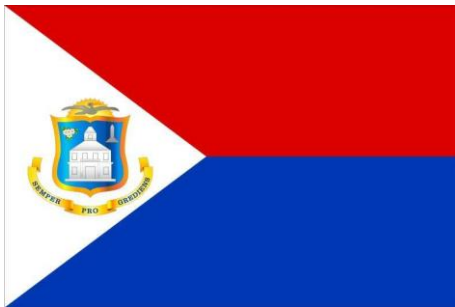


# Sint Maarten: cultural participation and cultural education in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

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 Maarten. To find out more about Gregory Richardson's research, [please visit our website](#).

Together with the European parts of the Netherlands, Aruba and Sint Maarten, Curaçao forms 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

The island of Saint Martin is divided into a Dutch and a French territory. The French part – the Collectivité de Saint-Martin – is French-speaking, somewhat larger in terms of land surface and has a slightly smaller population. The data below apply to the Dutch part of the island: Sint Maarten.

### Population composition

#### Age structure

- 0-14: 18.45% (men 4,000 / women 3,655)
- 15-24: 15.26% (men 3,127 / women 3,204)
- 25-54: 42.60% (men 8,628 / women 9,045)
- 55-64: 15.37% (men 3,057 / women 3,319)
- 65 and over: 8.32% (men 1,667 / women 1,784) (2016 est.)

#### [More information](#)

Official languages: English and Dutch

Languages spoken:

- English 67.5%
- Spanish 12.90%
- Creole (French) 8.20%
- French 6.60%
- Dutch 4.20%
- Other languages 3.50%
- Papiamentu 1.50%

[More information](#)

## 2 Cultural policy

### **Cultural policy plan (core themes for cultural education and participation)**

Nation building, social cohesion and developing identity through education, culture and sport is the strategy set out in the government's 2020-2024 programme.

This coalition government recognises that the future of Sint Maarten depends on the success of the education system, the provisions we make for the development of our younger generations, the recognition and ownership of our culture, and the development and professionalisation of sport. This is set out in the [Final Governing Program SXM 2020-2024](#)

On Monday, 14 October 2019, the Department of Culture within the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (MECYS) of the Caribbean Small Island Developing State Sint Maarten, in collaboration with the Sint Maarten National Commission for UNESCO officially launched its [First National Intangible Cultural Heritage \(ICH\) Inventory](#).

The Department of Culture aims to introduce and set up an infrastructure for Culture, Creative Industries and a Creative Economy with a view to achieving a new economic viability.

[Intangible Cultural Heritage](#)

[Beleid, wetgeving en conventies](#)

The four main sectors identified in the creative economy are: Arts, Heritage, Media and Creative Services. The creative industries are divided into 12 separate sectors:

- 1 Architecture
- 2 Audiovisual industry
- 3 Communication and advertising
- 4 Cultural heritage
- 5 Design
- 6 Fashion
- 7 Gaming
- 8 Music
- 9 New media
- 10 Performing arts
- 11 Publishing
- 12 Visual Arts

The department's annual plan is dedicated to creating the infrastructure for development and growth that will support the country's creative and cultural traditions through culture and the creative economy.

### **Mission statement**

The mission of the Department of Culture is to develop, promote and protect the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the people of Sint Maarten.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

National Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Inventory

Minister of Education, Culture Youth and Sports: Mr Rodolphe E. Samuel

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports: Ms Clara Reyes, Head of the Culture Department.

Government Administration Building

Soualuiga Road #1

Pond Island, Great Bay

Sint Maarten

Key governance issues / (political) developments

Sint Maarten Governing Program 2020-2024

National Development Plan

UNESCO Cultural Heritage Inventory Report

## **3 Education**

### **Primary education**

17 primary schools (11 subsidised, 6 public schools)

1 special needs school

5 fee-paying schools

More information

Number of pupils in primary education: 4,474 (2018)

### **Secondary education**

Number of pupils in secondary education 2,476 (2018)

11 secondary schools (branches):

6 subsidised and 5 fee-paying schools

List of schools

Charlotte Brookson Academy of the Performance Arts - CXC exam

**Senior secondary vocational (MBO) schools/study programmes**

**Higher professional and university study programmes**

The University of St. Martin (USM)

B.A. in Business Administration Management, B.A. in Elementary Education  
American University of the Caribbean – School of Medicine - Doctor of Medicine

Percentage of school dropouts  
0.24% (17 out of 6,950) (figures for 2017-2018)

## 4 Cultural sector

### Beyond Kultura Events Foundation

Promoting and enhancing storytelling, reading, writing, the arts – Culture, Nature and Environmental Protection.

### Freedom Fighters Musical and Cultural Foundation

The foundation promotes musical inclusion and events, cultural participation/empowerment and consciousness programmes

### Sint Maarten Archaeological Center (SIMARC)

SIMARC is a youth, heritage, and science after-school programme for young adults (14-18 years) on Sint Maarten.

### House of Nehesi Publishers (HNP)

NGO for the promotion of literature, the cultural arts, and historical and scientific research.

### Posh Productions Incorporated

Posh Productions Incorporated is an event and cultural entertainment agency.

### Behind The Beyond Community Theatre Foundation

Our mission is to breathe new life into the traditions of community theatre as a platform to encourage people of different generations and cultural backgrounds to meet each other.

### Better Opportunity for Talent

BOFT's mission is to attract, market and promote top local talents to enhance our young people's natural talents, performance skills and abilities in sports and culture so that they can excel and shape the future of Sint Maarten.

### Philipsburg Jubilee Library

The library is a knowledge institution to promote, encourage and stimulate active reading of books and all other reading material in the broadest sense of the word.

