

**Feasibility Study
Language of Instruction
on St. Eustatius**

**“It takes an island
to raise our children”**

Contents

- Foreword 4
- Summary 5
- 1. About the Study..... 7
 - 1.1 Scope of the Study..... 7
 - 1.2 Research approach 8
 - 1.3 Structure of the report 8
- 2. Facts, Figures and Context 10
 - 2.1 Background..... 10
 - 2.2 Population 13
 - 2.3 Education..... 15
- 3. Statement of the Problem..... 21
- 4. Theoretical Framework / Concepts 24
- 5. Four Options..... 28
 - 5.1 Continuing the current system (Option 1) 28
 - 5.2 English as a language of instruction (Options 2, 3 and 4) 30
 - 5.3 Dutch examination structure (Options 2 and 3)..... 30
 - 5.4 Caribbean Examination Council (Option 4) 31
 - 5.5 Customization for the vocational track 33
 - 5.6 Conclusion regarding the options 34
- 6. Language..... 35
 - 6.1 English as the language of instruction..... 35
 - 6.2 Dutch as a strong foreign language..... 38
- 7. Education..... 41
 - 7.1 Preschool education 41
 - 7.2 Elementary education 41

7.3 Secondary school and MBO.....	42
7.4 Adult education	44
7.5 Overarching	44
8. Outside the School	48
9. Possibilities for Progress to Education outside St. Eustatius and Future Prospects	51
9.1 Dutch-language education outside St. Eustatius.....	51
9.2 English-language education outside St. Eustatius	52
9.3 Preparation and guidance	53
10. Transition.....	55
10.1 Basic premises	55
10.2 Approach	55
10.3 From the students’ perspective	59
10.4 Financing	61
10.5 Legislation.....	63
11. Conclusions and Recommendations	67
Appendix I Abbreviations	71
Appendix II Interviewees.....	72
Appendix III Bibliography	78
Appendix IV Research Team.....	81

Foreword

In January 2014, after consulting the Commissioner of Education of St. Eustatius, the State Secretary of Education, Culture and Science [*Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*] (“OCW”) decided to request our research team to perform a study into the language of instruction on St. Eustatius. The study was to be a feasibility study involving weighing several options for the language of instruction against one another. Although this type of study requires an efficient, business-like approach, other dimensions should be taken into account in a study involving language. It is never a simple question of pros and cons, because language is part of people’s culture and identity, it is embedded in our society. Being very much aware of this, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science assembled a research team whose members not only possessed education expertise, but also experience with and knowledge of the social and cultural context of St. Eustatius and the Caribbean region.

Many of the interviews the research team held with those involved on St. Eustatius began by asking them what they were proud of. We received a variety of answers. The interviewees were proud of the Statian community, the unity, the solidarity, the peacefulness, the safety, the unique character of the island, its beauty, the national parks, and their own history. In terms of education, they are proud of the efforts made by many of the teachers, despite their frustrations, and of the students who achieve despite their significant deficits. Most of the interviewees, however, did not dwell on their pride, but moved on rather quickly to expressing their concerns. Adults are very concerned about their children. Children have ambitions, but are not given an opportunity to achieve them. Virtually everyone agrees that while the language of instruction inhibits their progress, it is not the only obstacle that must be overcome. There are other problems with the educational system and, as other studies have shown, there are significant social problems on St. Eustatius which also affect student performance. All of the interviews indicated that the current situation is cause for great concern, and the research teams therefore agrees with all of the interviewees that now is the time for action. We hope that this study provides a solid foundation for the decisions to be made regarding the language of instruction, and that it will provoke thoughtful discussion regarding the broader challenges facing young people on St. Eustatius.

The research team thanks everyone who contributed to this report. First and foremost, we thank all of the interviewees on St. Eustatius and elsewhere, all of whom were extremely candid about their experiences and viewpoints. The researchers also thank everyone else who assisted us by providing us with data or working out the logistics of the study.

The Hague, June 12, 2014

Tineke Drenthe (Chair)
Rose Mary Allen
Wim Meijnen
Gert Oostindie
Monica van Leeuwen-Laan (Secretary)

Summary

The objective of this study was to answer the question of what language of instruction and examination system would be most feasible on St. Eustatius. The study was premised on the students on St. Eustatius, their capabilities and their future prospects.

Most students on St. Eustatius are raised with the St. Eustatius dialect of English as their native language, and the majority of them pursue Dutch-language post-secondary education. This means that, at some point, their language of instruction switches from English to Dutch. Currently, this transition occurs rather early – in group 5 of elementary school for most students. Most children do not yet have sufficient command of Standard English at that age. They also receive lessons in Dutch as though it were their first or second language, while Dutch is a foreign language for virtually all of the students. As a result, the vast majority of the children are insufficiently prepared for the transition from elementary to secondary education. The problems are only exacerbated by the fact that virtually all instruction at the secondary level is offered in Dutch. As a result, the average scores on the central examinations are literally unsatisfactory across the board. Many students only graduate because of their comparatively higher scores on the school examinations. The Inspectorate of Education [*Inspectie van het Onderwijs*] considers the situation untenable, given that most students' later departure to the Netherlands or the Leeward Islands to continue their education will not meet with success.

What needs to be done in order to offer as many students as possible a better chance for that success? That is the fundamental question addressed in this study, which first examines the language of instruction because it is a significant obstacle for most of the students. It is clear, however, that not all of the problems can be solved simply by changing the language of instruction. The Inspectorate of Education's 1st visit to St. Eustatius in 2008 resulted in the conclusion that there were serious shortcomings in virtually every aspect of education on the island. A great deal of work has been done since that time, but it remains highly uncertain whether all of the schools will achieve the goal of the Education Agenda and meet the basic quality requirements by 2016. Furthermore, there are a number of socio-societal factors that limit the students' developmental opportunities.

With regard to the language of instruction, the research team has concluded that the best solution for most of the students on St. Eustatius would be for them to be given a solid foundation to master the language that is closest to their native language: Standard English. It is crucial that the students fully master at least one language. Given the students' location and immediate environment, and because English is a world language that plays a prominent role in a world that is becoming increasingly globalized, English is the designated language of instruction. By mastering at least one language and receiving instruction in that language students will be enabled to reach a higher level in their other subjects. Research indicates that the consistent use of Standard English will help the children across the board in their educational pursuits.

Choosing English as the language of instruction does not mean that Dutch will be banished. On the contrary, students must learn Dutch much more systematically. Both the interviews and research carried out by the researchers shows that virtually everyone on St. Eustatius is adamant that the students must also master Dutch. This will be possible if students are provided with enough hours of systematic Dutch lessons taught by a Dutch native speaker, provided that certain prerequisites are met. Students who wish to continue their studies in the Netherlands or the Leeward Islands will have to take an extra-intensive Dutch course during the last phase of their education on the island. Students who have the ability to pursue such post-secondary education will then be able to achieve the level of fluency they require to begin a Dutch-language vocational education [*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*] ("MBO") or professional education [*hoger beroepsonderwijs*] ("HBO") program.

These are equivalent to levels B1 and B2, respectively, of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (“European Framework”).

Given that the Dutch examinations system is not geared towards English-language examinations and that an adequate and accredited English-language examination system is used throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean, the research team recommends implementing this English-language examination system on St. Eustatius for students studying at the general secondary [*middelbaar algemeen voortgezet onderwijs*] (“MAVO”) and higher general secondary [*hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs*] (“HAVO”) levels. St. Maarten and Saba also use this system. This system, referred to as the Caribbean Examination Council (“CXC”) system, consists of modules that enable students to take examinations at their own levels. Students who are capable of working at higher levels have the option of adding extra modules. Nuffic equates completion of five subjects at grade level 1, 2 or 3 with HAVO level; this achievement will pave a student’s way to higher education.

The vocational track requires further customization, because some of these students will join the job market immediately after completing their secondary education. For St. Eustatius, a combined English-language prevocational education [*voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*] (“VMBO”) and secondary vocational education [*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*] (“MBO”) program would be a good solution for students who want to pursue their studies on the island and obtain a basic qualification. With a basic MBO Level 2 qualification, they can either look for a job or continue their studies in the Caribbean or in the European Netherlands. This option offers the best leeway for customizing the education while retaining accreditation. MBO Level 1 is a good alternative for students who cannot complete MBO Level 2.

The researchers realize that transitioning to English as the language of instruction and opting for new teaching methods will demand a substantial investment and enormous efforts from everyone involved. The research team also found that the people on the island are prepared to make those efforts, *provided that* enough attention continues to be devoted to Dutch. The researchers advise that the entire transitional process be centrally managed, with the focus being collaboration between the five schools and the preschool care providers. External expertise – such as that regarding teaching Dutch as a foreign language, drafting the English-language curricula, and providing teachers with additional training – will have to be engaged in close consultation with all of the collaborative partners.

Naturally, the question now is what the adoption of this advice would mean for the students who are still in school. If the Secretary of Education adopts this advice, the new system cannot be immediately implemented as of the 2014-2015 school year. It is expected, however, that preparations for the most significant changes can be made in a single school year, so that all students who are currently in elementary school or the first year of secondary school will be able to make a start with the new system in September 2015.

Finally, the research team refers to several pre-requisites that must be met in order to ensure that changing the language of instruction will actually result in improvements in student performance and future prospects. Within the school, the first priority will be supporting students with language and other deficits. The researchers advise devoting extra attention to students who require special care due to learning deficits or other causes. Adequate accommodations and ICT will also facilitate the proposed transition and promote students’ language and other development. The education provided will have to be adequately organized if the transition is to be carried out effectively. This will require everyone involved in the education process to have a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. Outside the school, a crucial role will be played not only by parents, but also by the wider community. A positive attitude towards learning and the creation of an environment that enables students to learn begins at home and within the family.

1. About the Study

1.1 Scope of the Study

In 2012, Mr. Glenville Schmidt, then the Commissioner of Education on St. Eustatius, recommended that a study be performed regarding the possibility of implementing English as the language of instruction because most of the children speak English at home. This study was performed in 2013 by the Faraclas commission.¹ This commission, whose most significant findings are set out in Chapter 3, concluded that virtually everyone on St. Eustatius wants the students to achieve maximal proficiency in both English and Dutch. Based on its findings, the Faraclas commission recommended that English be the only language of instruction, with Dutch being offered as a strong foreign language starting at a very young age.

The question now is whether that is actually the most feasible option. In January 2014, in order to answer this question and after consulting the government of St. Eustatius, the Secretary of Education requested our research team to perform a feasibility study relating to four options. These options are:

1. Continuing the current system, with adjustments (for example, to number of hours taught and teaching materials).
2. English as the only language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a foreign language. Retaining the Dutch examination structure.
3. The same as option 2, but with the possibility of retaining Dutch as the language of instruction starting in the second year of secondary education for students who wish to study in the Leeward Islands or the Netherlands.
4. English as the only language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a foreign language. The Caribbean Examination Council examination would be used (as it is in Saba).

The feasibility study had to be performed in order to enable the Secretary of Education to make a well-founded decision regarding the language of instruction that will optimally prepare students either to continue their education or find a job, either in the region or in the Netherlands.

The research team was requested to take three perspectives into account:

- A. When choosing one of these options, what changes would be necessary regarding:
- *the educational system*. Can the existing system be “translated” into English? Or would a new system be required?
 - *teaching and testing materials*. How would English-language teaching methods, tests and examinations be administered after a possible transition?
 - *teacher skills and qualifications*. Will teachers have to receive additional training and, if so, how much? What is the exact situation regarding the need to provide additional teacher training, and how will this affect teacher recruitment?
 - *finances*. What costs would be associated with a possible transition? How would these compare to the costs of investing in the current (Dutch-language) system of education in the Caribbean Netherlands, both in recent years and in the future?

¹ Language of Instruction in Sint Eustatius, Report of the 2013 research group on language of instruction in Sint Eustatius, Nicholas Faraclas, Ellen-Petra Kester and Eric Mijts.

- *the statutory framework*. What can be accomplished within the current statutory and regulatory parameters? Which statutes and regulations would have to be amended?
 - *other prerequisites*.
- B. What would the transition from the current situation to one of these options entail?
- What timeframe would allow the various options to be implemented carefully and responsibly?
 - How will the current generation of students be dealt with?
 - How will the current generation of teachers be dealt with?
- C. How would (or could) the implementation of these options affect:
- *the quality of education*. How would the changes in question affect the quality of education?
 - *possibilities for continuing education*. What would be the consequences for students wishing to continue their education in the Caribbean, the United States or the Netherlands?
 - *diploma accreditation*. How would examinations be affected, and what would be the consequences in terms of evaluating and accrediting diplomas?
 - *job market prospects*. How would students' chances on the job market, both in the Caribbean and elsewhere, be affected?
 - *student performance and educational efficiency*. What is the timeframe within which an improvement in performance and educational efficiency could be expected?
 - *finances*. How much would the implementation cost?

The study had to examine elementary, secondary and vocational education from each of these perspectives. The project description also offered the team leeway to address preschool education. The request included weighing all of the factors against one another, and to issue a recommendation regarding the option to be chosen.

1.2 Research approach

In January 2014, the Ministry of OCW assembled an independent research team from various disciplines (see Appendix IV) to carry out the study, which it did between February and May 2014. Much of the research consisted of interviews with those directly involved and experts from St. Eustatius, Saba, St. Maarten, Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba, the European Netherlands and Belgium. In February and April 2014, part of the research team visited St. Eustatius to speak with those directly involved and experts. The goal of the first visit was to get a good picture of the situation and to get to know both the students and the professionals who know what issues were affecting the students. During the second visit, focused discussions were held regarding the actual situation at the schools and the changes that might be needed. These two visits enabled the research team to gather a great deal of information and helped clarify the hopes and frustrations of the students, the concerns of their parents, the involvement of the teachers, principals and school board members, and the powerlessness that many of them feel with regard to the language of instruction. The research team also consulted a variety of publications and tracked down data. The lists of interviewees and the literature consulted are appended to this report.

1.3 Structure of the report

Chapter 2 describes the context of this study. The background for the language situation on St. Eustatius is explained and facts and figures about St. Eustatius are provided, both in a general sense and specifically regarding the language situation.

Chapter 3 describes the problem from the students’ perspective, first in terms of the language problem and then the broader problem within the educational system and the home situations of some of the children.

Chapter 4 explains the most important concepts referred to in this report.

Chapter 5 discusses the four options researched, and draws a conclusion as to which option would offer students on St. Eustatius the best opportunities and would be both the most feasible on St. Eustatius.

Chapter 6 provides details of the advisory report regarding the language of instruction, first discussing English as the language of instruction and then Dutch as a strong foreign language. This chapter addresses the first concentric circle in the figure below.

Chapter 7 explores the consequences the advisory report would have for the educational system and teaching practice. This discussion first addresses the various sectors, and then deals with several overarching topics. This chapter addresses the second concentric circle in the figure below.

Chapter 8 discusses the possibilities for supporting the children’s broader development and their language skills outside school. This chapter addresses the third concentric circle.

Chapter 9 deals with the opportunities the students have for continuing their education, as well as their future prospects.

In chapter 10 the recommended transition is described.

Chapter 11 summarizes the most significant conclusions and recommendations.

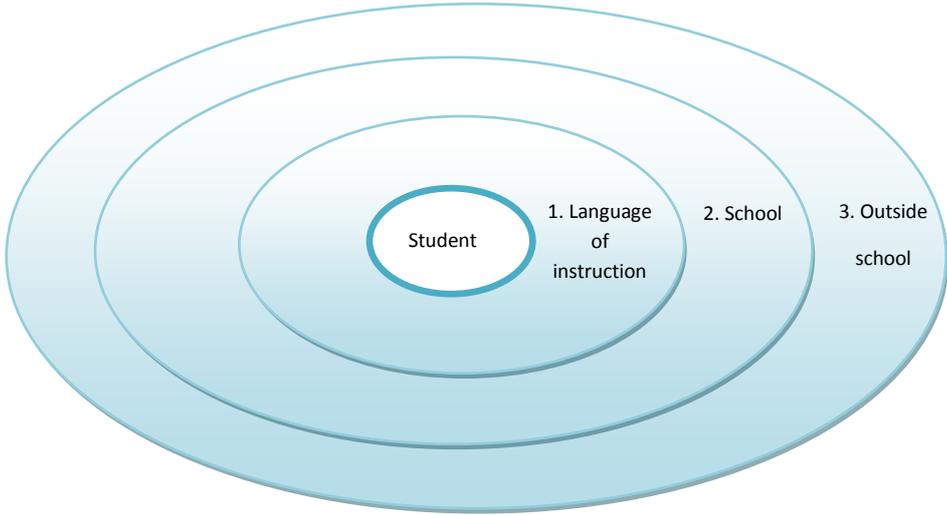


Figure 1. Structure of the report

2. Facts, Figures and Context

2.1 Background

St. Eustatius has a rich history, having been referred to in the 18th century as “the Golden Rock” due to its important role as a transit port. In the closing decades of that century, thousands of ships from Europe, the Americas and Africa would drop anchor at the anchorage off Oranjestad. The island fulfilled a crucial role as a free-trade zone, and the cosmopolitan population at the time numbered some 8,000 souls. This brief period of renown ended around 1800. Most of the people left, until only a few thousand remained. The population decreased until approximately 1950, when there were only 1,000 people living on the island. The trend was later reversed when it became clear that St. Eustatius would become a “municipality” of the Netherlands. The population now stands at just under 4,000 people, many of whom are recent immigrants.

Leaving aside a few brief periods of British or French occupation, St. Eustatius has been a Dutch colony since 1636, although the population remained cosmopolitan. A significant proportion of the population comprised Africans from various regions who had been brought to the islands as slaves, as well as their descendants. The European population was just as diverse, with a strong representation from Britain and the west coast of the Netherlands [*“Hollanders” and “Zeeuwen”*]. Even in the earliest days of the eighteenth century, English was the lingua franca in this Dutch colony; and so it would remain.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the island was governed by the Dutch West India Company. The proclamation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands two centuries ago opened a period in which the Dutch state was responsible for colonial policy and would eventually govern the six Antillean islands as a single unit. The Dutch Antilles policy centred on Curaçao, with no attempt being made to change the language on the Windward Islands to Dutch.



Students in a classroom on St. Eustatius, circa 1920
Source: Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, the Netherlands.

Education in the whole of the former Netherlands Antilles was generally in the hands of the Catholic and Protestant missionaries. In the twentieth century, this led to an educational policy that was more focused on “the motherland”, with Dutch teachers and Dutch-language teaching methods and examinations. Nevertheless, Papiamentu remained the dominant language on the Leeward Islands, with English continuing its prominence in the Windward Islands. In the sixty years that have passed since the Dutch Antilles gained autonomy pursuant to the Statute of 1954, that linguistic schism has not narrowed.

In the last decades of the 20th century, the educational system in the Dutch Antilles fell further and further behind. The result of a system that did not evolve in tandem with societal development and used very outdated teaching methods was that Antillean children were less and less prepared for the local, regional, and international job markets. Substantive problems that prompted the need for a fundamental change in the educational system include the drop-out rate, the large number of students who receive special education, the relatively limited number of students that follow a general secondary education program, and insufficient harmonization between education and the job market. Since the end of the 1970s, politicians in the Dutch Antilles have worked on a policy plan entitled *Enseñansa pa Un i Tur / Education for one and all*, which was published in 1989. This plan was the first to express the resolution to formulate an integral Antillean educational policy. The plan served as the foundation for the 1995 report entitled “Steps towards a better future” [*Stappen naar een betere toekomst*]. This document contained the details of the resolution to implement Foundation Based Education [*Funderend Onderwijs*] in order to reform the Antillean educational system.

This was led by the conviction that only a fundamentally different educational system, one that was completely separate and apart from the Dutch system and tailored to the situation in the Dutch Antilles, could offer a solution to the above problems. Foundation Based Education, in which the learning goals of individual students would take centre stage and the classical educational system would be replaced by a group- and development-oriented education program that would bring out the best in the children and optimally prepare them to contribute to society. One of the hallmarks of Foundation Based Education was the introduction of the native language of the majority of the children as the language of instruction in the first years of education. This was also implemented on St. Eustatius, where English was introduced as the language of instruction in the first years of elementary school. The rest of the education was provided in Dutch in order to keep it consistent with the education provided in the Netherlands.

The actual implementation of the educational renovations did not proceed according to the plan set out in “Steps towards a better future”. The plan to proceed gradually, in phases, was abandoned, and the reforms were made all at once. Although several schools acted as forerunners, the reforms were fully implemented all at once at all the elementary and secondary schools starting in 2000 (AEF, 2011). The result was that the schools had to endure far too many changes at once, without being afforded time for reflection and adjustment. Specifically, this placed enormous demands on the teachers, who were not sufficiently prepared for their tasks. The new teaching materials were neither developed according to schedule. From the viewpoint of those involved on St. Eustatius, the reforms were imposed from above rather than being developed by the schools. The research team also notes that the Foundation Based Education theory, which was also in the spotlight in the Netherlands for a while, later became the subject of sharp criticism, particularly with regard to children with deficits.

