture, agreements have been made between the Caribbean Netherlands and the European Netherlands. [The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science](#) is responsible for the relevant legislation. Public entities shape policies through local legislation (island ordinances) and implement policies.

Cultural organisations and target groups

[Gertrude Judson Bicentennial Public Library Sint Eustatius](#) – Sint Eustatius public library

[Statia Historical Foundation Museum](#) – Simon Doncker Museum

[Statia Pride Foundation](#)

[Sint Eustatius Monuments Foundation](#)

[Statia Park /STENAPA](#)

The Sint Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation commissioned by the island government to manage the Sint Eustatius National Marine Park, the Quill/Boven National Park and the Miriam C. Schmidt Botanical Garden. It is in charge of acquisition, protection, conservation and administration for those stretches of

land and water on and around Sint Eustatius which have been awarded special status.

Sint Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research (SECAR)

SECAR is a non-governmental organisation involved in the study of all aspects of the rich and diverse archaeological heritage on Sint Eustatius.

Art teachers, government organisations, NGOs, independent professionals working in education or for other target groups

- Rosabel Blake, President of the Historical Foundation
- Ellis Lopes, Playwright and Historian
- Dion Humphreys “Mega D”, Dancehall artist and entertainer

Stakeholders and key contacts in the field of cultural education and participation

- Sint Eustatius Expertise Centre Education Care (ECE)
- BES(t) 4 Kids

Libraries

In general, it can be said that library work on the islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba is fundamentally different from that in the European Netherlands. Public libraries in the Caribbean Netherlands are mainly focused on the traditional lending function of the library. The layout of the libraries is very outdated, especially on Bonaire and Sint Eustatius, and on Bonaire, the library is not centrally located. The libraries on Sint Eustatius and Bonaire are currently ill-equipped to function as learning and development centres. On Bonaire, an initiative was recently launched to incorporate a fully fledged library branch into the restoration of a listed building complex. In a letter of intent, the Public Entity of Bonaire and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) will establish joint principles, goals and actions for the realisation of this project.

The evaluation of the Public Library Facilities Act (WSOB) has also highlighted a need to strengthen the library system across the European and Caribbean Netherlands. The Act states that the public library system should contribute to personal development and improvement of opportunities in society. That includes the role of library work in lifelong development, as stated in a motion put forward in parliament.

Library work in the Caribbean Netherlands is currently ill-equipped to fulfil these tasks. Improving this situation will require financial efforts (incidental and structural) for which no funds are available at present. The government of the Netherlands can provide temporary incentives, but structural responsibility lies with the public entities. The Royal Library (KB) offers support and guidance to the libraries in the Caribbean Netherlands. In the longer term, the KB will also provide support to the public entities in making structural resources available for library work in the Caribbean Netherlands.

5 Funds and funding bodies

No specific funds known for Sint Eustatius.

6 Other culture and welfare initiatives

Youth Care Foundation

A+ PLUS ACADEMICS Academic & Professional Training Centre

working to build a sustainable community by supporting young people's personal development

NEW CHALLENGES FOUNDATION

An organisation striving to benefit the community of Sint Eustatius by creating opportunities for empowerment, education and improvement.

Sint Eustatius Health Care Foundation (SEHCF)

Dare 2 Care – Stop Domestic Violence Statia

Chapel Peace Health and Recreational Center Foundation – Day care for the elderly

Sint Eustatius Community Care Center

Out-of-school childcare

Seven childcare centers

Mega D Youth Foundation provides after-school childcare on Sint Eustatius through a range of volunteers. Our watchwords are: youth, education, positive values, media, entertainment, music, cosmetology, education, sports, personal development, academic learning, social enrichment, emotional development, mental health support and recreational activities.

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-mega-d-youth-foundation/about/>

Buzzy Bees Inn Day Care Centre provides care for children aged 0 to 12

Daughters of the King Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation which provides an after-school facility for preteen girls on the island of Sint Eustatius.

Bethel Methodist School

Seventh-Day Adventist School

Happy Kids Nursery