### Sint Maarten Carnival Development Foundation

Sint Maarten's Carnival lasts three weeks and attracts hundreds of tourists to, as the Carnival's slogan suggests, 'Experience Life' the Sint Maarten way. Runs from April to May.

### National Institute of Arts

NIA integrates all forms of the visual and performing arts, including gymnastics and the circus arts. NIA works to prepare its students for today's global challenges in the arts professions, as well as researching, preserving and creating the history of Sint Maarten according to the

principles of nation building. NIA conducts in-school and after-school arts programmes and is extremely proud of its latest additions: a 72-piece youth orchestra, a community band and an interlude programme for senior citizens and people with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

#### Dow's Musical Foundation

The Foundation provides music education, workshops and entertainment with an emphasis on steel pan music and its cultural preservation.

Art Saves Lives Foundation <https://artsaveslivesfoundation.org/>

A cross-cultural exchange between young people in need and experienced practising artists seeking to use their talents for positive change.

Each summer the foundation coordinates a Summer Intensive which caters to over 100 children.

#### **Leading contacts and key people:**

Clara Reyes, Arlene Halley and Rudolph Davis (NIA), Nicole de Weever (Art Saves Lives).

## **5 Funds and funding bodies**

#### The Sint Maarten Development Fund (SMDF)

SMDF is a legal entity on Sint Maarten that actively works to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of Sint Maarten society. The Fund was established to further the country's social development. Whether through foster homes, emergency shelters, seniors enrichment programmes, after-school activities or food pantries, SMDF works to support foundations that support the people of Sint Maarten.

#### Resilience Resources 4 Community Resilience (R4CR)

This programme, implemented by VNG International and funded by the World Bank Trust Fund for Sint Maarten, was created to help the island in the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Irma in 2017. It covers the following categories and sectors:

- 1 Community councils/neighbourhood initiatives;
- 2 Nurseries/after-school programmes and activities;
- 3 Sports and recreational activities/facilities;
- 4 Nature and the environment;
- 5 The arts, culture, archaeology and heritage.

## 6 Other culture and welfare initiatives

### Voice of the Youth Sint Maarten

Our Sint Maarten Youth Brigade offers a three-year programme for our target group aged 12-21. We seek to eradicate negative behaviour among our young people and to help them develop and achieve a general sense of well-being. We provide them with physical, mental, cognitive and social education to promote self-confidence, self-esteem and higher-order thinking skills.

### SXM A.C.T.I.O.N

Our mission is to provide development opportunities that empower young people aged 18 to 40 to bring about positive changes, both individually and in the community as a whole.

### Sint Maarten Senior Citizens Recreational Foundation

The leisure centre in Hope Estate provides an opportunity for senior citizens to socialise regularly with people their own age. Festive meals are organised on public holidays and other special days to encourage interaction among older members of the community.

### New Start for Children Foundation

The central aim of the Foundation is to assist parents and families in acute need to care for and raise their children. In particular, this involves introducing and providing education and information services to heighten the children's awareness of the society in which they live.

## **Out-of-school childcare**

### Reading Rainbow Early Stimulation and Afternoon School

This foundation provides preschool and after-school activities, with a focus on early stimulation for ages 2-11.

### Joann's After School Activities

After-school tutoring and homework help in Dutch, remedial reading, writing, vocabulary building, language skills, grammar, biology, science, computer skills and more.

### Volunteers of Sint Maarten

This organisation works in the following areas:

- 1 Food collection
- 2 After-school school programme
- 3 Math Bee competition
- 4 Painting competition
- 5 Young people's sports day.

### Sr. Borgia Elementary School

Dutch-language primary school with after-school programme for pupils.

### National Institute of Arts

Preserving and creating the history of Sint Maarten based on the principles of nation building.

The NIA leads arts programmes in schools and after school, and is particularly proud of its latest addition: a 72-piece youth orchestra.

#### Asha Stevens Hillside Christian School

The target group consists of children aged 0 to 17. The school offers education, nurseries and after-school activities.

#### No Kidding With Our Kids Foundation

After-school care for children aged 4 to 14, from Monday to Friday from 13.00 to 17.00.

#### 721 Kids Foundation

Non-profit organisation providing an after-school programme for children aged 4 to 16. High-quality educational, recreational and social programmes in the form of childcare, after-school activities and family events. An active and engaging programme with a mix of educational, social and physical activities.

#### Excellence Learning Academy

Organisation offering high-quality educational and activity programmes (after-school, special education, day care and preschool) that are safe, fun, rewarding and affordable.

#### Sint Maarten Catholic Education Foundation

The Sint Maarten Catholic Education Foundation is the largest subsidised school board on Sint Maarten. Its staff of 200 provides high-quality education for nearly 2,000 pupils between the ages of 3 and 19. The education on offer ranges from an Early Stimulation Programme to the International Baccalaureate Programme.

#### The Alpha & Omega Foundation

The Foundation's programme promotes parental involvement and facilitates learning for children from 18 months to 12 years old in all areas of personal development: spiritual, physical, intellectual, creative, emotional and social.

#### Let the Children Come Learning Primary Pre-School Foundation

We offer services for children with special needs and children from regular classes. We use specially developed techniques that help children learn the basics of reading and writing.

#### Just Kid Inn Playschool

Educational day care based on the Montessori learning style for children from 1 month old to 4 years old. Our aim is to ensure a high standard of basic education while taking the most cost-effective approach. We incorporate a wide range of methods and a wide variety of subjects including mathematics, geography, art, nature, music, science and language.

#### All Children's Education School

The aim of the A.C.E. Foundation is to provide education for all children, based on the fundamental rights of the child and the principle of Education For All (EFA).