In 2006, the decision was made that the political union of the Dutch Antilles would be dissolved in the near future. Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba would become “public entities”, essentially overseas municipalities of the Netherlands. As a result, the Netherlands became directly responsible for the educational systems on these three islands, which became known as the “BES Islands”. In 2008, a

research team from the Inspectorate of Education visited all of the schools and educational facilities on St. Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire, resulting in an extremely critical report. On St. Eustatius, the team noted that the education offered by the four schools following Foundation Based Education did not meet basic quality requirements and that they had, almost unnoticed, sunk below an acceptable level of quality. The Education Inspectorate also determined that there were concerns about the only secondary school on St. Eustatius. Many students' academic careers were in serious jeopardy: student performance had been substandard for a long time, the curriculum was insufficient, there was too little differentiation in the lessons, and the care and supervision provided did not meet the students' needs. Combined with the lack of clear lines of communication, the absence of pedagogical leadership, internal conflicts and an insufficiently clear division of responsibilities between the administration and the school board, this led to the conclusion that the school had lost control on several important points. The school organization (administration and the school board) did not appear to be in the position to adequately address the problems that had arisen.²

On October 10, 2010, the political unit known as the Dutch Antilles was dismantled and St. Eustatius, along with Saba and Bonaire, became part of the country of the Netherlands. Since that time, the Ministry of OCW has been responsible for the educational policy on these three islands. In consultation with the island governments, and in line with the premise of legislative prudence, the language regime that was in place on 10-10-10 was maintained. This means that, by law, elementary education on St. Eustatius is provided in Dutch and English, while secondary education is taught in Dutch and examinations are administered in Dutch.

In March 2011, the Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands, entitled "Working Together on Quality" [*Samen werken aan kwaliteit*] was drafted and signed by the Minister of Education, the island governments, and the school boards.³ The primary goal of the Education Agenda is that basic quality requirements will be met by 2016. In order to achieve this goal, all of the schools have drafted improvement plans containing activities intended to help them meet the basic quality requirements. The Ministry of OCW has made funding available to assist in achieving these improvements. School coaches have been deployed and Expertise Centres Education Care [*Expertisecentra Onderwijszorg*] ("EOZs") have been established. A teachers' plan has been drafted for improving the quality of school staff. Improving school accommodations is also part of the Education Agenda. Another key part that relates to this study is bringing the performance of the three islands' students up to standard in language (Papiamentu, English and Dutch) and mathematics. The Education Agenda stipulates that the school boards on each island will make arrangements regarding language policy and the necessary continuous curriculum strands. This is intended to prevent or eliminate a situation in which the transition to Dutch-language secondary education and the transition to secondary vocational education or higher education present an obstacle to students. According to the Inspectorate of Education, it is unlikely that all of the schools will meet all of the goals of the Education Agenda by 2016. In the view of our research team, and at least with regard to St. Eustatius, bringing the students' command of Dutch "up to standard" is not a realistic expectation.

² Education in Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, Inspectorate of Education (2009).

³ <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/notas/2011/04/13/onderwijsagenda-voor-caribisch-nederland.html>.

2.2 Population

Composition of the population

St. Eustatius has an area of 21 km² and 3,897 residents (as of January 1, 2013). The population has increased sharply in recent years, primarily through immigration.⁴ Fewer than half of the residents were born in the Dutch Antilles or Aruba, Statian-born residents are now a minority. The chart below breaks down the population by country of birth.

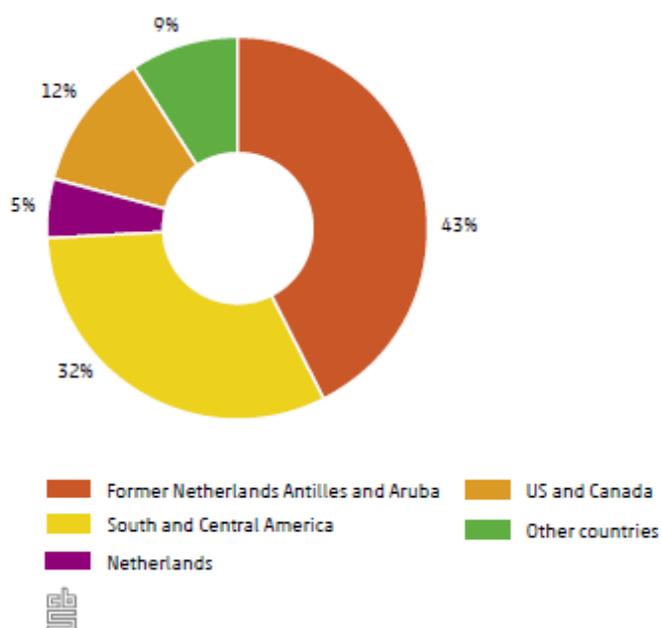


Figure 2. Countries of birth of residents of St. Eustatius, 2013⁵

Migration is thus a crucial factor affecting Statian society. On the face of it, this is nothing new. The island has a long history of newcomers settling on the island, sometimes for shorter periods, sometimes for longer – and vice versa; many Statian-born residents emigrate to nearby Caribbean islands, and sometimes even to the United States or the Netherlands, for school, work or simply to broaden their horizons. This migration seems to have intensified in recent decades, and particularly seems to have entered a new phase around the time that the Dutch Antilles were dissolved and the island was redefined as a “public entity” of the Netherlands. In 1960, the island had approximately 1,000 residents, with 1,700 in 1980, 2,700 in 2007, and about 4,000 today. The population has thus quadrupled in just half a century, largely due to the high immigration rate. Most of the recent immigrants speak (Caribbean) English or Spanish; there are very few Dutch-speaking immigrants. Paradoxically, while Dutch has become even more marginalized in the wake of this immigration, more young Stadians than ever are choosing to continue their education in the Netherlands, or are at least seriously considering it. In addition, there is still the longer-term tradition of continuing their education in Dutch in the Leeward Islands.

⁴ In 2012, there were 275 registered immigrants and 140 registered emigrants. Source: The Caribbean Netherlands in Figures 2012 [*Caribisch Nederland in cijfers 2012*], Statistics Netherlands [CBS].

⁵ The Caribbean Netherlands in Figures 2012, Statistics Netherlands.

Socio-economic situation

There are two large employers on St. Eustatius: the Public Entity [*Openbaar Lichaam*] and the NuStar oil terminal. Other businesses are associated with the NuStar terminal. Most working men on St. Eustatius earn a monthly income of between USD 1,501 and USD 2,000, while most working women receive a lower income of between USD 501 and USD 1,000. The adult minimum wage in 2013 was USD 4.89 per hour. In 2013, the bi-weekly child benefit [*kinderbijslag*] was USD 27 for the first child, and USD 14 for the second and third children.⁶ The amount of welfare benefit is capped at approximately USD 400 per month, depending on factors that include the number of children.⁷ According to the island government, there are also families who must make do with less.

According to the survey entitled “Exploring Poverty in the Caribbean Netherlands” [*Armoede in Caribisch Nederland, een verkenning*], the respondents on St. Eustatius stated (as did those in Saba and Bonaire) that people with a minimum income level could barely make ends meet. According to this survey, approximately 50% of the incomes were just above or below the minimum wage level. Income is often obtained by working multiple jobs, with children’s job income contributing to the family income. Many respondents in this exploratory survey indicated that some children were undernourished.

All of the respondents named single mothers with multiple children, and especially those single mothers with a low level of education, as a category of people who found it extremely difficult to make ends meet. Because these mothers often work more than full-time, the children generally receive insufficient parental attention or supervision. Professional day care is often a luxury they cannot afford, meaning that child care must frequently be improvised. Older brothers and sisters are charged with caring for their younger siblings, or others, which provides them with insufficient structure (healthy, safe upbringing) (Drewes, 2012).

The figures from Statistics Netherlands [*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*] (“CBS”) regarding the entire population of St. Eustatius from ages 15 to 65 show that the majority of the population have an elementary or VMBO education, have completed only the first years of a senior general secondary education (“HAVO”) or pre-university education program (“VWO”), or have attained a degree at secondary vocational education (“MBO”) level 1.

Education level: elementary, VMBO, first years of HAVO or VWO or MBO 1	58%
Education level: completed HAVO/pre-university, MBO 2, MBO 3 or MBO 4	26%
Education level: Higher professional education (“HBO”) or university education or equivalent	16%

Table 1. Education levels of the population of St. Eustatius from ages 15 to 65, 2014⁸

Those who are highly educated come from somewhere off the island, since no higher education is available on St. Eustatius. Remigration of higher educated Statians seems exceptional.

⁶ The Caribbean Netherlands in Figures 2012, Statistics Netherlands.
⁷ The Job Market in the Caribbean Netherlands 2013 [*De arbeidsmarkt in Caribisch Nederland 2013*], Ecorys, Rotterdam, May 29, 2013.
⁸ Statistics Netherlands [*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*], The Hague/Heerlen, the Netherlands, May 20, 2014 (these figures remain consistent if those for the population from ages 15 to 25, who may still be continuing their education, are excluded from the figures).

Religion

Religion is very important on St. Eustatius, which is evident, among other things, from the fact that three of the four small elementary schools are religion-based. According to Statistics Netherlands, 27% of the population of St. Eustatius is Methodist, 25% is Roman Catholic, and 21% is Seventh Day Adventist. Of the remaining population, 19% belong to another church, with only 8% responding that they do not have a religious affiliation. Stavian society has not been secularized to any significant degree, and the churches are still packed on Saturdays and Sundays. As a result, one of the conclusions drawn by the report entitled “Approaching domestic violence in the BES Islands” [*De aanpak van huiselijk geweld op de BES-eilanden*] is that the churches on St. Eustatius are an important source of social support (De Bruijn, Kriek and De Vaan, 2014). Church assistance is also requested in handling societal problems. The churches are actively involved in working with young people and they organize many faith-based after-school activities. This was also discussed during the interviews the research team held with the elementary school principals.

2.3 Education

A brief description of the various types of education and training available on St. Eustatius is provided below. Throughout this report, the reader must keep in mind the relatively small student populations in these programs.

Preschool education

Although preschool education does not qualify as formal education, this report nevertheless addresses it, since preschool contributes to shaping many of the children on St. Eustatius (as well as their language development). Preschool education focuses on children who are not yet enrolled in elementary school.

The largest organization for child care on St. Eustatius is the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre. Currently, 59 children receive child care at Buzzy Bees. These children represent one third of the number of children in this age group. All of these children attend the child care for five or six half-days a week. Buzzy Bees also offers after-school care (23 children that attend four or five times per week). The native language of virtually all of these children is Stavian English. The native language of most of the teachers at Buzzy Bees is also Stavian English,⁹ and that is the language in which they interact with the children. At the time of the transition on October 10, 2010, no agreements had been made about the language to be used in child care.

The monthly fees for children who receive child care for full days at Buzzy Bees range between USD 150 and USD 175. The monthly fees for children who attend half days range from USD 80 to USD 125.¹⁰

The High Scope program was introduced at Buzzy Bees in 2007 and was implemented across the board after a trial period. This is a teaching method that is based on the broader development of babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers and devotes particular attention to their language development. In the European Netherlands, this program, which originated from the United States, is known as Kaleidoscope [*Kaleidoscoop*]. Fifteen of the twenty teachers are trained in the High Scope program.

⁹ These figures were provided by the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre on June 6, 2014.

¹⁰ Interview with Buzzy Bees on February 25, 2014.

There are several private day care centres in addition to the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre. These are smaller-scale facilities, sometimes located in private homes. The research team did not find any information regarding figures or the quality of these facilities.

On June 22, 2010, the island territory of St. Eustatius and the Ministry of OCW agreed upon a Transition Protocol [*Transitieprotocol*] in preparation for the implementation of the new education legislation, stipulating that the island territory of St. Eustatius would continue to be responsible for the Island Ordinance [*Eilandsverordening*] relating to child care, at least until a General Administrative Order [*Algemene Maatregel van Bestuur*] was implemented (a maximum of five years after the transition). This Island Ordinance governs the quality, financing and supervision of child care. Quality assurance in the field of child care mainly regards hygiene, fire safety, and the teaching qualifications of the teachers, and thus falls within the scope of the public entity's responsibilities. According to the island council, there is insufficient funding for preschool childcare. Responsibility for national child care policy shifted from the Ministry of OCW to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment [*Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid*] ("SZW") in October 2010.

Elementary education¹¹

There are four elementary schools on St. Eustatius, three of which are associated with a religion and one of which is secular:

- Bethel Methodist School	130 students
- Golden Rock School (Roman Catholic):	82 students
- Lynch Plantation Seventh Day Adventist School:	93 students
- Governor de Graaff School (secular):	35 students

These schools provide education to children aged 4 to 12 in groups 1 to 8 (mandatory education on St. Eustatius begins at age 4).

Most of the elementary school students' native language is Stavian English (57%) or another (related) Caribbean English dialect (24%). A few students speak Spanish (5%) or Papiamentu (3%) as their native language. Approximately 4% of the students speak Dutch as their native language, with 1% speaking Standard English as their native language, and 3% speaking both English and Dutch as native languages.

¹¹ The figures in this section were provided during the course of the study by the Lynch Plantation SDA School, the Governor de Graaff School, the Bethel Methodist School, and the Golden Rock School.

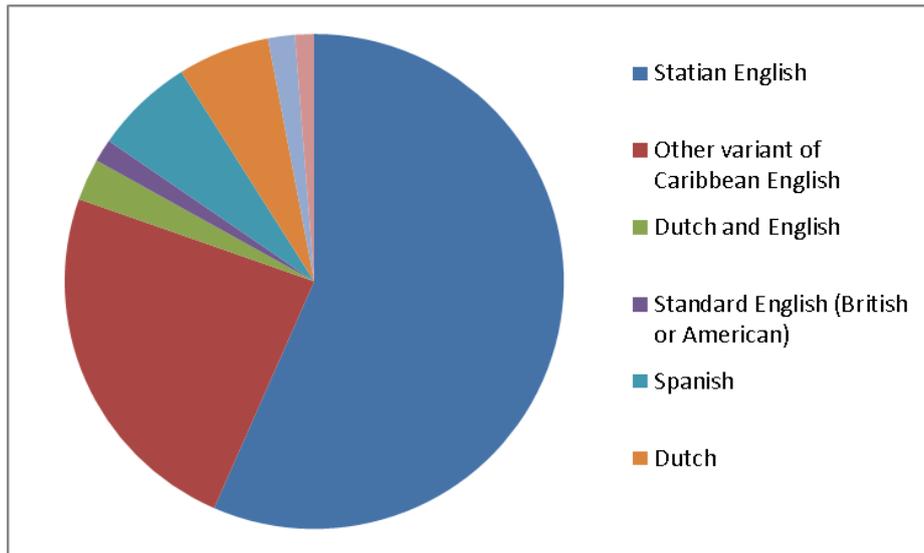


Figure 3. Elementary school students, by native language

In accordance with the island-wide language policy, the language of instruction in groups 1 to 4 of elementary school is English, with the transition to Dutch as the language of instruction (with translation into English permitted) starting in group 5. Compliance with this policy varies. For example, the schools introduce children to Dutch differently in the first years of elementary school. One school teaches classes in English up until the end of group 8. The teachers also use different methods for helping students who do not understand Dutch. Sometimes Dutch instructions are given, and are then repeated in English. Sometimes the teachers mix the two languages.

There are a total of 38 elementary school teachers, most of whom were born on St. Eustatius (11). The next-largest group comes from Suriname (10), followed by teachers from English-speaking countries or islands in the region (8), and the European Netherlands (5). Two of the teachers were born in the Leeward Islands and two are from other countries.

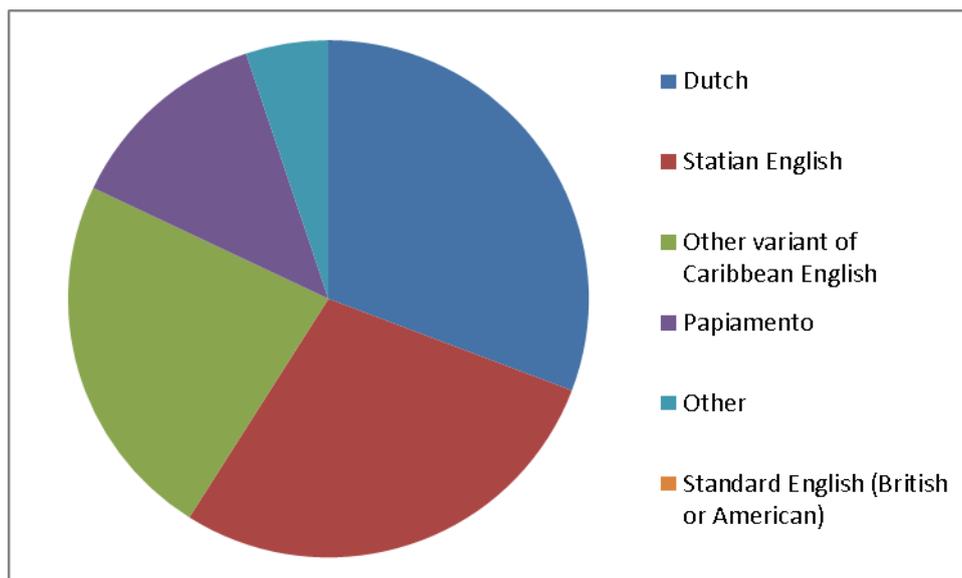


Figure 4. Elementary school teachers, by native language

Secondary education¹²

There is one secondary school, the Gwendoline van Putten School. This school has five programs:

- practical education: 20 students
- basic VMBO: 34 students
- VMBO trade: 55 students
- VMBO theoretical: 30 students
- HAVO: 61 students

The VMBO and HAVO programs are currently preceded by a one-year “transition class” [*schakelklas*] (41 students). The transition class was established in order to tackle deficits in Dutch and mathematics. The students in the transition class are divided into three levels: practical-oriented, mixed, and theoretical-oriented.

The practical and VMBO programs take four years; the HAVO program takes five years.

The vast majority (72%) of secondary school students speak Statian English as their native language. A minority speak Spanish (11), Dutch (8%) or Papiamentu (5%) as their native language. A few students speak another variant of Caribbean English, Papiamentu or other language as their native language.

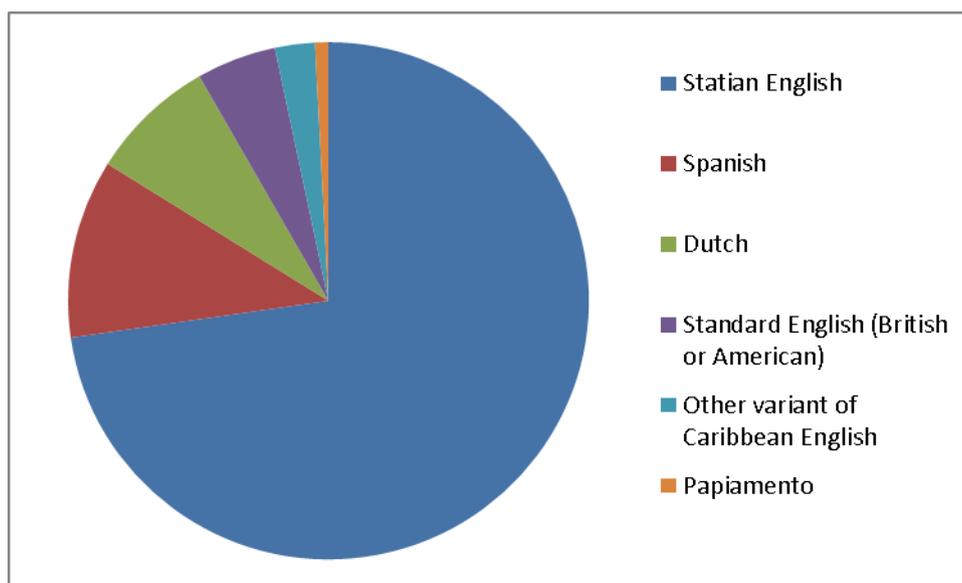


Figure 5. Students at the Gwendoline van Putten School (secondary education), by native language

Except in the practical education program (“PrO”), secondary education is in principle offered in Dutch. The teaching materials and the examinations are in Dutch. In practice, according to the people the research team interviewed on St. Eustatius, teachers provide instruction in both Dutch and English.

The Gwendoline van Putten School employs 39 secondary school teachers, most of whom (23) were born in the Netherlands and speak Dutch as their native language. Nine teachers were born on St. Eustatius, and ten speak Statian English as their native language. Five of the teachers were born in Suriname, with the other two having been born in other countries in the region.

¹² The figures in this section were provided by the Gwendoline van Putten School on May 8, 2014.

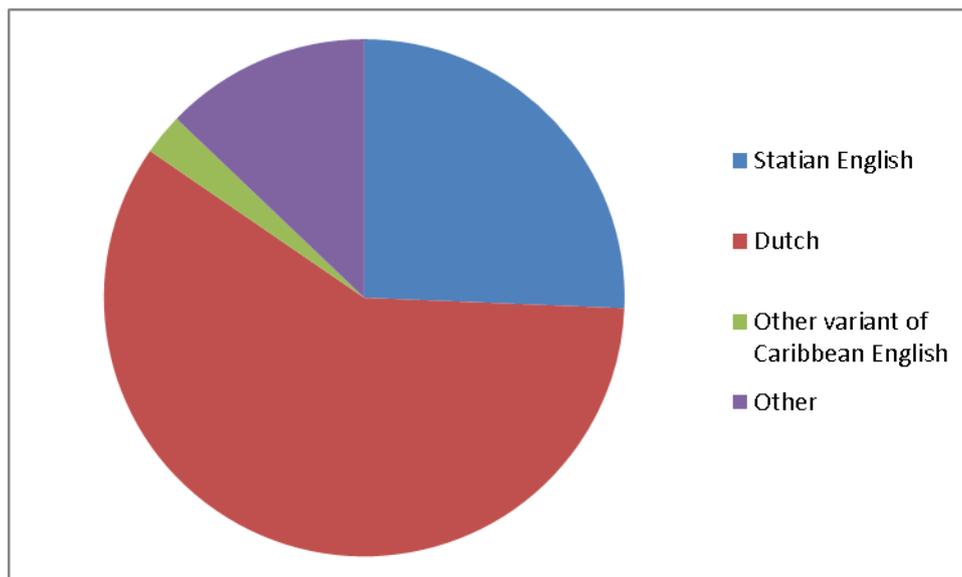


Figure 6. Teachers at the Gwendoline van Putten School (secondary education) by native language

Secondary vocational education¹³

Secondary vocational education (i.e. the MBO program) has been offered at the Gwendoline van Putten School since the 2012-2013 school year. The numbers of students in the program can be distinguished by group as follows:

- MBO 1 Construction:	0 students
- MBO 1 Job Market Qualified Assistant:	8 students
- MBO 2 Home Health Aid and Caregiver:	3 students
- MBO 2 Secretarial Administrative Assistant – Year 1:	0 students
- MBO 2 Secretarial Administrative Assistant – Year 2:	2 students
- MBO 2 Bookkeeping Assistant – Year 1:	6 students
- MBO 2 Bookkeeping Assistant – Year 2:	6 students

The students now in the MBO program did not begin their study directly after completing the VMBO program. Most of them are adults, most of them women (with children) who view their programs as a second chance to earn a diploma. Most of the students are in their early 20s.

The language of instruction in the MBO 1 program is English. One group of three to four students follows an MBO 1 program given in Dutch. The MBO 2 program is in Dutch.

Most MBO students speak either Statian English (36%) or another Caribbean English dialect (40%) as their native language. A few speak Spanish (16%), Dutch (4%) or another language (4%) as their native language.

Seven teachers work in the MBO program, six of whom speak Dutch, and one of whom speaks Statian English, as their native language.

¹³ The figures in this section were provided by the Gwendoline van Putten School on April 8, 2014.

Other education

The aforementioned types of education and training on St. Eustatius are supplemented by the youth development program SKJ [*Sociale Kanstrajecten Jongeren*] offered by the New Challenge Foundation. The aim of SKJ is to enable drop-outs to gain a basic qualification or, if that is not possible, to find suitable work. The requirements applying to SKJ do not directly concern qualification. They involve tailor-made solutions focusing on the acquisition/reinforcement of such things as basic skills and the ability to function in society. The intention is that the young people concerned will enter normal schooling, if possible. SKJ's target group is young people aged 18 to 25.¹⁴ Currently, five students are attending SKJ and the foundation is supporting three young people who do not participate in the SKJ-program.¹⁵

There is also a private school at the NuStar Oil Terminal on St. Eustatius. There are currently six students at this school, which provides lessons in English according to an American home schooling system.¹⁶ The School does not receive any funding from the Ministry of OCW and is not subject to the Education Inspectorate's supervision. This school will not be dealt with in more detail in this report.

Due to the island's size, there are no MBO 3, MBO 4, VWO or higher education programs available on St. Eustatius. Students who wish to continue their education past MBO 2 must leave the island to do so. This is the reality of a small island, as it always has been for generations of Statians.

¹⁴ Social opportunity programs for deprived young people in the Caribbean Netherlands [*Sociale kanstrajecten jongeren (SKJ) in Caribisch Nederland*], brochure published by the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands [*Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland*].

¹⁵ Interview with New Challenge, February 26, 2014.

¹⁶ Interview with NuStar, April 10, 2014.

3. Statement of the Problem

In 2013, Faraclas, Kester and Mijts were commissioned by the Education Commissioner of St. Eustatius and the Minister of OCW to perform a study into the language of instruction on St. Eustatius. This study showed that the use of Dutch as the language of instruction had a negative impact on student performance, both in English and in Dutch. Their command of Dutch was far below the level of their counterparts in the European Netherlands, while their command of English was far below their counterparts in most other English-speaking communities. These researchers' interviews showed that virtually everyone on St. Eustatius wanted students to acquire - maximum proficiency in both English and Dutch (Faraclas, Kester and Mijts, 2013). The Inspectorate of Education also noted that the fact that most of the students were not receiving instruction in their native language created additional difficulties for both the schools and the students.¹⁷ School performance was so poor across the board that it must be concluded that at least some of the children are performing below their ability level.

“A child has a better chance of succeeding if he understands what’s being said around him.

The children hear English and learn to speak that language.”

Source: Teacher in St. Eustatius, April 10, 2014

In 2013, the Inspectorate of Education noted that students transferring from elementary school have significant deficits in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and mathematics. At the beginning of the transition class (see section 2.2), most students who take Dutch-language reading comprehension tests achieve an average score that is equivalent to the level that elementary school students are expected to achieve at the end of group 3. The average score in mathematics achieved by students entering secondary school varies from the levels expected in groups 3 to 6 of elementary school. The average scores on the Dutch standard final examinations are unsatisfactory at every level,¹⁸ and have even fallen in the last year.¹⁹

There is broad consensus within the field of education on St. Eustatius that the manner in which the schools handle the language of instruction is a significant cause of the school’s poor performance. This conclusion is supported by recent scholarly literature. The Island Council [*Eilandsraad*] emphasized this standpoint in its motion dated May 8, 2014, in which it indicated that, for most students, Dutch is a foreign language that is barely used in their day-to-day life outside school on St. Eustatius. The Island Council’s arguments are consistent with the findings of Faraclas, Kester and

¹⁷ Letter from the Minister of OCW to the Chair to the Senate of the States-General, The Hague, August 29, 2012.

¹⁸ There is a significant difference between the average score on the examination administered by the school and the average score on the Standard final examination. The conclusion of the Education Inspectorate is that the school finals are not up to standard, resulting in a distortion of the pass rate in favor of the Gwendoline van Putten School.

¹⁹ Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO and HAVO Departments at the Gwendoline van Putten School [*Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Voortgezet onderwijs bij de Gwendoline van Putten School, afdelingen pro, vmbo en havo*], Education Inspectorate, September 12, 2013.

Mijts, which the motion also cites.²⁰ The problems with the current language policy are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

The language of instruction is not the only problem, however. There are other problems within the educational system, as well as socio-societal circumstances that hinder child development.

Let us first look at the situation in the schools. It is clear that the elementary schools have made progress since 2008. At most of the schools, the Inspectorate of Education has noted that the teaching time, school climate, and pedagogical-didactic action have reached satisfactory levels. According to the Inspectorate, class management has improved, there is a pleasant atmosphere in most of the classrooms, and discipline has shifted from negative punishment to positive reinforcement. The research team also observed this pleasant atmosphere. Although the parents of the children at all four schools indicated that their children are enthusiastic about going to school, significant efforts will still have to be made before the basic quality requirements are met. In the quality management and student care and guidance domains, in particular, a great deal of work remains to be done. Currently, for example, all four schools still lack a multi-year cyclical system for evaluating the quality of all of the important educational processes. The schools must also indicate how they intend to assure quality over a multi-year period. Another important element of assuring education quality is recording the agreements, procedures, and rules that have been made over the years, this remains to be done. The Inspectorate of Education is also concerned about student care and counselling. It is important to identify problems, but it is even more important to treat them effectively. This will require a well-functioning system of support, both within the schools and outside them. This has not yet been satisfactorily achieved.²¹

The Inspectorate of Education identified a backslide in the development of the quality of education offered at the Gwendoline van Putten School and considers the situation at the only secondary school on St. Eustatius to be a cause for extreme concern. According to the Education Inspectorate, none of the quality domains meet the basic quality standards. The Inspectorate speaks of a disruptive school climate and a consistently downward trend in educational efficiency. The final exam scores fell in the 2012-2013 school year. The percentage of students failing to be promoted is extremely high, particularly in the VMBO department, and there have been many mid-term student transfers to lower levels of education. The final exam scores were also lower across the board than they had been in previous years. The discrepancy between the average scores on the school finals and those on the Standard finals continued to be enormous for all subjects – the school finals continue to be scored too generously, which only serves to exacerbate the problems.²²

The students' home situations also play an important role. International studies have proven that the interaction between parents and children is crucial to children's performance at school.²³ Quality refers to both the *nature* and *substance* of the interaction. Nature has to do with learning to reason, understanding abstract concepts, and thinking about cause and effect. Substance refers to knowledge that is relevant at school: counting, recognizing letters, telling time, reading aloud, etc. When beginning elementary school, children from families where the quality of this interaction is high have an intellectual head start of one to two years over their classmates with low-quality interaction. If the schools fail to take this into account, the gaps between these students will continue to widen throughout elementary school. As indicated in the UNICEF report entitled "Child

²⁰ Motion of the St. Eustatius Island Council regarding the language of instruction for the public entity of St. Eustatius, May 8, 2014.

²¹ Reports of the Education Inspectorate Inspections of the Four Elementary Schools in St. Eustatius [*Rapporten van bevindingen van de Onderwijsinspectie van de vier scholen voor primair onderwijs op Sint Eustatius*], November 2013.

²² Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO and HAVO Departments at the Gwendoline van Putten School, Education Inspectorate, November 19, 2013.

²³ Meijnen, Wim (2003) (editor), Education deficits in elementary schools [*Onderwijsachterstanden in basisscholen*]. Antwerp (Belgium)/Apeldoorn (Netherlands): Garant.

on St. Eustatius" [*Kind op St. Eustatius*], many families only speak with their children when they order them to do something. A stable, safe environment is necessary for children's socio-emotional development. When parents become part of their children's emotional landscape, offer their children support at the right times, and encourage and guide them, socially deviant behaviour on the part of those children can often be prevented.²⁴ The UNICEF report cited above instead describes many families headed by very young single mothers who raise their children in an authoritarian manner and do not spare the rod, which continues to hinder their children's learning.

These home situations contribute to significant cognitive deficits and many behavioural problems among children. The elementary and secondary schools report such problems repeatedly, and the Inspectorate of Education recognizes and acknowledges these worrying domestic situations.

This leads to the conclusion that no change to the language of instruction will be sufficiently effective unless it is coupled with the development of solutions for the broader challenges with which the educational system and society are faced.

²⁴ Paul Leseman & Aryan van der Leij (editors) (2004), Education in the preschool and early elementary period [*Educatie in de voor- en vroegschoolse periode*], HB Uitgevers.

4. Theoretical Framework / Concepts

Because the many terms used in the discussion regarding the Dutch language on St. Eustatius are often subject to different interpretations, this chapter provides definitions and interpretations of those terms.

Bilingualism as a goal

An individual is bilingual if he commands two languages at equal levels of proficiency. Naturally, those levels can differ from person to person. Bilingual education is a teaching strategy intended to reach that goal.

Bilingual education is defined as the use of two languages of instruction in teaching, with both languages being used not just to teach the languages themselves, but as a means of communicating certain educational content.²⁵ Bilingual education can be divided into various categories based on the teaching goal. The goal of bilingual education can be “transitional” (shift from the home language/minority language to the majority/second language), or it can be intended for “maintenance” (retention of the home language) or “enrichment” (development of bilingualism).²⁶

In the European Netherlands, bilingual education usually falls into the enrichment category. Bilingual education in that context has two goals: promoting language proficiency and providing European and international perspectives. In this context, bilingual education means that students receive instruction in at least half of their subjects in a foreign language, such as English. For example, mathematics or history is taught using an English-language method and the teacher speaks English during the lesson. Bilingual students in the European Netherlands take their examinations in Dutch.²⁷ This is an additive form of bilingualism or multilingualism, because English is given in addition to, rather than instead of, Dutch. This is the opposite of the subtractive form of bilingualism, in which the second language replaces the first.²⁸

In the Dutch-Antillean context, bilingual education is usually used to transition from the home language to the second language. So, this falls into the transitional category. Various transition models are used on the islands of the former Dutch Antilles, with the difference primarily lying in the stage at which the transition is made. St. Eustatius has selected a model in which the transition is made in group 5 of elementary school.

The reference standard of successful bilingual education is that the students learn both languages at a level that is equivalent to what it would be in a situation in which the language of instruction is also the native language. Bilingual education that results in substandard performance in both languages affects students’ possibilities for development. Although research into the effect of experiments with bilingual education shows favourable results in some cases, that research is usually based on extraordinary situations, such as when a group of parents explicitly opt for this course of action and (can) provide their children with cognitive support and the school situations are conducive to success. Naturally, these schools must be staffed by bilingual teachers and have a curriculum that is divided between the two languages while still providing clear curriculum strands. These conditions

²⁵ Bilingual Education. Volume 5 of the Encyclopedia of Language and Education, J. Cummins and D. Corson, 1997. Cited in: “Bilingual education using English in early elementary education” [*Tweetalig onderwijs met vervroegd Engels in het basisonderwijs*], Rian Aarts and Sanne Ronde, *Living Languages Journal* [*Levende Talen Tijdschrift*], Volume 7, Issue 2, 2006.

²⁶ Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, C. Baker, 2001. Cited in “Bilingual education using English in early elementary education”, Rian Aarts and Sanne Ronde, *Living Languages Journal*, Volume 7, Issue 2, 2006.

²⁷ <http://www.europeesplatform.nl/tto/>.

²⁸ “Bilingual education using English in early elementary education”, Rian Aarts and Sanne Ronde, *Living Languages Journal*, Volume 7, Issue 2, 2006.

are not easily achieved. The results are positive if the parents are sufficiently proficient in both languages. If that is not the case, and the children in question are growing up in problematic social conditions, there is a substantially smaller chance that they will achieve bilingualism.

Dutch as a foreign language

When Dutch is spoken as a first language, learners are referred to as “NT1 students” [*Nederlands als eerste taal*]. Those who have other native languages and who study Dutch in a Dutch-speaking territory are “NT2 students” [*Nederlands als tweede taal*]. Those who have other native languages and who study Dutch in a non-Dutch-speaking territory are “NVT students” [*Nederlands als vreemde taal*].

There are significant differences in didactics and practical application of the subject matter. For example, many NVT students receive little to no exposure to Dutch outside the classroom, they use the same auxiliary language in the classroom, and their cultural background is largely homogenous.²⁹ This is precisely the situation St. Eustatius, where most students hear very little Dutch outside school, they use English (or St. Eustatius English) as an auxiliary language, and they have a St. Eustatius cultural background. For most students on St. Eustatius, Dutch is a foreign language, rather than a first or second language.

Interest is growing in Dutch as a foreign language. Worldwide, approximately 15,000 students in 40 countries study Dutch at the university level. More than 450,000 students at all types of schools study Dutch in schools abroad (primarily in Germany, Belgium and France). Dutch is currently being offered as a foreign language in dozens of different contexts. One of the essential features of Dutch as a foreign language is that the nature and form vary according to region and context.³⁰

This advisory report discusses Dutch as a *strong* foreign language. The word “strong” refers not to the language itself, but to way the Dutch language is taught. It is meant to express intensity and the target level of proficiency. There are difference reference frameworks for these levels.

European Framework

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (“European Framework”) was developed by the Council of Europe. It describes what a person has to be able to demonstrate in order to show that they have achieved a certain level of proficiency in a foreign language. The European Framework consists of six levels, which can be summarized as follows:



Figure 7. European Framework

The levels run from A1 up to and including C2. A1 is the lowest level and C2 is the level of an expert speaker with university-level intellectual abilities. These levels can be used for all languages and are interpreted the same way in all countries.

²⁹ Taaluniecentrum NVT website, http://taaluniecentrum-nvt.org/veelgestelde_vragen/.

³⁰ Draft memorandum, “Dutch in the Caribbean Netherlands” [*Nederlands in Caribisch Nederland*], Hellmuth van Berlo, Nederlandse Taalunie, April 29, 2014.

The European Framework distinguishes five language skills: reading, listening, conversation, speaking and writing. They are the same skills tested in the Dutch-language final examinations for modern foreign languages.³¹

Structure of the Framework for Dutch

The European Framework was linked to VMBO and MBO programs through the Framework for Dutch [*Raamwerk Nederlands*] (Bohnen, *et al.*, 2007) and to secondary education programs by the Meijerink Committee (2008). Based on the reports of these committees, the government assigned the following reference levels to the various education sectors in the Netherlands.³²

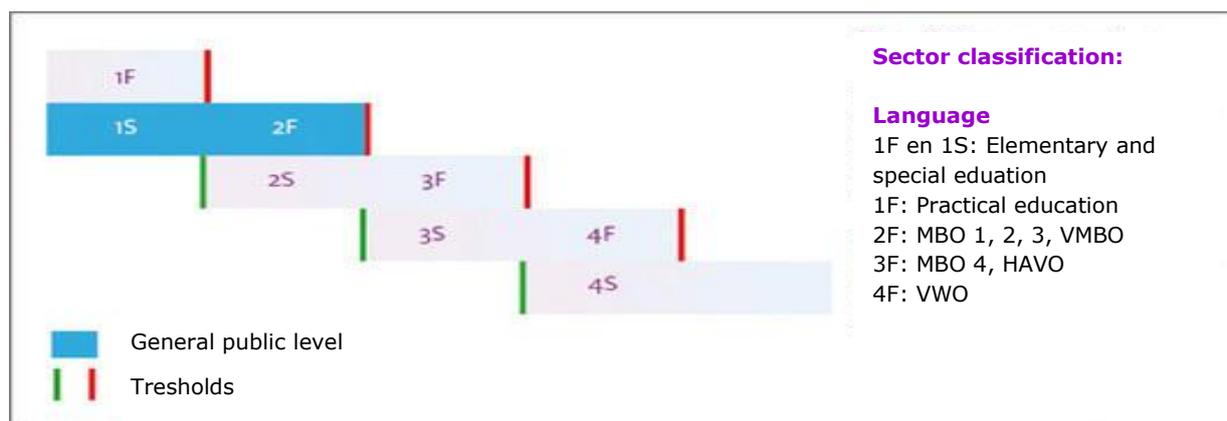


Figure 8. Structure of the Framework for Dutch

Level 1F largely corresponds to level A2 of the European Framework, 2F with B1, 3F with B2 and 4F approximately to C1.³³

Standard English

Standard English refers to the English that is generally accepted in an English-speaking country. British English and American English are the two most-used variants of English. American English is used in the United States and Canada; British English is used in the other English-speaking countries. It is generally agreed that there is no one correct version of English. For people in non-English-speaking countries who have a good command of English (level B2 or higher), it is a matter of personal preference. For non-native speakers, the most important rule of thumb is consistency of usage.³⁴ The interviews on St. Eustatius did not reveal a clear preference for either British or American English. As a result, this study refers to “Standard English” without a specific preference. The European Framework can be used to specify the various levels of English, just as it can with Dutch.

Statian English

The native language of most of the students on St. Eustatius is Statian English. This variant of English is similar in many ways to the other forms of Caribbean English that are spoken in areas nearby in the region, but there are some differences. Statian English also sounds slightly different than most of the

³¹ European Framework website (in Dutch), <http://www.erk.nl/leerling/watiserk/>.

³² <http://www.taalenrekenen.nl/referentiekader/niveaupbouw/>

³³ Language and mathematics reference levels in MBO programs: a general comparison [*Referentieniveaus taal en rekenen in het mbo: een vergelijking op hoofdlijnen*], CINOP, Den Bosch, 2010.

³⁴ Tolken- en Vertaalcentrum Nederland, <http://www.tvcn.nl/nl/blog/2013/2/14/engels-is-engels/>.

other forms of English spoken in the Caribbean. According to researcher Michael Aceto, this is explained by the specific development of Statian English throughout the history of the island, which, unlike other islands in the colonial period, served primarily as a trade centre rather than as the site of plantations.³⁵ It is clear that Statian English is different from British or American English, in terms of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Statian English has a smaller vocabulary and a very simple syntax. Little literature is written in Statian English.

Partly given the background of Statian English and its link to the culture and identity of the island's residents, it is wise to emphasize the fact that, for most residents, Statian English is "normal" English. This is the language children learn at home and the language they use in their daily lives.

³⁵ Statian Creole English: an English-derived language in the Dutch Antilles (Abstract), published in: *World Englishes*, Volume 25, Issue 3-4, Michael Aceto, 2006.

5. Four Options

As the entity ordering this study, the Ministry of OCW provided the four options to be studied for their feasibility. These four options are:

- Continuing the current system, with adjustments (for example, to the number of hours taught and teaching materials).
- English as the only language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a foreign language. Retaining the Dutch examination structure.
- The same as option 2, but with the possibility of retaining Dutch as the language of instruction starting in the second year of secondary education for students who wish to study in the Leeward Islands or the Netherlands.
- English as the only language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a foreign language. The Caribbean Examination Council examination would be used (as it is in Saba).

We have divided these questions a bit differently in order to be able to answer them thoroughly:

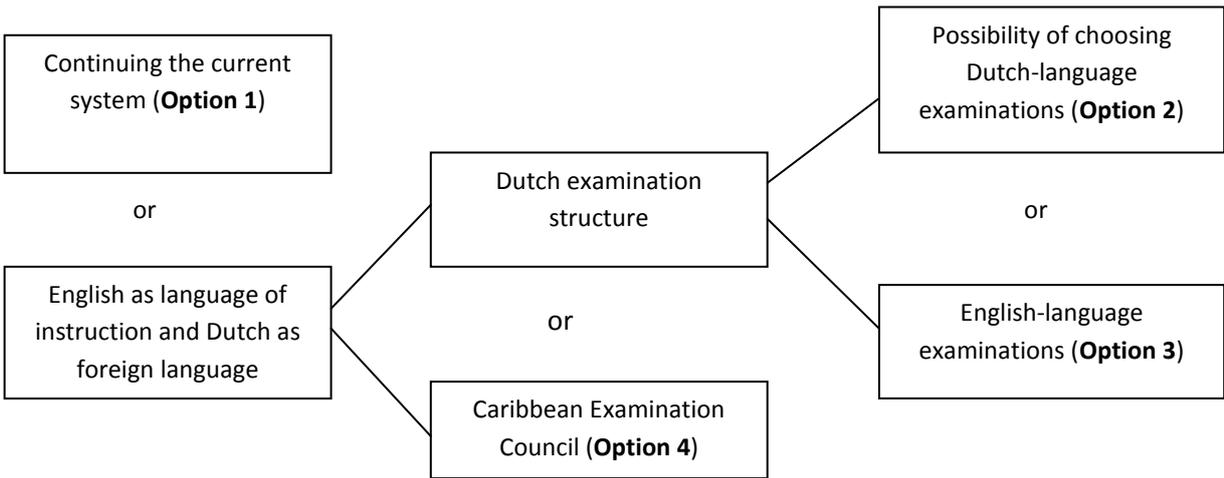


Figure 9. Options studied

5.1 Continuing the current system (Option 1)

The core of the current system is the combination of two languages of instruction in elementary school (first English and then Dutch) and Dutch as the language of instruction and examination in secondary school and MBO programs. This combination was intended to enable Stavian students to become bilingual. As indicated previously in this report, both the people on St. Eustatius and experts from outside the island acknowledge that this system does not offer the students the opportunities they deserve. There are several factors that contribute to this.

The first challenge for most students is learning Standard English, while their mother tongue is Stavian English. As indicated in Chapter 3, while Standard English is not a foreign language for most of the students, it is also not their native language. As stated, Stavian English is different from British or

American English, in terms of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. For that reason, enormous emphasis will have to be placed on Standard English, both at the preschool, elementary and secondary school levels, to enable the students to read and write in a language that is closest to their own. It would be unrealistic to presume that they could also master a second language to such an extent that they could be considered bilingual, or that they could become as proficient in Dutch as in English.

The relevance of this is heightened because, in this specific case, the second language – Dutch – plays little or no role in any aspect of their lives outside school. Their parents, neighbours and friends do not speak Dutch, and most of the media they use are in English. For most of the students on St. Eustatius, Dutch is a foreign language and, moreover, one that sounds to them to be completely unrelated to English. Most of the students never hear Dutch except at elementary school (from group 5 on) or secondary school. As the Faraclas report shows, the island residents that use Dutch most often are the teachers, but even teachers communicate with their students or colleagues in English outside the school. According to the Faraclas report, attitudes toward Dutch are particularly negative among students in secondary education and their parents, which is borne of their frustration of being unable to master a language that is literally foreign to them (Faraclas, Kester and Mijts, 2013).

A third issue is that teachers in such a bilingual situation are expected to have the same level of proficiency in both languages and to be trained in bilingual education. It would place enormous demands on teachers to expect them to be educated to a sufficient level of proficiency in both Dutch and English and to learn the didactics of secondary school subjects as well. It would be unrealistic, particularly considering that there is a relatively high turnover rate among teachers on St. Eustatius and bilingual education (in English and Dutch) is not part of a teacher's basic competencies, either in the region or in the Netherlands.

In Chapter 4, we indicated that there were also a number of extracurricular conditions that would have to be met for bilingual education to be successful. For example, an encouraging family situation and the community can contribute to an environment in which children want to learn and are offered positive challenges. Unfortunately, many children on St. Eustatius do not enjoy such an environment. One important factor on St. Eustatius is the low average level of education of the population and the unencouraging family situations in which many children are raised (see section 2.2 and Chapter 3). In many cases, parenting on St. Eustatius does not involve providing children with cognitively positive stimulation, and this fact must be taken into account. In addition, it would already be a chore for most of the parents on St. Eustatius to learn Standard English, because it is not their native language. These problems are exacerbated still further by the fact that some of the subject matter is taught in Dutch. This combination of languages makes it very difficult for parents to become involved with their children's schoolwork or to help them with their homework.

In summary, the research team's opinion is that a strategy focusing on changing both the situation at school and outside school in order to offer students sufficient development opportunities through bilingual education is not realistic.

Based on the research set out above, the first option, in which the current system would be maintained, is not considered feasible and will therefore be excluded from further consideration.

This does not mean that Dutch should be excluded from further consideration, just the opposite: Dutch must be offered in a more effective way. This study is therefore consistent with the Faraclas study, which concluded that Dutch could best be learned if it were offered as a foreign language rather than being used as a language of instruction (see also section 5.2).

5.2 English as a language of instruction (Options 2, 3 and 4)

Once the conclusion has been drawn that bilingualism – equal proficiency in English and Dutch – is not feasible, the next issue to be studied is which language of instruction would be best for the students on St. Eustatius. As the Faraclas committee concluded, the best solution for most of the students on St. Eustatius would be for them to be given a solid foundation to master the language that is closest to their native language: Standard English. It is crucial that the students fully master at least one language. Given the island's location and the students' immediate environment, and the fact that English is a world language, that language is the designated language of instruction. By mastering at least one language and receiving instruction in that language will enable students to reach a higher level in their other subjects. Research indicates that consistently speaking Standard English will help the children across the board in their educational pursuits.

The interviews the researchers conducted on St. Eustatius, both with those directly involved and experts, also indicate that a large majority of the island's residents advocate using English as the language of instruction. Most of them agree that the vast majority of the students will only have a chance to successfully complete their secondary education if they are instructed in English. In addition, as a world language, English offers sufficient possibilities for continuing education and a future, either on St. Eustatius or abroad. It is therefore essential that the transition be made to *Standard English*. This is discussed in more detail in section 6.1. Section 6.2 provides more details about Dutch as a strong foreign language.

The three options below are premised on English being the language of instruction. The various options for examinations are then weighed against one another.

5.3 Dutch examination structure (Options 2 and 3)

Possibility of choosing Dutch-language examinations (Option 2)

The research team does not consider the option premised on the possibility of choosing – partly with an eye towards maintaining the Dutch examination structure – to keep Dutch as the language of instruction starting in the second year of secondary education for those students who wish to study in the Leeward Islands or the Netherlands to be adequately feasible. Even if Dutch were offered as a strong foreign language starting in elementary school, the students would not be proficient enough in Dutch to begin studying from Dutch-language textbooks in their second year of secondary school and taking Dutch-language exams. This would still put students into a back log.

In addition, there are too few students to use two complete systems side by side. This would mean, in any case, that there would be a group of students within the HAVO program and the theoretical track of the VMBO program that would, from their second year of secondary school, be using Dutch-language methods and materials and taking lessons from teachers who would have a sufficient level of proficiency in Dutch, while, at the same time, there would be another group of students using English-language methods and materials and taking lessons from teachers who would have a sufficient level of proficiency in English. This would be unrealistic, even leaving aside the question of whether opting for English-language education for general secondary programs would entail using an entirely different teaching system (see section 5.4).

English-language examinations (Option 3)

If a Dutch examination system with English-language examinations is chosen, it would inherently mean that examinations in secondary school would be translated from Dutch into English, since the Dutch finals constitute part of the Dutch examination system for VMBO and HAVO programs. The Netherlands Examination Board [*College voor Examens*] does not consider translating all of the Dutch examinations into English to be a realistic option. Translating the questions would affect their nuances. A question that refers to hectometers and “praatpalen” (emergency telephones on highways) or “ZOAB” (very porous asphalt concrete designed to improve tire traction on wet roads) and frost would be difficult for students on St. Eustatius to understand, even if they were translated into English. This difficulty would not spring from their intellectual capabilities, but from their complete unfamiliarity with references to concepts that are part the Dutch context. According to the CITO (Central Institute for Test Development Foundation), translating these concepts is no simple task, and the problem worsens in proportion to the size of the role that context plays in the examination questions. Examination questions in subjects such as mathematics tend to be more heavily embedded in context. If the examinations are to be translated, there must be two completely separate examination packages, including with regard to exam grading standards. Developing such standards would be difficult in that case, because the comparison group would be extremely small. If errors were identified, the translated exams would also have to be checked to see if the translations included the errors, and the errata would have to be translated again separately. Two completely separate systems for one school would be expensive and ineffective. No translated English-language examinations are administered in the European Netherlands. There are other countries in the Kingdom where some of the Dutch examinations are translated into Papiamentu or English, but this situation is very different because these countries have their own exam grading standards. In Bonaire, a few of the school finals are translated into Papiamentu, but not the Standard finals; they are administered in Dutch. The translated examinations, moreover, are only administered in the VMBO programs. The Netherlands Examination Board does not grant permission to translate examinations in HAVO and VWO programs.

5.4 Caribbean Examination Council (Option 4)

The CXC is responsible for the examinations in the former British colonies in the Caribbean. A total of nearly 250,000 students take the CXC examinations each year.³⁶ The CXC examinations are tailored to the Caribbean region and are widely accredited.³⁷ According to the Netherlands Examination Board, there can be no doubt about the quality of the examination structure and grading standards.³⁸ The biggest advantage the CXC would offer the students on St. Eustatius would be that both the pedagogical-didactic action and the subject matter of the lessons would be better suited to the St. Eustatius context than their Dutch counterparts.

The CXC examination that is administered most often is the examination for the Certificate of Secondary Education (“C-SEC”). This examination focuses on **general secondary education**. There are a total of 28 subjects at the general level. These can be used to compose profiles, including a profile that reflects the theoretical track of the Dutch VMBO (i.e. the “MAVO” [*middelbaar algemeen vormend onderwijs*] program) or HAVO program. The C-SEC has a modular structure that permits students to graduate at different levels.

³⁶ Interview with Mr Cumberbatch, Registrar and CEO of the CXC on May 21, 2014.

³⁷ Explanatory Memorandum to the Temporary Decree regarding the Saba Comprehensive School BES [*Nota van Toelichting bij Tijdelijk besluit Saba Comprehensive School BES*], July 10, 2013.

³⁸ 2012 Annual Report [*Jaarverslag 2013*], Examination Board, page 18.

The C-SEC examination system is structured as follows:

- Each subject consists of modules.
- The modules are graded separately.
- The entire set results in a final grade for the subject, ranging from I to VI (high to low).
- The complete profile of all of the subjects is graded from A to F (high to low).
- C-SEC consisting of at least 5 general subjects graded at I, II or III grants admission to Dutch higher education.³⁹ (Students in St. Maarten are advised to complete at least five subjects with grades of I and II, and in practice students take exams in six or seven subjects. The same applies in Saba.)
- C-SEC score that includes at least 4 subjects at the general level with a grade of III and two subjects with a grade of IV plus a passing score on the school final is comparable with the Dutch theoretical VMBO (i.e. MAVO) level.⁴⁰

An important benefit of this model is that it motivates students by enabling them to track their process by passing modules. The students can even complete some subjects they have completely mastered by taking the examination before their final year. This structure is very suitable for the relatively small student population on St. Eustatius, where it is very difficult to offer course differentiation at the school level, leaving differentiation possibilities within one class.

The C-SEC exam consists of two parts: the Standard final and the school final. School finals are administered for several subjects, such as geography, physics, chemistry and biology. These exams are graded by the teachers using a set answer key. The CXC performs random checks of the corrections. Standard finals are administered in June and are corrected centrally by teams of teachers from throughout the region. Results are announced in August. Repeat examinations are administered in January for some subjects.⁴¹ Students who need passing grades on these exams in order to continue their education can be issued preliminary certificates.⁴²

The C-SEC exams administered in other Caribbean islands do not result in a diploma, but rather a certificate for each exam that is passed. The principal of the school in the relevant country can award a school diploma based on the certificates earned. Although this school diploma has no legal effect, Nuffic can evaluate an individual school diploma for the purposes of the student continuing his or her education in the Netherlands.⁴³ Several additional modules are being developed for Saba in order to ensure that the C-SEC diplomas at the level referred to above can be equated with HAVO diplomas. These English-language modules can be administered as school finals in addition to the CXC exam. These modules will be completed by students who wish to continue their education in the Netherlands.⁴⁴ Naturally, this would also be possible for St. Eustatius.

³⁹ Nuffic Country Module for Curaçao, St. Maarten and the BES Islands [*Nuffic Landenmodule Curaçao, St. Maarten en de BES-eilanden*], The Hague, 2013.

⁴⁰ OCW, May 28, 2014.

⁴¹ Repeat exams are administered in: biology, chemistry, English A, English B, human & social biology, information technology, mathematics, office administration, physics, principles of accounts, principles of business, social studies, and Spanish. Source: CXC, May 28, 2014.

⁴² Information provided by Dominic High School in Sint Maarten.

⁴³ Explanatory Memorandum to the Temporary Decree regarding the Saba Comprehensive School BES, <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/dossier/32419/stb-2013-323?resultIndex=0&sorttype=1&sortorder=4> (in Dutch).

⁴⁴ Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO/MBO and HAVO Departments at the Saba Comprehensive School, Education Inspectorate, October 25, 2013, page 8.

5.5 Customization for the vocational track

The research team has considered various possibilities for the vocational track based on the premise that the examination system will have to be flexible enough for the specific context of St. Eustatius while continuing to be geared to continuing education programs in the region and the European Netherlands.

In Saba, close consultation and cooperation with the Ministry of OCW resulted in a customized solution for students at the MBO level. During the latter years of the pre-vocational and vocational tracks, Saba Comprehensive School offers a combined course of study. The students will not be awarded a VMBO diploma, but will instead transfer to an MBO 2 program, at the end of which they will take their exams. The teachers at the Saba Comprehensive School used different qualification files to structure the courses for the three MBO programs.⁴⁵ These programs also include modules that were developed for the Jamaican Technical and Vocational Education and Training (“T-VET”) program.

According to the Inspectorate of Education, this type of education is comparable to the “VM2” (i.e. VMBO-MBO 2) tracks that were offered as pilot programs in the European Netherlands.⁴⁶ The VM2 track was developed because the transition from VMBO to MBO appears to be a critical step that a relatively large number of students are unable to make. The VM2 track offers students a continuous learning pathway that guides students directly to MBO 2 (basic vocational education) as soon as they complete their VMBO program. The development of this learning pathway was premised on the following principles:

- the qualification file for the vocational training pathway: four days at school and one day working at a job to acquire practical experience
- a single model comprising a single pedagogical-didactic concept
- a single team of VMBO and MBO teachers
- education at a single location.

The VM2 pilot program in the Netherlands showed positive effects, demonstrating that, under certain conditions, a continuous learning pathway is an opportunity-rich model for reducing the drop-out rate and more rapidly earning a basic qualification. The most important prerequisite proved to be unanimous and complete cooperation between the VMBO and MBO partners.⁴⁷

For St. Eustatius, this combination of VMBO and MBO programs would be a good solution for students who want to pursue their studies on the island and obtain a basic qualification. With a basic MBO 2 qualification, they can either look for a job or continue their studies in the Caribbean or in the Netherlands. This option offers the most leeway for customizing education while retaining accreditation. MBO 1 is a good alternative for students who cannot complete MBO 2. This program does not have a generic conclusion, but is instead tailored to each individual student.

⁴⁵ Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO/MBO and HAVO Departments at the Saba Comprehensive School, Education Inspectorate, October 25, 2013.

⁴⁶ Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO/MBO and HAVO Departments at the Saba Comprehensive School, Education Inspectorate, October 25, 2013, page 8.

⁴⁷ Letter from the Minister of and the Secretary of Education to the Chair of the Senate of the States-General regarding the Assessment of the VM2 experimental learning pathway [*Evaluatie experiment leerroute 'vm2'*], October 16, 2013.

5.6 Conclusion regarding the options

Based on the information above, the research team advises implementing English as the language of instruction and offering Dutch as a strong foreign language. The C-SEC exam of the CXC system can best be used for the general track (MAVO and HAVO level). For the vocational track, the team recommends a combined, English-language VMBO-MBO program customized to the local situation and directly linked to MBO 2. The MBO 1 program should still be available for students who cannot complete an MBO 2 program. This advice is detailed in the chapters that follow, with the transition being addressed last. In anticipation of structuring this transition, it should be noted that this advice recommends not just a change in language policy, but also a change in the broader educational system – particularly the secondary educational system. The research team considers this a chance to adopt an overall approach to resolving the problems within the educational system. It will require enormous efforts and thorough cooperation from all parties involved. The team recommends engaging external support for this endeavour, comprising both direction and substantive expertise.

6. Language

This chapter discusses the consequences the recommended option will have on how the educational system, including preschool education, handles English and Dutch. This regards all sectors of education. Chapter 7 provides more specific information on the consequences the changes would have for each sector of education.

6.1 English as the language of instruction

Continuous educational pathway

If English is chosen as the language of instruction, the team advises developing a continuous curriculum strand running from preschool education up to and including MBO and HAVO, divided into their respective levels and corresponding final exams. This must be based on the level of English that the students will have to achieve by the time they complete their education on the island. For most students, this will be level B1 of the European Framework, with HAVO students likely to be required to achieve level B2.

The development of the curriculum strand must take into account the various phases of the students' transition from Stavian English to Standard English. In practice, preschool children will primarily use Stavian English. This is not a problem, as the primary goal in this phase is for the children to hear Standard English and to be consistently addressed in that language. Children in this age range have not yet been introduced to the concepts of grammar. Standard English will be directly learned by using it, for example, when singing songs together, reading to the children, etc.

The children will probably also primarily use Stavian English in the classroom in the first years of elementary school. Because the schools must provide a safe environment, teachers will be expected to refrain from negatively responding to statements in Stavian English, but rather to consistently convert them into Standard English. Reading and writing will have to be taught in Standard English; it can reasonably be expected that this will improve the students' ability to speak Standard English. The continuous curriculum strand must offer a perspective on the level of English that students must achieve by the end of elementary school in order to transition to the various levels of secondary education. Based on this curriculum strand, an assessment can be made to determine whether the method being used at the elementary schools on St. Eustatius can be maintained, in which respect attention will also have to be devoted to examination schedules, examination tools and grading standards. Based on the discussions with the Language Work Group [*Taalwerkgroep*] it is expected that much of the existing materials will continue to be usable. If this method is maintained, the schools will have to make agreements regarding exactly how teachers will handle this method in light of the curriculum strand to be agreed upon.

“We need objective rules and guidelines if we want uniformity regarding what the children have to learn at which level.”

Source: Teacher in St. Eustatius, April 10, 2014

If English becomes the language of instruction, it will take the place Dutch currently holds in secondary education. This means that all lessons will be taught in English and that English will also be a separate subject. In practice, all teachers will have to teach consistently in Standard English, and the students will be expected to speak only Standard English (except, of course, during lessons in Dutch or other foreign languages). It is expected that the method – if it is only one method – that is currently used for English at the secondary level will have to be replaced with an English-language method that is consistent with a continuous curriculum strand.

Chapter 7 discusses the consequences that having English as the language of instruction will have for other subjects and the overall educational system.

Teachers

Many of the teachers are already using English in the classroom. This is a matter of policy at Buzzy Bees and in groups 1 to 4 of elementary school, and the teachers in the other classes use English to help students who have difficulty with Dutch. The information provided by the schools indicates that none of the current teachers speak Standard English as their native language. No requirements are currently imposed on the teachers (except for the English teachers, of course) regarding the required level of competence and variant of English used in the classroom. If English is implemented as the language of instruction, all of the teachers will have to teach consistently in Standard English, which means they will have to be proficient in that language themselves. The same will apply to the teachers at Buzzy Bees. The proficiency bar must be set high because teachers play a crucial role in their students' language development (and thus their chances of educational success).

Additional training

Before transitioning to English as the language of instruction, all teachers that are already employed will have to sufficiently master Standard English. A language expert will have to determine the requisite levels of proficiency. Consideration may be given to the following suggestions. For the teachers at Buzzy Bees, command of Standard English at the B2 level of the European Framework should be sufficient and feasible. Teachers of the general track in secondary education must have at least a C1 level of proficiency in Standard English. This level can be demonstrated by taking the Cambridge Advanced English Exam ("CAE").⁴⁸ The teachers must also be capable of teaching in English. Those who do not yet meet the requirements will have to undergo additional training during the first phase of the transitional period.

First Certificate in English:	Level B2
Certificate in Advanced English:	Level C1

All teachers will have to take oral and written placement exams before starting their additional training. There are various possibilities for organizing the courses. It would make sense to make the additional training part of the Maestro Kompas program, which is a program for the Caribbean Netherlands that is intended to work with regional educational institutions to arrive at a regional teacher training infrastructure. The program was developed at OCW's behest by the Education Faculty of the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht [*Hogeschool Utrecht*] and the Open University of the Netherlands [*Open Universiteit Nederland*]. Options can be explored under Maestro Kompas supervision regarding whether the English courses can be arranged with partners such as the universities of St. Maarten, Curaçao or Aruba or the Aruba Teacher Training College [*Instituto Pedagógico Arubano*]. There are also possibilities for forming other partnerships, including in the

⁴⁸ Preferably level C2 for the later years of the general track of secondary school, but there is some question as to whether this is feasible. C2-level proficiency is not often encountered in practice, but can be demonstrated by passing the Cambridge Proficiency in English Exam ("CPE").

region. While finding a suitable training provider should not present a problem, the following issues must be taken into account when selecting such a provider:

- The teachers are already undergoing additional training with regard to their qualifications and skills. This demands a great deal from them, both in terms of workload and with regard to their personal lives (most of the teachers are also mothers). They may also have to take several trainings on working with new methods. This is not to say that the English courses should be postponed, but rather that they should be scheduled taking the teachers' schedules into account, with school principals setting clear priorities. The research team noted a high level of teacher motivation during their interviews with elementary school teachers.

"Of course I will work for my children."

"Being a teacher means that you never stop learning, that's something you know going in."

Source: Teachers in St. Eustatius, April 10, 2014

- Since it is expected that many teachers will have to have additional training, the courses would obviously have to be given on St. Eustatius in collaboration with all five schools and Buzzy Bees.
- Particularly at the secondary level, teachers are contracted on a temporary basis (three-year contracts). There would be no point in providing additional training to teachers who are nearing the end of their contracts. If the school wishes to retain a teacher and wishes to offer him/her additional training for that purpose, the team advises the school to make an agreement with that teacher that he/she will continue to teach at the school for a certain period of time after completing his/her training, in default of which he/she will have to repay the costs associated with his/her training.

In addition to receiving additional language training, teachers in the general secondary track will also have to receive training in teaching under the CXC system. This brief course can be organized through the CXC, and does not involve a separate formal qualification.

Given the high attrition rate of teachers on St. Eustatius, and perhaps on the other Windward Islands as well, the research team advised making a joint assessment of the extent to which training in Standard English should be made a permanent part of teacher training in the Caribbean region of the Kingdom (see below). This has already been integrated into some Dutch teacher training programs.

Recruitment

The expectation is that new teachers will be able to be recruited more from the region than is currently the case, entailing the advantage that more teachers will be able to identify with Caribbean culture and communicate more easily with students, and vice versa. In terms of pedagogical background, their origin is often more consistent with the parenting culture the children experience at home. Another advantage is that there are a relatively large number of English-speaking teachers in the region, and that teachers on St. Eustatius have relatively good employment

benefits in comparison with other areas of the region. Well-trained teachers who also have a sufficient level of English might be recruited from Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica, for example. One risk of recruiting from the Caribbean region is that the teachers will not always have earned teaching certificates that are equivalent to Dutch teaching certificates. Under Dutch law, they would be considered unqualified and could not be hired. In connection with the Education Agenda, the Netherlands is currently paying for all current staff to obtain their teaching certificates, but that does not mean that new unqualified teachers should be hired. An exploratory study could be made to identify the problems with those trainings and assess how significant the material differences really are. In any case, it would seem an obvious choice to continue working with the universities in St. Maarten, Curaçao and Aruba, the Aruba Teacher Training College and Maestro Kompas. For example, a joint effort could be made to provide a way for English-speaking students in teaching training programs to undertake teaching positions on St. Eustatius, Saba and St. Maarten.

Recruitment from the Netherlands is certainly not excluded, since there are teacher training programs there that also train teachers to teach in English, usually in the context of bilingual education programs. There are also teachers who, perhaps through their experiences abroad, have acquired a B2- or C1-level of proficiency in English. Cultural sensitivity is an important factor in recruiting from the Netherlands. While there are of course teachers who are culturally sensitive, it must be kept in mind that not all of these teachers have an accurate picture of St. Eustatius before they depart for the island. Some of them will have difficulty making the transition, which could affect the class and the school as a whole. The team advises that teachers who are recruited from the Netherlands be given a frank explanation of what they can expect on St. Eustatius before they accept their appointments, and that they take a course in intercultural sensitivity either before departure or immediately upon arrival.

In all cases (except for those teachers who will teach Dutch), job descriptions should state the required level of English as a prerequisite to hiring. Proficiency in English should also be part of the teachers' performance reviews. The teachers' proficiency in English must not just be brought up to standard, it must be maintained.

6.2 Dutch as a strong foreign language

Continuous educational pathway

To its surprise, the research team discovered that there is no method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language that would be suitable for use with students in the Caribbean. In 2013 OCW did assign Splika⁴⁹ the task of developing a method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language in the Caribbean [*Nederlands als vreemde taal in het Caribisch gebied*] (i.e. a "NVTiC" program) with a transition program to be provided for the short term. The assignment, however, did not result in a program that is ready for use on St. Eustatius. The differences in the language situations in the three islands of the Caribbean Netherlands, as well as the differences in the methods and materials used and the needs to be met, played a role in this outcome. The Nederlandse Taalunie is currently assessing the usability (or potential usability) of the parts of the program that have actually been completed. In the meantime, the Ministry of OCW has requested several experts to work with local language teachers to develop vocabulary and reading comprehension modules for the schools on St. Eustatius. The teachers of all of the elementary schools will begin using these modules in August 2014. At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, the teachers will receive introductory training in

⁴⁹ SPLIKA stands for "Stimulá Papiamentu Literatura i Informashon riba Kultura di Antianan abou", or "Encouraging Papiamentu Literature and Information about Leeward Island Culture".

using the modules before these are introduced.⁵⁰ The Nederlandse Taalunie has been requested to supervise and monitor the implementation of these modules.

Partly based on the imminent advice of the Nederlandse Taalunie, the research team recommends that the Ministry of OCW draft an order as soon as possible regarding the development of a continuous educational pathway for Dutch as a foreign language based on the needs of the students on St. Eustatius (and, for reasons of scale, preferably for Saba, St. Maarten and the Leeward Islands as well). This must in any case constitute a continuous curriculum strand from preschool education through secondary education, split into different levels and their corresponding final examinations. Initially, a transition program and then a complete method can be developed based on this curriculum strand. (A transition program is required because the development of a complete method is expected to take at least two years.) This method must also include the establishment of a series of key targets for each educational sector (e.g. preschool, elementary, etc.) level of education and each phase of that sector, as well as a guideline regarding the number of hours that must be spent on Dutch in each sector if those targets are to be achieved.

Given that the key targets for Dutch as a foreign language have not been formulated yet, it is difficult for the team to describe how Dutch as a foreign language can be structured in practice. This will have to be left to experts in the fields of Dutch as a foreign language and curriculum development, and can be organized in partnership with those directly involved on St. Eustatius. In broad terms, the team advises starting with the level that the students must achieve by the time they complete secondary school and working backwards to the preceding years of secondary and elementary school and, if necessary, preschool. It is difficult for the research team to estimate the age at which students should begin being taught Dutch as a foreign language. On the one hand, young children learn new languages easily. On the other, because Standard English is not the native language of the children on St. Eustatius, it might be asking too much of them. We advise keeping these factors in mind when developing a curriculum strand for Dutch as a foreign language. This development process will have to estimate how effective it would be to familiarize young children with Dutch. In any case, Buzzy Bees will have to be involved in this process, since the teachers there have the most insight into the development of language skills in St. Eustatian children aged 0 to 4. Based on the interviews held with language experts, the research team expects that Dutch will have to be taught as a foreign language at both the elementary and secondary levels, a substantial number of hours being taught each week during regularly scheduled lessons.

Level and examinations

The students must achieve a B1 or B2 level of proficiency according to the European Framework in order to be able to transition to a Dutch-language MBO program (B1) or other higher education programs (B2) provided in Dutch. This will therefore have to be the premise for the development of both the curriculum strands and the examination methods.

There are various possibilities for administering examinations in Dutch as a foreign language at the end of secondary school, such as the Cambridge Certificate, which is also used in Saba. This is a generally accredited examination that can be administered at different levels. Another possibility would be the Certificate for Dutch as a Foreign Language [*Certificaat Nederlands als vreemde taal*]. This examination can be adapted to the students' needs and context. The pros and cons of both options will have to be investigated further while developing the curriculum strand for Dutch as a foreign language. In summary, the examinations for Dutch as a foreign language will not negatively affect the feasibility of this option.

⁵⁰ Report of a Written Consultation [*Verslag van een Schriftelijk Overleg*], Parliamentary Document [*Kamerstuk*] 31 568, no. 134, March 4, 2014.

Given the strong desire of the St. Eustatius population for the island's children to learn both English and Dutch, the research team advises requiring all students – except for those in practical education programs (“PrO”) – to take Dutch as a foreign language and to take a final exam in the subject. Naturally, the level of Dutch proficiency they must reach will correspond to the level of education they are receiving. In Saba, all vocational track and general track students take final examinations in Dutch. The former sit for a school final, the latter for the Cambridge examination. In the general track, Dutch holds a position that is equivalent to that of other subjects. They do not need to pass the test if they get enough passing grades in other subjects.⁵¹ However, students that fail their final exams in Dutch will have to be advised not to continue to a Dutch-language higher education program.

Teachers of Dutch as a foreign language

If Dutch is to be offered as a strong foreign language, we advise having it taught by specialized teachers who speak Dutch as a native language or have at least a B2+/C1 level of proficiency in Dutch. These teachers must be (or have been) trained in teaching Dutch as a foreign language. The team also advises assigning the teachers a role in developing the method (see below).

To the best of the research team's knowledge, there is no Dutch-language training available for learning to teach Dutch as a foreign language, although the Nederlandse Taalunie, among other training providers, offer modules/workshops in teaching Dutch as a foreign language. There also are programs and courses for learning to teach Dutch as a second language. One example is the post-HBO program in teaching Dutch as a second language offered by the Fontys Teacher-training College [*Fontys Lerarenopleiding*] in Tilburg, the dual masters course in Dutch as a second language at the University of Amsterdam, and various courses and workshops for teachers (and aspiring teachers) of Dutch as a second language offered by the University Language and Communication Centre [*Universitair Taal- en Communicatiecentrum*] in Nijmegen. There are also training programs for teachers of Dutch as a foreign language given in non-Dutch-speaking regions, but they are usually linked to a philology program in Germany or Wallonia (i.e. the French-speaking part of Belgium).⁵² Modules from these courses might be usable in an adapted form.

As a practical solution, the team proposes selecting several current teachers who have a good level of proficiency in Dutch and strong pedagogical-didactic skills and working with them to develop a curriculum strand for Dutch as a foreign language while simultaneously ascertaining which training they still need themselves. This will have to be done with specialized support, preferably with the involvement of the Nederlandse Taalunie. The continuity of this training must be sufficiently ensured because of the attrition rate for teachers, which is rather higher for teachers from the European Netherlands.

⁵¹ Information provided by the Saba Comprehensive School, April 28, 2014.

⁵² Overview from *Taalunieverse* [*Overzicht van Taalunieversum*], <http://snvt.taalunieversum.org/adressen/docentcursussen.html> (in Dutch).

7. Education

This chapter discusses the necessary changes to the educational system and teaching practice in the various sectors, based on the recommendation to implement English as the language of instruction, with Dutch as a strong foreign language.

7.1 Preschool education

The Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre uses the High Scope method (which is referred to as “Kaleidoscoop” in the European Netherlands). Because this is a well-developed program that can be used to improve children’s language skills, the research team advises that Buzzy Bees continue using the High Scope program to train its teachers. Buzzy Bees has an in-house trainer, so no additional measures will be needed. The management team is responsible for ensuring that the High Scope program is also applied properly in daily practice.

The High Scope system focuses on a smooth transition from preschool to elementary education. In this respect, the research team advises making good use of this in practice by having Buzzy Bees and the four schools make agreements on the method used and goals set in preschool education, particularly with regard to language, but also with regard to all areas of child development. In addition to system harmonization, a “warm transition” is also important.⁵³ This means that preschool teachers and elementary school teachers who teach group 1 will have to contact one another about the development and any special needs of students transitioning to elementary school. (This also applies to the transition from elementary to secondary school, and to that from secondary school to the MBO program.)

Not all of the young children on St. Eustatius attend Buzzy Bees. Ideally, all children would be exposed to Standard English from birth to age 4 and provided with stimulation to develop their language skills. The public entity could promote this, for example by increasing accessibility to preschool daycare (through subsidies). Another option that could be considered would be giving children the right to compulsory education as soon as they turn 3. We advise having those directly involved St. Eustatius and the ministries consult with one another to determine whether there are opportunities for better preparing children St. Eustatius for their transition to elementary education, including with regard to their language development, and in any case with regard to English.

7.2 Elementary education

In terms of the educational system, the recommendation to change the language of instruction will not have any serious consequences for elementary education. The most significant measures (in addition to providing the teachers with additional training) will be taken in the areas of curriculum strands and teaching methods for the other subjects. As is the case for English and Dutch, a single, continuous educational pathway for mathematics must be applied in the same way at all four elementary schools. This will have to be an English-language method. The research team does not know whether there is an English-language version of the recently implemented method “Alles Telt”. If this method is unavailable in English, or if it is not a good fit for the islands, the team expects there

⁵³ Advisory Report on Better Transitions in Education [*Advies Betere overgangen in het onderwijs, Onderwijsraad*], The Hague, 2005, <http://www.onderwijsraad.nl/upload/documents/publicaties/volledig/betere-overgangen-in-het-onderwijs.pdf>.

to be enough other English-language methods that would be suitable for the students on St. Eustatius.

Many of the materials for the other subjects are already in English. As a matter of practice, the schools collect materials originating from the United States and the Caribbean.⁵⁴ Continuous educational pathways will still need to be developed for any subjects for which these materials have not been collected. The research team advises having the four elementary schools jointly develop a complete and shared English-language curriculum with the support of an expert. Existing materials can also be incorporated into the curriculum, depending on their content and the goals that are set.

As described in Chapter 6, continuous educational pathways must be developed for both English and Dutch, and the same will be true at least for mathematics. The continuous educational pathways must offer a perspective on what the students must achieve by the end of elementary school in order to transition to the various levels of secondary education. Based on what they must ultimately achieve and the interim steps they take up to that level, students can be tested during elementary school in order to identify and try to remedy any deficits. The team advises involving the Inspectorate of Education in developing these graduation standards.

7.3 Secondary school and MBO

Section 4.3 discusses the recommended examination structure. This section explains what this will mean in practice in secondary education and in the MBO program. First, the proposed structure is set out below:

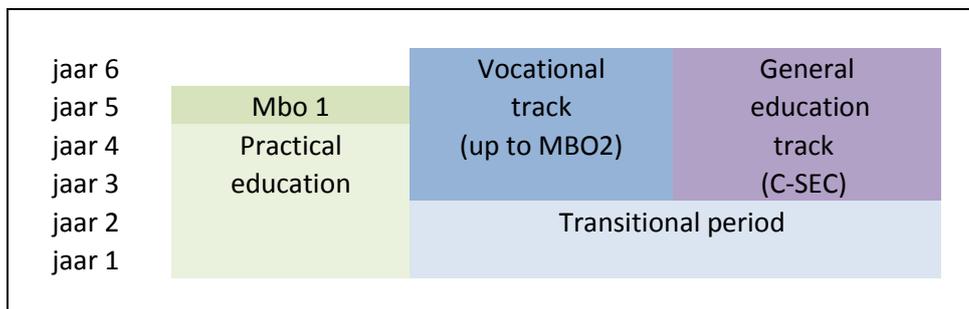


Figure 10. Proposed structure for secondary education

Practical education (“PrO”)

Practical education is intended for young people who are unable to obtain a diploma in a regular program. These students are “doers” rather than “thinkers”; it takes them longer to learn things than other people in their age group, and they need extra attention, structure, and care during the learning process. These students have below-average IQs and generally have significant deficits in language and mathematics by the time they leave elementary school. They are not expected to be able to earn a diploma in regular secondary school. A customized educational program must be offered to these students. Consideration may be given to offering them Dutch as a foreign language as an *elective*.

Transitional period [“brugperiode”]

To the extent permitted by the number of students, the school should try to divide incoming students into three parallel classes: one as the basis for vocational education, one as the basis for

⁵⁴ Information provided by the Education Inspectorate.

general education, and one combined class. An accurate assessment of the abilities of elementary students in group 8 will be necessary to making this division. This can be accomplished based on estimates provided by elementary school teachers and tests that can be developed within the continuous educational pathways. The students can switch tracks during the transitional period. After the second year of the transitional period, the students will follow either a vocational or general education program.

VMBO/MBO level

As indicated in section 5.5, the team recommends a combined VMBO/MBO program for the vocational track. This program will lead students from the basic vocational track and advanced vocational track to a basic educational training diploma (MBO 2). This track can be structured using what has already been developed for the VMBO and MBO programs on St. Eustatius, as well as for the track developed in Saba, and possibly what has been developed in St. Maarten as well.

We propose allowing the students in their third and fourth years (i.e. those who have completed the transitional period) to choose the sectors in which they will be more broadly educated. Determining how many sectors there will be and how they will be structured will depend on the number of students, the requirements of the job market and the possibilities available to the school. For those two years, the research team recommends devoting a great deal of attention to the practical subjects. Internships outside the school are also part of the program. At the end of their fourth year, the students can opt to follow a more specialized program at the MBO 2 level. This follow-up practical education will take an additional two years of schooling. An internship is also part of this program. The requirements for graduation will be set out in qualification files.

MAVO/HAVO level

As explained in section 5.4, the research team proposes using the CXC's Certificate of Secondary Education for the general education track (MAVO and HAVO levels). Depending on the level of education the students complete, they can then transition to continue their education in a program on a MBO 3 or MBO 4 level or an program on HBO level.

C-SEC is an examination system, not a program in itself. The countries that use the CXC exams are responsible for developing their own curricula. This can be done, however, using the syllabi the CXC makes available online for all subjects. Methods based on the CXC syllabi have been developed in the region and can be ordered from various publishers.⁵⁵ The team advises engaging expert assistance when developing the curriculum.

In addition to the regular CXC subjects and extra modules that have been developed for Saba, the team recommends developing extra modules for the students on St. Eustatius (and possibly for those on Saba and St. Maarten as well) that the students can take at the end of secondary school in order to prepare them to continue their education. Dutch modules will in any case have to be developed for students who wish to continue their education in Dutch-language MBO or HBO programs in the European Netherlands or the Leeward Islands. We recommend making this a part of the continuous educational pathway. This means that this module will be part of Dutch as a foreign language, with the students being offered the opportunity to take exams at a higher level than the students who have less need for proficiency in Dutch. This system will also harmonize well with the C-SEC system. Students who want to study in English-speaking countries will want these modules to focus on becoming more proficient in English. In addition, to prepare them for life off the island, all of the students will need modules that cover course and vocational orientation, social skills, and living independently (see also section 7.3). These modules can be concluded with a certificate to be issued by the school. This opportunity must also be available to students in the vocational track.

⁵⁵ Information provided by the Sint Maarten Examination Council.

In order to give the students a chance to complete all of these modules successfully, we advise retaining the six-year period for secondary education for the time being; this is already the case for the HAVO program, counting the transition class [“schakelklas”]. This would, for example, enable the students to take examinations in six subjects after five years. They could then take repeat exams (to achieve a higher grade) or take exams in additional subjects in their sixth year. They would also be able to use this extra time to complete the additional modules intended to prepare them to continue their education. It will be an *opportunity* for the students to take six years to complete their secondary education. Students who complete their subjects earlier and are prepared to continue their education will be able to obtain their diploma after five years.

Guidance counselling

As discussed in Chapter 9, which also deals with preparing students for continuing their education, particular attention needs to be paid to guidance counselling.

7.4 Adult education

Currently, the MBO program on St. Eustatius is actually an adult-education program. The team recommends that this “second opportunity to learn” be maintained. It is also important that adults be offered the opportunity to learn Standard English and Dutch and to further develop their own language skills, so that they can assist their children with their language development in their roles as parents and caregivers. The statutory foundation for this is set out in the Law on education and vocational education BES [*Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs BES*]. The responsibility for ensuring this lies first and foremost with the public entity.

7.5 Overarching

Transitioning to a new language policy and a new secondary educational system will demand a great deal from the schools on St. Eustatius. It is clear that this transition will not be the only challenge the schools will face. At the same time as the transition, they will be working to achieve all of the goals set out in the Education Agenda, which should be met by 2016. It is clear that these endeavours cannot be undertaken separately.

Special educational needs of students with language and other deficits

Chapters 2 and 3 refer to other extensive problems facing the school in addition to the language of instruction. A significant element of these problems are the students’ special educational needs. It appears that there is a relatively high number of special needs students at the schools, and their problems are relatively severe. For these students, it will not be enough simply to change the language of instruction. Without providing an in-depth description of the special education structure, we take this opportunity to draw the Ministry’s attention to several points that must be made with regard to students who have deficits for various reasons.

First, the research team notes that expertise is being engaged from a variety of fields, but the students do not always get the specific help they need. The researchers advise assigning responsibility for this to the teachers, many of whom have already acquired a degree of expertise in this respect, and providing them with the support to which they are entitled. An internal facilitator, remedial teacher, teacher’s assistant and other professionals can provide these students with as much help as possible within the classroom. In “A Study of the Support Provided to Students with Special Educational Needs on St. Eustatius” [*Onderzoek naar de ondersteuning van leerlingen met*

specifieke onderwijsbehoeften op Sint Eustatius] (Beek, 2013), the KPC Groep also recommends such joint efforts and the provision of support to students by teachers, parents and other service providers. If the help they get in class is insufficient for these students, the teacher and internal facilitator can indicate this and engage external assistance. It is important that a request for extra support be submitted to a single external expert, who will then draw up an action plan encompassing both diagnostics and the provision of the help/support. This action plan may also indicate the need for intervention in the student's situation outside of school, which is why the institutions that provide this support on St. Eustatius will have to develop intensive cooperative partnerships. It is important for both students and parents to have a single point of contact who can coordinate any additional experts that need to be engaged. These will in any case be experts from the Expertise Centre Education Care (ECE), the Centre for Youth and Family [*Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin*] ("CJG") and SKJ [*Sociale Kanstrajecten Jongeren*] New Challenge Foundation.

For the occasional students has special educational needs during elementary school and who cannot be adequately helped in the classroom, a partnership will have to be formed with ECE to arrange for help outside the classroom. At present, it is clear that both the students who need special education and those who do not are suffering because neither group gets the attention it needs. The KPC Groep study also notes that students will have to be provided with assistance outside the classroom context in some cases (Beek, 2013). This will have to be a joint undertaking on the part of all four elementary schools that is designed to provide support for students with severe learning disabilities or behavioural problems. These students must stay registered at their own schools, but must be temporarily relocated to another learning environment and be taught by other teachers and facilitators. These teachers and facilitators will also remain in the employ of their own schools. Students will only attend these special classes as long as they need them, after which they will return to their own schools. The research team received positive feedback on this concept regarding the possibilities for expanding students' opportunities during the interviews it conducted St. Eustatius.

"You can work together as schools."

"You have to show parents that it's going to work and explain how you're going to help their children."

Source: Teachers in St. Eustatius, April 10, 2014

Accommodations and ICT

In October 2012, the Minister of OCW and the island government signed amended master plans for improving school accommodations. Some projects have already been completed, such as the new construction of the Governor de Graaff School. A start has also been made with renovating the Golden Rock School and the Bethel Methodist School. The expansion of the Lynch Plantation SDA School and the renovation of the Gwendoline van Putten School are still in the planning stages. Obviously, if the research team's advice is adopted, the renovation of the Gwendoline van Putten School will have to take this advice into account, both with regard to the facilities needed for the vocational tracks and for the layout of the school, for example, in order to continue being able to offer the "second chance for education."

Adequate ICT can promote language development in both elementary and secondary school students. This will also be very important when it comes to offering Dutch as a strong foreign language. Currently, some teachers use ICT to teach their students, but no overall approach has been

developed in this regard. Some of those interviewed indicated that the Internet connection is primarily used, for example, to watch *Jeugdjournaal* (Dutch-language news for children and pre-teens) in the classroom. Others indicated that the connection was often too slow. A serious study of the use of ICT in education must entail an examination of four aspects: a vision for using ICT and the Internet, expertise on the part of school administrators and teachers, materials, and infrastructure. The benefit of providing instruction in English is that no materials would have to be developed, there are more than enough available. If the schools collectively decide to implement ICT as an integral part of the educational system, Kennisnet (public educational organization which supports and inspires Dutch primary, secondary and vocational institutions in the effective use of ict) can offer support with drafting a plan.⁵⁶

Organization

It will be important, both for the transition process and in everyday teaching practice, that everyone involved in providing education be clear about their role and responsibilities. School principals, in particular, will play an important role in the proposed transition process, since they are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the schools; the school boards perform their duties at a distance. A document describing the duties and powers of the administrators and the school board [*directiestatuut*] could help govern the relationship between these two groups.

The interviews indicated that, for approximately the last year, the elementary school principals have been meeting with one another on a regular basis. This began at the initiative of the elementary school coach. The principals are positive about these meetings, including because of the opportunity they offer to exchange experiences. The contact between the elementary schools and Buzzy Bees on the one side, and the Gwendoline van Putten School on the other, is less positive, and there is virtually no communication between these groups with regard to policy harmonization. The Interim Principal of the Gwendoline van Putten School has recently undertaken steps to improve this situation. In the context of the transition, the team absolutely recommends continuing these meetings, and intensifying them if possible (see also the sections on continuous educational pathways in Chapter 5).

The most important task the school boards will have in connection with the transition will be to support and assist the school management. It would be good if every school were to develop a vision and mission statement that included the new language policy, so that all of those directly involved with the school would know what they were trying to accomplish. There is a particular need for this at the Gwendoline van Putten School. The school board could take the initiative in this regard, but the actual “nuts and bolts” of the process will have to be undertaken school-wide.

The school boards will also have to manage the schools’ finances, because their failure to do so could jeopardize the transition process. Discussions are currently underway between the Ministry of OCW and the school boards, including with regard to improving the secondary schools’ financial policy. The research team emphasizes the importance of making sound agreements in this regard and also advises that the financial governance at the elementary schools be examined as well. It might be helpful to have a single administrative office handle all of the financial matters for the schools.

The Ministry of OCW has lofty ambitions for the Caribbean Netherlands and is taking an extremely active role on the three islands with regard to both staffing and investments. The situation the Ministry of OCW observed in 2008 was so grave that even the slightest improvement was a victory. The Ministry was intensively involved in the improvements that were needed (first through the facilities coordinator, and then through the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands [*Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland*] (“RCN”)). This involvement is still evident, particularly in relation to

⁵⁶ Interview with Kennisnet on May 13, 2014.

the Caribbean Netherlands Project Unit within the Ministry of OCW and RCN, which, from the perspective of the European Netherlands, is closely involved with the schools. The researchers believe that OCW's intensive involvement will be needed throughout the transitional period. In this respect, the researchers envisage primarily a supervisory role, also for RCN/OCW: the Ministry must – naturally, in partnership with the school boards and the island government – be ultimately responsible for supervising the transition process (see also Chapter 10).

8. Outside the School

While this study is about the language of instruction used in the educational system, the children's environment outside the school has at least as much impact on their language development and learning performance. This chapter therefore addresses those directly involved in the children's life outside of school who are in a position to support the children in developing their language skills and broader life skills.

Parents

A child's development is primarily the responsibility of his or her parents. As the article entitled "How to get the educational system to work for the St. Eustatius child: A pedagogical perspective" notes, parents are their children's first teachers (Molina, 2014). Children are born with an instinctive drive to learn, and it is up to their parents to contribute to their children's positive attitude about learning. Parents are also responsible for creating an environment that enables and motivates their children to learn. This might be done, for example, by providing them with educational toys and books, having conversations and discussions with them, going on excursions, and exploring nature. Children who grow up in an environment that teaches them that learning is a normal part of life perform better at school than children who receive less stimulation at home (Molina, 2014).

A positive parenting campaign was started on St. Eustatius in early 2013. The goal was to make the population aware that having questions about parenting is perfectly normal, to inform them where they could seek answers, and to communicate the basic principles of positive parenting to parents. This campaign was based on Triple P, the Positive Parenting Program (Kloosterboer, 2013). Turning uninvolved parents into involved parents continues to be a challenge. Another difficult situation is that while parents who have questions or problems sometimes prefer to seek out someone outside their social circle, people from outside the island often have trouble understanding these parents' background and culture.

Community

Everyone knows that many children do not grow up in a stimulating and healthy environment. This can create tension for children that affects their development. Children who do not have a safe home environment need attention from other adults in the community (Molina, 2014). The researchers learned from their interviews that this has become increasingly difficult to achieve in recent years, because the community is becoming ever more individualized. Professional organizations such as CJG or ECE, however, cannot undertake tasks that rightfully belong to the community. It remains important that children and young people have access to a safety net in the community, and have people in their environment who are willing to work with them and act as their role models.

After-school program and activities

Because many adults are away from home in the daytime, children are often left to their own devices after school. Because both the adults and the children the research team interviewed indicated that this causes problems, an educational after-school program is desirable. The educational aspects need not necessarily or exclusively involve cognitive/intellectual tasks; creative activities or sports can also contribute to positive child development, as can help with their homework.

The interviews yielded a variety of opinions regarding activities for young people. Some indicated that there was nothing for young people to do, while others indicated that there was plenty to do for such a small island. The research team noted that various types of after-school programs and youth activity programs are available on the island.

Children aged 7 to 12 can go to the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre after school starting at 12.30 p.m. Approximately 56 children in this age group avail themselves of this opportunity, for which Buzzy Bees receives a contribution from the local government. Parents pay USD 100 per month for the after-school program at Buzzy Bees.⁵⁷

The Mega D Foundation also offers an after-school program consisting of recreational activities and help with homework. A professional teacher is involved with this program, with an average of 20 children aged 4 to 13 who attend after school. The children are also fed. The parents pay a contribution of USD 30 per month. The Mega D Foundation was established through donations and volunteer work, and now receives a subsidy.⁵⁸

Churches also organize various activities for young people. Other organizations also undertake initiatives, such as the youth projects organized by the St. Eustatius Historical Foundation.

The research team's conclusion is that it is important that attention be focused on providing after-school programs and that these be made available to as many young people as possible. With regard to help with homework, the question is the extent to which this task should be left to privately owned organizations that offer after-school programs, or whether it should be undertaken by the Gwendoline van Putten School by making it a standard part of the schedule and providing supervision by teachers from the school. The school could provide for this in its duty roster and, if necessary, make agreements for this program with the public entity.

Television

Television can also help children develop their language skills. Studies performed in Sweden and the United States show that viewing behaviour can positively affect student performance at both the elementary and secondary levels. There are multiple studies showing that children who watch *Sesame Street* have larger vocabularies and develop language faster. Even when taking account of factors such as their parents' level of education, television can still be credited for some of a child's progress at school. The positive impact responsible television viewing has on language development is most obvious in children between the ages of 2 and 6. Naturally, age is not the only factor; the type of programs a child watches can also make a big difference. Television can help children learn a standard language in addition to a dialect. It is important that children hear a standard language at a young age so that they command that language to some degree by the time they go to school. Television is often the only source for standard language a child has, because they only hear a dialect spoken at home or in their immediate environment. Finally, television can contribute to development of proficiency in a foreign language. Research in Flanders (i.e. the Flemish-speaking portion of Belgium) and the Netherlands has shown that watching programs in another language – with or without subtitles – results in the implicit acquisition of vocabulary in that language.

Of course, verbal interaction with a parent or other adult is orders of magnitude more important than watching television, as this is how children learn to converse and actively use new words. A child must develop socially, learn to play with friends, develop motor skills, play with blocks, etc. Television is a tool, not a "miracle solution".⁵⁹ Where possible, schools can play a role in recommending and selecting programs that are educational for children.

⁵⁷ Interview with Buzzy Bees on February 25, 2014.

⁵⁸ Letter dated June 22, 2012, from the Minister of SZW to the Chair of the Senate of the State-General regarding Commitments of the General Consultation regarding the Caribbean Netherlands on January 30, 2012 [*Toezeggingen algemeen overleg Caribisch Nederland 30 januari 2012*].

⁵⁹ "Television promotes language development in children" [*Televisie bevordert taalontwikkeling van kinderen*], Journal of Language and Language Policy [*Tijdschrift over taal en taalbeleid*], Professor Wouter Duyck, March 8, 2009, <http://taalschrift.org/reportage/004442.html> (in Dutch).

Library

St. Eustatius has a public library, the Gertrude Judson Bicentennial Public Library. Information provided by the library in 2011 indicates that, despite having done their best over the years with their limited means, the libraries in the Caribbean Netherlands are generally substandard in terms of accommodations, collection, services and qualified staff. The buildings are in dire need of maintenance, the collections are in urgent need of updating, and the staff often lacks the qualifications and means necessary to be able to offer services that meet the needs and wishes of the target group. For example, a card catalogue is still used on all of the islands.⁶⁰ In 2012, the Ministry of OCW granted the library on St. Eustatius a subsidy of USD 208,500 to remedy this situation.



*Children at the library on St. Eustatius
Source: Research team, April 2014*

St. Eustatius also has a Temateka for parents and children aged 0 to 7. A Temateka is comparable to a library and is intended to allow parents to familiarize their children with various topics and themes through play. Parents can borrow boxes of games and toys with various themes for a period of up to one month. Parents who are members of the system are taught how to make efficient and effective use of the contents of the boxes. This system is the result of a partnership formed by CJG, the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre and the St. Eustatius Public Library, with the two Temateka staff members being both teachers and assistant librarians.⁶¹

The team advises involving both the library and the Temateka in helping the children and young people on St. Eustatius improve both their English and Dutch. Close cooperation with the schools and Buzzy Bees would seem to be an obvious choice.

⁶⁰ Letter dated January 3, 2011, from Ms. Petra Ploeg, Head Librarian at the Public Library in St. Eustatius, the Caribbean Netherlands, to the Members of the Standing Committee for Kingdom Relations, Education, Culture and Science http://www.debibliotheeken.nl/fileadmin/documenten/diversen/Brief_Bibliotheekwerk_Caribisch_Nederland_aan_Vaste_Kamercommissie_s.pdf (in Dutch).

⁶¹ St. Eustatius Center for Youth and Family introduces the Temateka [*Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin Sint-Eustatius introduceert Temateka*], RCN, <https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/nieuws/centrum-voor-jeugd-en-gezin-sint-eustatius-introduceert-temateka> (in Dutch).

9. Possibilities for Progress to Education outside St. Eustatius and Future Prospects

This advisory report is based on the assumption that the students will be taught using English as the language of instruction, with Dutch as a strong foreign language, and that, because of the implementation of the proposed new educational system, students will be better prepared and more successful in continuing their education, both in the Netherlands and in the region. This assumption is endorsed by the Nederlandse Taalunie, which expects the level of proficiency that students will be able to achieve in Dutch as a foreign language to exceed the level they now achieve with Dutch as the language of instruction.

9.1 Dutch-language education outside St. Eustatius

Both students and their parents have a compelling desire to be able to move on to secondary or tertiary education in the European Netherlands or the Leeward Islands. They generally have a positive image of the education available in the Netherlands (high quality) and associate the Netherlands with opportunities. Information provided by the Gwendoline van Putten School shows that, over the last three years, nearly all students who continue their studies choose to do so in a Dutch-language program. Of the 77 students who entered a post-secondary education program, 51 entered a Dutch-language MBO program (26 of these studying in the European Netherlands) and 26 entered a Dutch-language HBO program (21 of these studying in the European Netherlands).⁶² The information provided by DUO regarding a longer period of time painted a similar picture.

“The Netherlands is rough. You have to be mentally prepared to handle the Netherlands. It’s every man for himself.”

Source: Statian student in the Netherlands, May 29, 2014

Although there is little data available based on which the academic success of Statian students can be measured, the information on the academic success rate of students from the former Dutch Antilles and Aruba indicates that many of these students fail in their endeavour to continue their education. For example, 25% of the Antillean and Aruban students who entered Dutch-language HBO programs left without a diploma after studying for three years. The failure rate was as high as 37% for students who entered an HBO program from an MBO program.⁶³ The researchers do not have any data regarding, specifically, Statian students, but based on the interviews, we must conclude that, on average, they are unlikely to escape the same deficits and failures. This assessment is confirmed by the S4 Foundation, which offers guidance to students from St. Maarten and the Caribbean Netherlands who study in the European Netherlands, and by the Curaçao Student Financial Aid

⁶² The figures in this section were provided by the Gwendoline van Putten School on May 8, 2014.

⁶³ These data relate to students who started their HBO programs in 2009 (the most recent figures). Statistics Netherlands, Statline, April 3, 2013.

Foundation [*Stichting Studiefinanciering Curaçao*], which has past experience with guiding Statian students.

As indicated in section 5.4, students who obtain a C-SEC diploma can transfer to a suitable level in a Dutch-language MBO or HBO program. Dutch HBO institutions do not impose any requirements with regard to Dutch, but some do administer a language test, which is generally used to remedy any language deficits. The reference levels apply to VMBO and MBO programs in the European Netherlands, which means that by the time they complete their VMBO program, students must have a level 2F (B1+) level of proficiency in Dutch, and that this level of proficiency must be maintained throughout their MBO program. The extra modules proposed in section 7.3 should enable students to achieve the requisite levels. In order to make it easier to transfer from one type of school to another, many regional education centres [*ROCs*] and HBO institutions offer summer courses that offer students additional training or support with language and mathematics.

9.2 English-language education outside St. Eustatius

Very few students from St. Eustatius continue their studies in the region or the United States or in English-language programs in the Netherlands. The opportunity to do so will increase if Standard English becomes the language of instruction.

Students from St. Maarten generally opt to follow English-language HBO programs in the Netherlands, such as the hotel management programs offered in Apeldoorn and Leeuwarden. There are plenty of English-language HBO programs available in the Netherlands. There are fewer English-language MBO programs available, with 19 programs being offered at the MBO 4 level and only one being offered at the MBO 3 level. The offerings at the MBO 4 level are varied, including for example International Hotel Management, International Business Studies (also offered at the MBO 3 level), Interactive Media Design, Business & Fashion, and International Marketing & Communication.⁶⁴

There are also opportunities for English-language programs on other islands in the Caribbean. For example, the University of Curaçao offers an English-language program in Business Administration/Accountancy taught by the Social Economics Faculty. The University of Aruba offers an English-language bachelor's program in International Tourism Management and a masters program in International Tourism & Business.

The research team requested information from Nuffic regarding the educational institutions in the region, such as the University of the West Indies, Barbados Community College, the Caribbean Polytechnic Institute in Jamaica, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic in Barbados, and the International University of Nursing in St. Kitts. While Nuffic was able to provide general information about these institutions, the research team does not have the expertise to establish whether the programs offered by these institutions are accredited and whether students who wish to study there would be eligible for financial aid. If students from St. Eustatius would like to attend one of these institutions, the team recommends having Nuffic investigate these issues.

It became clear during this study that there is a great deal of uncertainty and lack of clarity regarding the issue of eligibility for financial aid for students who wish to continue their education in the region or in the United States, but these options do indeed exist. A student from the Caribbean Netherlands can receive the same amount in financial aid to study in the United States that he or she would

⁶⁴ Overview of schools with foreign students and English-language programs, MBO Council [*MBO-Raad*].

receive to study in the European Netherlands. Students who wish to study at the MBO 3, MBO 4 or HBO level in the United States are entitled to receive a performance-linked grant and a student loan. Students who study at the MBO 1 or MBO 2 level receive a gift and a loan.⁶⁵ Students who wish to study in the United States must take into account that tuition costs are often high, that they must often pass entrance examinations, and that there are costs associated with a visa and similar documents. On the other side of the coin, scholarships are sometimes available. Both Nuffic and the Fulbright Centre can provide students with information on these topics.

9.3 Preparation and guidance

The interviews with both the St. Maarten Student Support Services (S4)⁶⁶ and the Curaçao Student Financial Aid Foundation, as well as the interviews with Stavian students, revealed that many students have a very difficult time making their way in the Netherlands. Although the language barrier plays a role in these difficulties, it is not the sole cause. Secondary and tertiary education programs in the Netherlands require a high degree of self-motivation, and students must take responsibility for their own learning process. For many Caribbean students, this transition is overwhelming. The change in their personal lives is also enormous; whereas on the island they were always surrounded by family and friends, in the Netherlands they are on their own. Many students have trouble bridging the gap between Stavian and Dutch culture, and students from St. Eustatius seem to have a much harder time with this than students from, for example, St. Maarten and Curaçao.

The problem often begins when the students select a program. The researchers noted that students on St. Eustatius know at a very young age which country they want to study in, and sometimes already decide on a program. The student-guidance organizations, however, note that these choices are often made without thoroughly considering them. Many students have an inaccurate impression of what the programs entail and what will be expected of them. Many students lag being in their studies, often due to changing their major in their first year, and, as noted above, the drop-out rate is high.

The researchers recommend strengthening guidance counselling at the Gwendoline van Putten School. This should not be a “side job” for one of the teachers, but the main job the teacher has. The guidance counsellor must be well informed about study opportunities, both in the European Netherlands and the region and in the United States. He or she must also be well versed in financial aid opportunities. This information must be made permanently available at the school and students and parents should be able to access it easily through the guidance counsellor. It would be wise for the guidance counsellor to work with his or her counterparts at the schools in Saba and St. Maarten, and perhaps those at the schools in the Leeward Islands as well, in order to keep this information complete and updated and available (perhaps also online). The guidance counsellor must maintain good contact with RCN/DUO and organizations such as Studiekeuzecheck, Nuffic and the Fulbright Centre,⁶⁷ also in order to ensure that the information provided is complete and up to date and that it is suitable to the students’ needs.

⁶⁵ Report of written consultations dated March 3, 2014, regarding the letter dated November 29, regarding the Assessment of the Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands 2012/2013.

⁶⁶ S4 provides guidance to students from St. Maarten as well as to those from the Caribbean Netherlands.

⁶⁷ The Fulbright Center provides information on education and research in the United States and offers scholarships in specific cases.

As indicated in section 7.3, the research team advises offering students who wish to study off the island intensive preparation for this endeavour at the end of their secondary school careers. This preparation should consist of, first, intensive training in the language of the country where they wish to study, i.e. Dutch or English. Second, the students must be trained in the skills they will need both in their studies and in their day-to-day lives. This guidance can continue to be provided by S4 once they are in the Netherlands. The team advises arranging to have a program developed that will cover the period from the last phase of secondary school up through the students' receipt of guidance in the European Netherlands. This issue must be examined in partnership with the Leeward Islands to determine the extent to which such guidance is available there or whether a program can be established for that purpose.

10. Transition

10.1 Basic premises

The transition must be accomplished as quickly as possible in order to be able to give current students the chance to be offered a curriculum that will give them a better chance of successfully completing their education. This means that the Ministry of OCW, the public entity, the school boards, the administrators, the teachers and all other professionals involved will have to use the 2014-2015 school year to make all of the necessary preparations for the transition. This will enable the first students to start under the new system in September 2015. It is more important to provide continuity for students who are already in secondary school so they can finish their examinations under the current system.

10.2 Approach

Before the transition can be made to English as the language of instruction with Dutch as a strong foreign language, the following actions will have to be taken:

- A. Prepare a detailed action plan and appoint a coordinator
- B. Develop a method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language
- C. Provide teachers with additional training in English
- D. Develop curricula for elementary education, secondary education, and the MBO program, as well as the design the customized vocational track
- E. Develop a program for graduates leaving the island

In addition, remedial lessons will have to be provided to the student cohorts who will continue to follow the current system.

A. Prepare a detailed action plan and appoint a coordinator

Clarity and structure are the most important things for students and, indirectly, for those around them, including their teachers. Children should never be given the impression that they are being used as guinea pigs. This means that all of the teachers and facilitators will need to have a clear picture of what they must do, and they must receive guidance in this respect. One of the premises for the transition process is that all of those directly involved must work together as partners. It will be a single chain made up of many different links, and every link must stay connected to the others. Another premise is that, while the expertise available on the island should be utilized, substantive external support will also be needed. The deployment of external experts will be accomplished in close consultation between all of the partners.

The most pressing need for substantive support will regard curriculum development, which will serve as the basis for developing the continuous educational pathways for Dutch and English, as well as for the other subjects. These curricula will be continuous and applied from preschool up through the end of secondary school and the MBO program. Exams and tests can also be chosen or developed based on those continuous educational pathways. The curricula can be used as a basis for choosing materials, but also for determining the requisite teacher training levels. Naturally, specific expertise

will be needed with regard to some aspects, particularly the method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language and providing additional teacher training.

In practice, it will probably not be possible to find one single curriculum developer that has expertise in all educational sectors and sufficient qualifications to coordinate the entire process. Ideally, the coordinator will stay on St. Eustatius for at least three years to coordinate and supervise all of the activities during the most critical phase of the transition process. A practical solution to this situation will have to be found, for example, by hiring one curriculum developer for elementary education who can also coordinate the entire transition locally, and one curriculum developer for secondary education who can also travel to St. Eustatius for short periods of time to offer the professionals on-site support.

The coordinator will have to be accountable to the Ministry of OCW, which will have to remain in close contact with the school boards, the public entity and the other parties who are directly involved to ensure that they are all meeting their individual responsibilities. The coordinator will also be responsible for keeping in touch and partnering with the other islands, because such partnerships will benefit all concerned. Partnerships with Saba and St. Maarten are very obvious choices, both in terms of the exchange of knowledge and the benefits of scale that can be achieved. Partnerships with the Leeward Islands should also be considered, however, perhaps with regard to developing a method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language and the additional training the teachers will need. The parties must be vigilant, however, in ensuring that the partnerships do not delay the transition on St. Eustatius.

The following schedule is being proposed for the transition process:

September 2014	Draft action plan for the transition process and job description(s) completed
October 2014	Coordination with all parties involved
November 2014	Contract(s) awarded

B. Develop a method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language

As indicated in section 5.2, a continuous educational pathway for Dutch as a foreign language that includes final and interim goals must first be developed. A teaching method can then be developed based on this curriculum strand. Because it will probably take more than one school year to develop this method, the team advises starting the process by developing a transition program. The method can be developed in the meantime in multi-year phase for clusters of school groups. For example, at the same time the methods developed for group 1, group 5 and the transition class are being taught, the methods can be developed for the next years in those clusters – group 2, group 6 and the second year of secondary school.

Given that the Nederlandse Taalunie has already been engaged to advise the State Secretary of Education about what will be needed to devise a suitable manner of offering Dutch as a foreign language in the Caribbean, engaging the Nederlandse Taalunie for this part of the process would seem an obvious choice. It would also seem logical for the SLO National Curriculum Development Expertise Centre [*SLO nationaal expertisecentrum leerplanontwikkeling*] (“SLO”) to play a role, given its expertise and its current involvement in developing a curriculum for Saba, as well as the fact that it has already been in contact with the Gwendoline van Putten School (see below). Local expertise can also be utilized, expanding and supporting it when necessary. Teacher schedules must allot them the time they need to work on curriculum development.

The following schedule, which is based on information provided by SLO, might be considered:

November 2014	Contract awarded
January 2015	Continuous educational pathway completed
June 2015	Transition program for Dutch as a foreign language delivered
June 2015	Dutch teachers trained in the principles of, and transitional program regarding, teaching Dutch as a foreign language
September 2015	Transitional program regarding Dutch as a foreign language implemented in all elementary schools and in the transitional class in secondary school
April 2016	Final method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language delivered for group 1, group 5, and the first year of secondary school
June 2016	Dutch teachers trained in the method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language for group 1, group 5, and the first year of secondary school
September 2016	Method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language implemented in group 1, group 5, and the first year of secondary school
April 2017	Final method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language delivered for group 2, group 6, and the second year of secondary school
June 2017	Dutch teachers trained in the method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language for group 2, group 6, and the second year of secondary school
September 2017	Method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language implemented for group 2, group 6, and the second year of secondary school
	Et cetera
September 2019	Method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language implemented throughout elementary educational system
September 2021	Method of teaching Dutch as a foreign language implemented throughout secondary educational system and the MBO program

C. Provide teachers with additional training in English

Section 5.1 discusses the need to provide teachers with additional training to increase their proficiency in English. Given the current difficulty in assessing how many teachers need training and how much training they need, the team provides only a few brief comments regarding organization and scheduling.

In recent years, a great deal of effort has been made to offer teachers training, both in terms of their qualifications and in terms of maintaining their teaching skills. The teacher training infrastructure has been fairly arranged, with Maestro Kompas providing the training and partnerships having been formed with educational institutions in St. Maarten, Curaçao and Aruba. The team advises utilizing this structure in training the teachers, including the experience Buzzy Bees has acquired with regard to teacher training. The team recommends providing collective and centralized training on St. Eustatius.

If the teachers are divided into groups, the first groups trained will have to be those who teach preschool, elementary school, and the transitional class, since they will be the first professionals to have to deal with the transition (see section 9.3). Another issue requiring attention with regard to

training in English is ensuring that the teachers are allotted enough time for that training (the same goes for allotting them time for training in the new curriculum, see below).

The school boards will be responsible for ensuring that any new teachers recruited meet these new requirements. This can be done using the same test that was used for the baseline survey [*nulmeting*]. If the teachers do not satisfy these requirements – which is eminently conceivable, given that teachers from both the Netherlands and the region have difficulty with Standard English – the school board will also be responsible for offering those teachers a training program.

The team advises taking the following steps:

No later than November 2014	Contract awarded
February 2015	Placement exams for all teachers at the schools and Buzzy Bees, including an inventory of all contracts (keeping in mind that the parties must agree on a certain period for the teacher to remain employed after receiving additional training)
June 2015	Program of additional training developed
2015-2016 school year	Additional training completed
September 2016	All teachers satisfy the prerequisite proficiency level
	Teaching skills trainings and training of new teachers continues

D. Develop a curriculum and design a trade-oriented track

As indicated in Chapter 6, the transition to English as the language of instruction entails that the curriculum will also have to be in English. This will not involve developing English-language methods and materials (these are readily available), but forming a curriculum made up of those readily available methods and materials. This process must begin with formulating continuous educational pathways, first with a rough version covering the students' entire academic careers, and then refining it for each year of school.

The curriculum developer can establish four task groups on St. Eustatius:

- first years of elementary school (harmonized with the end of preschool)
- later years of elementary school
- general secondary education track
- practical education, trade-oriented secondary education track, and the MBO program.

The VMBO/MBO group will also work on structuring the combined vocational track discussed in section 5.5. Teacher schedules must allot them the time they need to work on curriculum development.

Based on an estimate prepared by SLO, the team expects that the curricula for the entire educational system on St. Eustatius can be completed in two years. The groups will be able to ascertain whether transitional programs will be needed as they do their preparation work.

The team advises taking the following steps:

November 2014	Contract awarded
June 2015	If necessary: transitional programs delivered
June 2015	If necessary: teachers trained in transitional programs

September 2015	If necessary: transitional programs implemented
May 2016	Curriculum with new methods and materials delivered
June 2016	Teachers trained in new methods
September 2016	New curriculum implemented

E. Develop a program for graduates leaving the island

Leaving aside the transition regarding the language of instruction, the team also recommends taking steps as soon as possible to begin developing a program for graduates leaving the island. The students who are currently being educated in Dutch at the Gwendoline van Putten School will also need extra support both with regard to their proficiency in Dutch and with regard to the acquisition of personal skills. The school will have to improvise until these issues are included in the curriculum. Given that no one has been specifically assigned responsibility for this, no timeframe has been set yet. The team advises including this issue in the aforementioned action plan, in consultation with those directly involved on St. Eustatius, the European Netherlands, and possibly the other islands.

10.3 From the students' perspective

The next school year (2014-2015) will be used to prepare for the transition, which means that the first students will be educated under the new system in September 2015. These will be the students in groups 1 through 8 of elementary school and in year 1 of secondary school. Development has not yet been completed for all of these groups. This will be done year by year. The goals to be achieved and the transitional programs will largely have been developed by then, and the teachers will have begun their additional training.

One alternative would be to start with the first years and group 5 of the elementary schools, but that would mean postponing implementation at the secondary school level or making it necessary to work with a dual system for several years. The research team considers both these options to be less desirable than one in which groups 6 through 8 start learning under a program which, while it may be incomplete, will definitely prepare the students for English-language secondary education.

A table illustrating the transition is provided below. In September 2015, students in preschool day care, elementary school and first year of secondary school will start the new system. The students will evolve along with the system until they are all being taught under the new system in the 2020-2021 school year (green). The students in years 2 through 6 of secondary school will continue to be educated under the current system until they graduate (blue).

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Preschool	O	O	O	O	O	O
Group 1	A	O	O	O	O	O
Group 2	B	A	O	O	O	O
Group 3	C	B	A	O	O	O
Group 4	D	C	B	A	O	O
Group 5	E	D	C	B	A	O
Group 6	F	E	D	C	B	A
Group 7	G	F	E	D	C	B
Group 8	H	G	F	E	D	C
Year 1	I	H	G	F	E	E
Year 2	J	I	H	G	F	F
Year 3	K	J	I	H	G	G
Year 4	L	K	J	I	H	H
Year 5	M	L	K	J	I	I
Year 6	N	M	L	K	J	J

Figure 11. Transition table: green = new system, blue = current system

Groups 1 through 8 are in elementary school.

Years 1 through 6 are in secondary school and in the combined VMBO-MBO program.

The children that enter preschool day care or elementary school in September 2015 will be the first students educated under the new system. This means that the children starting preschool day care in the 2015-2016 school year will have to be spoken to in Standard English as much as possible, and consistently beginning with the 2016-2017 school year.

The children in all groups of the elementary schools will receive lessons taught in Standard English, to the extent possible in the 2015-2016 school year and consistently beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, and they will (to the extent the continuous educational pathway has been developed by then) be offered Dutch as a strong foreign language. This means that, for the elementary schools, the transition will take place all at once, and that while the children in the higher groups will have to make a change, this is not expected to cause significant problems because it will be easier for them to follow lessons given in English and most of them have been exposed to Dutch enough to be able to study it as a foreign language.

The students who will begin their first year of secondary school in September 2015 will also start under the new system. They will undergo the same change as the older elementary school students. The expectation is that it will be easier for them to follow lessons with English rather than Dutch and that they will have learned enough Dutch to study it as a foreign language.

Because the change would be too radical for the students who are already in secondary school, the team advises maintaining the current system for them until they complete their education. Regardless of how the transition proceeds, many students will need extra help. Consideration might be given, in any case, to after-school programs similar to those currently offered to elementary school students. A summer school program could also be organized, perhaps with the assistance of trainee teachers from the European Netherlands or elsewhere in the Caribbean.

One of the risks associated with the transition is that the reference levels for language and mathematics will have to be implemented in the 2014-2015 school year (initially only at the secondary level), including in the Caribbean Netherlands. The Ministry of OCW has requested the Nederlandse Taalunie to submit an advisory report on how the reference framework can best be

handled in the Caribbean Netherlands. The Ministry of OCW has not yet announced what decision will be made based on this advisory report.

10.4 Financing

It must be noted at the outset that the current level of educational effectiveness on St. Eustatius is unacceptably low. The system now being used simply does not work for most of the students. The team does not expect a system in which English is the language of instruction and Dutch is offered as a strong foreign language to differ much from the current system in terms of costs. In this respect, the research team assumes that the budget for six years of secondary education (five years of HAVO plus the transitional class) will be maintained. Naturally, extra investments will be required in the transition phase. However, part of these investments (such as those relating to curriculum development and the development of a method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language) would also have been necessary even if the current system were to be continued. In addition, the method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language will not be developed exclusively for St. Eustatius. Moreover, the researchers expect that teachers can be deployed more effectively and that additional benefits can be achieved in connection with the schools' mutual cooperation.

The order for the study specifically requested a comparison of the investments necessary for the (Dutch-language) education offered in the past with those for the education to be offered in the future. The research team's conclusion in this respect is that the investments that have already been made in the context of the Education Agenda can still be utilized even if English is chosen as the language of instruction. This topic was discussed with such organizations as Maestro Kompas, which is the organization responsible for training the teachers who must upgrade their qualifications. According to Maestro Kompas, these trainings will not go to waste even if the transition to English as the language of instruction and the CXC examination system is made. The teachers who will soon receive their teaching qualifications will retain them under the new educational system as well, although, along with all of the other teachers, their proficiency in English will have to be ascertained and they will have to receive additional training as needed. As far as the investments in accommodations are concerned, the research team has established that the renovation of the Gwendoline van Putten School has not yet begun. Nothing will be lost, since this means that the proposed new educational system can be incorporated as much as possible into the renovation plans. Other investments, such as those relating to the school coach, the school board coach and the teaching coach, as well as special needs care, must be viewed separately from the costs relating to the choice of a language of instruction, and the effects of these actions are unlikely to be impacted by a decision to implement a different language of instruction. Some of the investments in Dutch-language methods, materials and tests would have to be written off sooner than expected, however. The research team has not explored the extent to which the tests could still be used in Bonaire, for example.

Below, the research team discusses the various cost items without assigning them an exact amount. The estimated amounts will be provided to the Ministry, but they will not be made public in the interests of safeguarding competition.

A. Coordination

As indicated in section 9.2, the preference would be to have a coordinator continuously present on St. Eustatius to supervise the entire transition process, at least for the first three years. This will not be a full-time job. It would be preferable to combine this position with one of the other positions

listed below, as well as another position on the island, with the coordinator spending perhaps two days per week on the transition process. A position at grade 13 should be considered.

B. Dutch as a foreign language

The Nederlandse Taalunie is currently dealing with the question of what will be needed to provide an adequate curriculum for Dutch as a foreign language in the Caribbean. A cost estimate will have to be prepared based on the advice. In this respect, the program will not be developed just for St. Eustatius, but for the other islands as well, which will result in a benefit of scale.

C. Additional training for teachers to acquire proficiency in Standard English

A substantial cost item will be training the teachers so they can acquire a good command of Standard English. The research team does not know how many teachers will have to receive additional training. We have nevertheless made an estimate based on several prudent assumptions.

We assume that most of the teachers at the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre, where Stavian English is primarily spoken, will have proficiency at a level of A2 or B1. As indicated in section 5.1, these teachers must achieve proficiency at a level of B2, thus at least one level higher. We expect that most of the elementary and secondary school teachers currently have a proficiency level of B2. They will have to receive additional training to enable them to achieve a one-level increase to a proficiency level of C1. A few teachers already have this proficiency level, while others may have to move up two levels. Overall, we estimate that all of the teachers will have to receive additional training to move one level of proficiency in Standard English up from the level at which they currently stand.

There are courses in the European Netherlands for bilingual education teachers who want to improve their proficiency in English. For example, Fontys offers a course in English for bilingual education that takes approximately 140 hours to complete. This figure assumes attending class approximately 20 times and spending 3-4 hours a week studying independently. This course is available for level C1 and level C2.⁶⁸ An expert in this field can estimate whether this type of course would be suitable for the teachers on St. Eustatius. For St. Eustatius, extra costs are likely to be incurred for customizing the additional training and for transporting the teachers to the island. However, it may be possible to negotiate a competitive price in the region because this type of additional training is expected to be suitable for purchase by multiple educational institutions. A benefit of scale may also be realized in cooperation with Saba and/or St. Maarten. There will also be costs associated with coordination, a task the research team recommends be outsourced to Maestro Kompas. Given that they are already acting as coordinators of the teacher qualification courses, adding this type of coordination to their duties would certainly promote efficiency.

The teachers' scholarship [*lerarenbeurs*] cannot be used for this additional training unless the teacher is following a full bachelor's or masters program (which will not be necessary in this context).

Consideration may be given to whether it might be more efficient to train some teachers on St. Eustatius such that they can provide training in English to their colleagues in the future. This is not a practical solution for the short term because of the time pressure associated with the transition phase.

D. Curriculum development and purchase of materials

As stated in section 9.2 with regard to curriculum development, consideration is being given to dividing the task between elementary education (first years and later years) on the one hand and secondary education and MBO (general and vocational track) on the other.

⁶⁸ Sources: Fontys Teacher Training [*Lerarenopleiding*], <http://fontys.nl/Werk-studie/Opleidingen-en-cursussen/Engels-voor-Tweetalig-Onderwijs.htm> and Radboud into Languages, <http://www.ru.nl/radboudintolanguages/nascholing/nascholing-docenten-1/onderwijs/engels-certificaten>.

On Saba two local sessions with SLO facilitated the development of a curriculum for secondary education. Support from Bonaire was provided in developing the qualification files for MBO. This will probably take longer for St. Eustatius because part of the curriculum will encompass a new system with which those involved at the Gwendoline van Putten School are not yet familiar. Moreover, the expectation is that first transitional programs will have to be developed. On the other hand those involved on St. Eustatius may be able to learn from the experience gained in Saba, and possibly St. Maarten as well. The process will probably be simpler at the elementary schools because that system will not be changing as much.

We propose splitting the tasks of the experts and the work groups into several phases (see section 10.2). The research team assumes that there will be two experts available, one for elementary education and one for secondary education/MBO, one of whom will also act as coordinator and have a more permanent presence on the island, which is why travel expenses have been estimated for only one expert.

This research team has not included an estimate for materials. They can be included in the regular school budget because they have to be replaced every few years anyway.⁶⁹

E. Developing a program for graduates leaving the island

As indicated in section 9.2, this activity must be defined in more detail with those directly involved before a cost estimate can be prepared.

F. Examinations

Although examination costs are permanent cost items rather than incidental items, we nevertheless state those costs in this section for the sake of completeness.

For the CXC exams, the school pays an amount per candidate (*candidate entries*) and an amount per subject (*general subjects entries*). These costs are USD 36 per candidate and USD 36.50 per subject.⁷⁰ There are also several types of administrative charges, such as late registration fees, or fees for changing the subject of the exam or the candidate's personal details.⁷¹

10.5 Legislation

This section discusses the current legislative situation and the changes the research team believes will have to be made if English is chosen as the language of instruction, with Dutch as a foreign language. We also – generally – explore the consequences of a different examination system. The research team again emphasizes the importance of the rapid implementation of the transition, meaning that once the decision is made to use English as the language of instruction, the preparations for the statutory and regulatory amendments must be started as soon as possible.

Primary education

Primary education on St. Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire is governed by the Law on primary education BES [*Wet primair onderwijs BES*] (“WPO BES”). This Act includes two sections that specifically address

⁶⁹ The St. Maarten Examination Board referred the team to the following website, which contains information on materials that can be used by schools that work with the CXC system:

<https://www.google.nl/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CC8QFjAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mcmillan-caribbean.com%2Fbook.aspx%3Fid%3D58&ei=Gyx6U-H-PORHsATB5YDwCQ&usq=AFQjCNFj7ZRiUGErAPHIHtumRXh3CqgjWQ&sig2=T2s0gR5ve6GYzTxM0aM-FA>

⁷⁰ Information provided by the Caribbean Examination Council on May 28, 2014.

⁷¹ Information provided by the Sint Maarten Examination Council.

language. Section 12(7) provides that education on St. Eustatius and Saba must be provided in Dutch and English. The same section provides that the education must include the Dutch and English languages. Finally, Section 10(8) provides that the education must be structured so that attention is permanently and recognizably devoted to combating deficits, particularly language deficits. Currently, the WPO BES also applies to Saba, where elementary education is provided in English. The sections cited above permit the schools leeway to meet the requirements in their own way. This means that the WPO BES need not be amended before English can be implemented as the language of instruction on St. Eustatius. Over the longer term, consideration may be given to alternative phrasing for Section 12(7) that would better reflect the situation in Saba and St. Eustatius.

For the longer term, if the developments are sustained, the team also recommends examining the Decree on the Core Objectives of the WPO BES [*Besluit kerndoelen WPO BES*]. Although this decree currently suffices for Saba and thus should not present an obstacle for St. Eustatius, the core objectives are premised on two languages (Dutch and English for St. Eustatius and Saba) of equivalent status. The distinction between English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a strong foreign language should preferably be reflected in the core objectives in the new situation.

WPO BES⁷²

Section 10. Premises and educational objective

Subsection 8. The education must be structured such that attention is permanently and recognizably devoted to combating deficits, particularly language deficits.

Section 12. Subject matter of education in the public entities of St. Eustatius and Saba

Subsection 1. Education in the public entities of St. Eustatius and Saba must be provided, where possible in combination, in:
[...]

b. the Dutch language

c. the English language

[...]

Subsection 7. Instruction is provided in Dutch and in English.

Secondary education

Secondary education on St. Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire is governed by the Law on secondary education BES [*Wet voortgezet onderwijs BES*] (“WVO BES”). Section 117 of this Act offers leeway for specific secondary schools to set other requirements regarding the teaching structure, examinations, staffing and budget. This leeway has been utilized for the secondary school in Saba, which is subject to the Temporary Decree regarding the Saba Comprehensive School BES [*Tijdelijk besluit Saba Comprehensive School BES*]. This decree focuses on general secondary education, vocational education and practical education, and is premised on using English as the language of instruction, with English-language examinations being administered in accordance with the Caribbean system. This decree also enables the school to hire teachers whose qualifications differ from those set out in the WVO BES. A practical short-term solution would be to add St. Eustatius to this temporary decree, which would have to be amended on a few points with regard to the proposed combined VMBO-MBO track. It should be possible to implement this amendment by September 2015.

For the longer term, the team advises permanently amending the laws and regulations to accurately reflect the education situations in Saba and St. Eustatius.

⁷² The law is laid down in Dutch, so these are not the formal texts.

Temporary Decree regarding the Saba Comprehensive School BES⁷³

Article 8. Language

Contrary to the provisions of Section 8 of the Act, instruction provided and examinations administered at the school shall be in English. Another language may also be used if:

- a. the instruction relates to that language,
- b. the instruction is provided in the context of a practical education program, or
- c. the specific nature, structure, or quality of the instruction or the origin of the participants require this, in accordance with a code of conduct established by the competent authority. The code of conduct must be submitted to the Inspectorate of Education.

Article 9. Combating language and other deficits

Contrary to the provisions of Article 10(2) of the Act, attention must be devoted to combating language deficits, particularly those relating to the English language.

Article 12. Examinations

1. The students in the general education program must be afforded the opportunity to take the C-SEC examination offered by the CXC.
2. Students in vocational education programs must be afforded the opportunity to take the TVET1 examination offered by the HTF.
3. The final examination must be administered by the principal or one or more teachers at the school, with due observance of the applicable examination protocols.
4. If a student has met all the requirements for being awarded a certificate, he shall receive that certificate from the principal.

Article 13. Teachers

1. The competent authority shall ensure that the school employs a sufficient number of teachers to offer instruction of sufficient quality.
2. The school shall only hire teachers who:
 - a. have been issued a certificate of good conduct [*verklaring omtrent het gedrag*] issued in accordance with the Judicial Records Act [*Wet op de justitiële documentatie*] and the Act on Certificates of Good Conduct BES [*verklaringen omtrent het gedrag BES*] that is no more than six months old on the date it is submitted to the competent authority,
 - b. have not been excluded from the practice of teaching by court order, and
 - c. may be appointed pursuant to the law, or
 - d. have a certificate based on which they may be considered as capable of providing instruction of sufficient quality.
3. For each teacher, the competent authority shall establish what training he or she has received and what experience he or she possesses. An overview shall be submitted to the Inspectorate of Education at the start of each school year. The Education Inspectorate must be notified of any changes within a month of their occurrence.

Vocational Education

Vocational education on St. Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire is governed by the Law on education and vocational education BES [*Wet educatie en beroepsonderwijs BES*] (“WEB BES”). This law currently permits the instruction and examinations for the assistant training and the basic vocational track to be provided in English on St. Eustatius.

Over the longer term, consideration might be given to amending Article 7.1.1 to read that instruction may be provided and examinations administered in Dutch or English (again, Dutch should be included in connection with Bonaire).

This law also provides a good basis for the adult education proposed in section 6.4. It should also be possible to offer courses that focus on improving one’s ability to function in society in English.

⁷³ The law is laid down in Dutch, so these are not the formal texts.

WEB BES⁷⁴

Section 7.1.1. Language

Subsection 1. Instruction is provided and examinations are administered in Dutch.

Subsection 2. Contrary to the first subsection, instructions and examinations relating to assistant training or the basic vocational track in Bonaire may, at the option of the competent authority, be provided in Dutch or in Papiamentu, and, to the extent the aforesaid assistant training or the basic vocational track are provided on St. Eustatius and Saba, they may, at the option of the competent authority, be provided in Dutch or in English. In choosing the language of instruction and examination, the competent authority must consider at least the following factors:

- a. the dominant language on the island territory,
- b. the language of instruction used in the preparatory education,
- c. the nature of the target group and the degree to which this target group is proficient in the dominant language or relevant language of instruction in the island territory,
- d. the language of instruction of any follow-up educational programs, and
- e. the availability of teaching materials in the relevant language of instruction.

⁷⁴ The law is laid down in Dutch, so these are not the formal texts.

11. Conclusions and Recommendations

Main question

The purpose of this study was to determine which of the following four options is most feasible with regard to the language of instruction on St. Eustatius:

1. Continuing the current system, with adjustments (for example, the number of hours taught and teaching materials).
2. English as the only language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a foreign language. Retaining the Dutch examination structure.
3. The same as option 2, but with the possibility of retaining Dutch as the language of instruction starting with the second year of secondary education for students who wish to study in the Leeward Islands or the Netherlands.
4. English as the only language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a foreign language. The Caribbean Examination Council examination would be used (as it is in Saba).

The research team considers the first option, in which the current bilingual system on St. Eustatius would be maintained, to be the least feasible. The research team takes the position that bilingual education can have a positive effect on child development only under exceptional circumstances, and that these circumstances are lacking on St. Eustatius, both inside and outside the schools.

This does not mean that the students should not learn any Dutch, just the opposite: Dutch must be offered in a more effective way. This conclusion is consistent with the Faraclas study, which also indicates that students on St. Eustatius will learn Dutch better by having it offered as a foreign language, rather than as a language of instruction.

The research team concludes that having English as the sole language of instruction, combined with Dutch as a strong foreign language, would be the most feasible option for students on St. Eustatius. Students will need to make a transition from St. Eustatius English to Standard English at a young age. They will be taught in Standard English, which will offer them more opportunities to complete their secondary education at their own level. In the interim period, they will be offered Dutch as a foreign language. By the end of their secondary education, they must be able to achieve a basic level of proficiency that will offer them a realistic chance to continue their education in English- or Dutch-language post-secondary programs.

As far as examinations are concerned, our research team studied the possibilities offered by both Dutch examinations – whether or not they are translated – and the customary examinations in the English-speaking region. If English is chosen as the language of instruction, Dutch-language examinations will not be a realistic option, even if the students make the transition to Dutch as the language of instruction in their second year of secondary education. This would still put students into a back log. Moreover, maintaining both Dutch- and English-language tracks would be ineffective given the schools' small scale. In principle, it would be possible to administer translated examinations from the Netherlands, but translation also has its drawbacks. The nuances of an assignment can be lost in translation, and comparability would become more complicated the more the examinations deviate from the original Dutch-language versions. The Caribbean already has an adequate and generally accredited examination system for English-language general education. These examinations, which are developed by the Caribbean Examination Council, are also used in St. Maarten and Saba. A major advantage of this examination system is that it allows students to take

examinations at their own pace and at their own level. The research team recommends using this examination system for general education (MAVO and HAVO levels) if English is chosen as the language of instruction. For the vocational track, the research team recommends an English-language combined VMBO-MBO track that can be customized for the students on St. Eustatius and the needs of the local job market.

Conclusion regarding the other research questions

The report provides a detailed discussion of the changes that will be needed to implement English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a strong foreign language. The answers to these research questions are briefly summarized below.

Educational system

In terms of the educational system, our advice will not have any significant consequences for preschool and elementary education. The most important measures regarding educational content will be in the area of the curriculum strands for the English language and the Dutch language as a strong foreign language, and the English-language methods for the other subjects. The change for secondary education is expected to be much more significant. The methods used by the Caribbean Examination Council differ from those used in the Dutch educational system. The proposed combined VMBO-MBO track will also require an alternative approach to be taken at the Gwendoline van Putten School.

Teaching and testing materials

The most important factor will be the development of continuous educational pathways for both English and Dutch (as well as for the other subjects). These pathways must be continuous from preschool education through secondary education, split into different levels and their corresponding final examinations. The Caribbean and the United States have sufficient methods and materials available for use in this respect. An additional method would only have to be developed for teaching Dutch as a foreign language. Examinations are discussed above.

Teacher skills and qualifications

The proposed transition will demand a great deal from teachers. Before transitioning to English as the language of instruction, all teachers that are already employed will have to sufficiently master Standard English. A language expert will have to determine the requisite levels of proficiency. The teachers must also be sufficiently skilled in teaching in English. Those who are not yet able to do so will have to undergo additional training during the first phase of the transitional period. Also, the teachers will have to be trained in new methods, and those teaching secondary school will have to be trained to work with the Caribbean Examination Council system. The team recommends engaging specialized teachers to teach Dutch as a foreign language.

Finances

Although the transitional phase will definitely involve extra investments, the research team does not expect the system of using English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a strong foreign language to differ much from the costs of the current system. Of course, extra investments will be necessary in the transitional period. However, part of these investments (such as those relating to curriculum development and the development of a method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language) would also have been necessary even if the current system were continued. In addition, the method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language will not be developed exclusively for St. Eustatius. Moreover, the researchers expect that teachers can be deployed more effectively and that additional benefits can be achieved in connection with the schools' mutual cooperation.

Statutory framework

The language of instruction in primary, secondary and secondary vocational education is set forth in the laws on education in the Caribbean Netherlands. This means that opting to change the language of instruction will entail a change to the relevant legislation. The key objectives for primary education and the first years of secondary education will also have to be changed; specifically, they are currently premised on two languages (for St. Eustatius, Dutch and English) of equal status. The change will be more comprehensive for secondary education.

Other prerequisites

There are several pre-requisites that must be met, both in and outside the schools, to ensure that changing the language of instruction will actually result in improvements in student performance and future prospects. Within the schools, the first priority will be supporting students with deficits. Adequate accommodations and ICT facilities will also help with the proposed transition and promote students' language and other development. The education provided will have to be adequately organized if the transition is to be carried out effectively. This will require everyone involved in the educational process to have a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. Outside the school, of course, a crucial role will be played by parents, and also by the wider community. A positive attitude about learning and the creation of an environment that enables students to learn begins at home and within the family.

Transition

The proposed transition is set forth in detail in Chapter 10. The most important premise is that the transition be accomplished as quickly as possible in order to be able to offer current students the chance to be offered a curriculum that will give them a better chance of successfully completing their education. According to the proposed planning, the first students can make a start with the new system in September 2015. It is important to provide continuity for students who are already in secondary school so they can finish their examinations under the current system. In this respect, it will be important to examine how is dealt with the decision to have the reference levels for the Dutch language (and mathematics) enter into effect in the Caribbean Netherlands starting with the 2014-2015 school year.

Quality of education, student performance and educational efficiency

This advisory report is based on the assumption that the quality of education, student performance and educational efficiency must be improved. The research team has concluded that the best solution for most of the students on St. Eustatius would be for them to be given a solid foundation to master the language that is closest to their native language: Standard English. Mastering at least one language and receiving instruction in that language will enable students to reach a higher level in their other subjects. Based on the conclusions drawn from the research, the consistent use of Standard English is expected to improve student performance and educational efficiency. Naturally, the quality of the education offered will depend on how English is implemented as the language of instruction, with Dutch being offered as a foreign language.

Possibilities for continuing education, diploma accreditation and job market prospects

Chapter 9 discusses the possibilities St. Eustatian students have for continuing their education. This advisory report is based on the assumption that the students will be taught using English as the language of instruction and Dutch as a strong foreign language, and that because of the proposed new educational system, students will be better prepared and more successful in continuing their education, both in the Netherlands and in the region. Provided a satisfactory qualification is earned, diplomas for both the general track (CXC) and the combined VMBO-MBO track will offer sufficient possibilities for students to continue their education, and thus improve their job market prospects, both in the Netherlands and in the region.

Recommendations

With reference to its main conclusion, the research team provides the following summary of its recommendations:

- The school boards of the five schools and the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre are advised to develop a vision and mission statement that includes the new language policy.
- The school boards of the five schools and the Buzzy Bees Day Care Centre are advised to develop a close-knit partnership and work together to facilitate the students' transition from the old system to the new, and from preschool to elementary school to secondary school.
- The public entity is advised to facilitate and stimulate the boards of the five schools and Buzzy Bees to cooperate intensively in implementing this transition process.
- The principal of the Gwendoline van Putten School will play a central role in this process, because the majority of the changes will have to be made at that school. The principal is advised to work together with the curriculum developer and the teachers to make a detailed plan to flesh out the transition process for secondary school and the MBO program.
- The Ministry of OCW is advised to assume final responsibility for the entire transition process, appoint a coordinator for the transition process, and issue assignments for the following four activities:
 - Developing a method for teaching Dutch as a foreign language
 - Providing teachers with additional training in English
 - Developing curricula for primary and secondary education and for the MBO program
 - Developing a program for graduates leaving the island
- The school boards and the Inspectorate of Education are advised to address the issue of standards for the various elements of the elementary education curriculum.
- The school boards of the five schools, Buzzy Bees and the Expertise Centre Education Care (ECE) are advised to work together to develop a joint vision and plan of action for supporting students with special needs. The Centre for Youth and Family and SKJ New Challenge Foundation must also be involved in this endeavour. A joint plan must also be drafted to provide students with a "warm transition" to the next phase of their education.
- The public entity is advised to strongly promote participation in preschool education and to supervise and foster the quality of preschool and after-school child care programs. The Ministry of OCW and the Ministry of SZW are advised to consult the public entity on the further promotion of preschool education.
- The public entity is advised to offer adults the opportunity to further develop their language skills (Standard English or Dutch) to enable parents and caregivers to assist their children with their language development.
- The Ministry of OCW, Buzzy Bees, the school boards and the public entity are advised to learn from the experience gained on the other islands and to use the expertise present on those islands, as well as to share the experiences gained on St. Eustatius with their counterparts on the other islands.

Appendix I Abbreviations

ECE	Expertise Centre Education Care [<i>Expertisecentrum Onderwijszorg</i>]
European Framework	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
Statistics Netherlands	Statistics Netherlands [<i>Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek</i>]
CITO	Central Institute for Test Development
C-SEC	Certificate of Secondary Education
CXC	Caribbean Examination Council
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
HAVO	Senior general secondary education
HBO	Higher professional education
MAVO	Junior general secondary education
MBO	Secondary vocational education
NT2	Dutch as a second language [<i>Nederlands als tweede taal</i>]
NVT	Dutch as a foreign language [<i>Nederlands als vreemde taal</i>]
NVTiC	Dutch as a foreign language in the Caribbean [<i>Nederlands als vreemde taal in het Caribisch gebied</i>]
OCW	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science [<i>Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap</i>]
RCN	National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands [<i>Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland</i>]
S4	St. Maarten Student Support Services
SKJ	Youth development program, New Challenge Foundation [<i>Sociale Kanstrajecten Jongeren</i>]
SZW	Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment [<i>Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid</i>]
T-VET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VM2	VMBO-MBO 2 pilot program [<i>Pilot-leergang vmbo-mbo2</i>]
VMBO	Preparatory secondaryvocational education
VWO	Pre-university education
WEB BES	Law on Education and Vocational Education BES [<i>Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs-BES</i>]
WPO BES	Law on Elementary Education BES
WVO BES	Law on Secondary Education BES

Appendix II Interviewees

Below is a list of everyone the research team interviewed in the context of this feasibility study.

William Adams	Teacher	St. Maarten Vocational Training
Ameling Algra	Project Leader, Standard Final Examinations for the Caribbean Netherlands	Board of Examinations [<i>College voor Examens</i>]
Luc Alofs	Coordinator, Second level Teacher Training in Dutch	Instituto Pedagogico Arubano
Natasha Ambrose	Interim School Principal	Sister Regina School (St. Maarten)
Louis van Ameijden Zandstra	Clerk	St. Eustatius Island Council
Magda Angad-Geur	Dean and Chair of the Language Department	St. Dominic High School (St. Maarten)
Annelies van den Assem	Rector Magnificus	University of St. Martin
Henk Barink	Financial Expert	ABD Interim
Pim Beirnaert	Legislative jurist	Ministry of OCW / Directorate of Legislation and Legal Affairs
Stefan Bergwerff	Intern	Ministry of SZW / Directorate of Child Care
Camelia Berkel	Director	Expertise Centre Education Care St. Eustatius
Gerald Berkel	Lieutenant Governor	Public Entity St. Eustatius
Marilyn Berkel-Woodley	School board member	Bethel Methodist School
Jan Berkvens	Curriculum Developer and Education Reform Consultant	SLO
Hellmuth van Berlo	Senior Project Leader	Nederlandse Taalunie
Norma Berr	Acting Director	St. Maarten Vocational Training School
Arjan Beune	Adjunct Director	Reading and Writing Foundation [<i>Stichting Lezen en Schrijven</i>]
Mariëlle Bieleman	Teacher of Dutch, French, and English, member of the Language Work Group	Gwendoline van Putten School
Karin Biemans	Senior Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW, Directorate of Primary Education
Sharon Blair	Group 3 teacher	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Jaantje Bot	Transition class teacher	Gwendoline van Putten School
Cleopatra Brice	Teacher of group 1/2 and Dutch	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Oralie Broillard	Head	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Department of Education and Innovation, St. Maarten
Benjamin Brown	Interim Director	St. Maarten Student Support Services (S4)
Franklin Brown	Councilman	St. Eustatius Island Council

Marion Brown	Assistant Teacher	Buzzy Bees
Monique Brown	Member	Council for Education and Labour Market
Vienne Buitink	Teacher of groups 5 and 6, member of the Language Work Group	Golden Rock School
Brian Carthy	Home healthcare teacher and member of the management team	Gwendoline van Putten School
Maria Charles	Student counsellor	St. Maarten Support Services (S4)
Constance Clement	Academic Stream Department Head and English teacher	Saba Comprehensive School
Militza Connell-Maduro	Acting Clerk	St. Eustatius Island Council
Tessa Courtar-Thomas	Group 5 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
Glenroy Cumberbatch	Acting Registrar & CEO	Caribbean Examination Council
LaVerne David-Duggins	Principal	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Elly Deelder	Expert in bilingual elementary education	European Platform
Nienke Deelstra	Elementary school coach, member of the Language Work Group	Primary Education Council
Wim van Didden	Project Leader	Maestro Kompas / Open University
Marta Dijkhoff	Expert in language and education	Dijkhoff Learning Unlimited
Maike Drobinski	Group 2 teacher, member of the Language Work Group	Bethel Methodist School
Frans van Efferink	Interim Principal	Gwendoline van Putten School
Maria van Enckevoort	Senior Policy Advisor	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Minister's Cabinet, St. Maarten
Daniëlle van Etteger-Jordaan	Group 6 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
Itesica Euson	Assistant	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Radha Gangaram Panday	Project Leader	Maestro Kompas / University of Applied Sciences Utrecht
Henri Geerling	Senior Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW / Directorate of Secondary Education
Francisca Gibbs	Assistant to the Commissioner	Public Entity St. Eustatius
Keith Gittens	Teacher	St. Maarten Vocational Training School
Francio Guadeloupe	Dean and researcher	University of St. Martin
Elisabeth d'Halleweyn	Policy Advisor	Nederlandse Taalunie
Yvette Halley	Head	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Division of Examinations, St. Maarten
Khadija El Hamdaoui	Employee	Reading and Writing Foundation
Beulah Hassell Woodley	Assistant	Bethel Methodist School
Latifah Hassell	Student	HBO Socio-Legal Services
Mystica Hassell	Social worker	SKJ New Challenge Foundation
Rita Hassell	Principal	Buzzy Bees
Cindy Havinka	Vice Principal, teacher and coach	Sister Regina School (St. Maarten)

Jet van Heijnsbergen	Director	Expertise Centre Education Care Saba
Walter Hellebrand	Director	St. Eustatius Monuments Foundation
Elvin Henriquez	Councilman	St. Eustatius Island Council
Gene Herbert	Guidance counsellor	SKJ New Challenge Foundation
Deborah Hinckson-Norville	English teacher	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Irene Hofland	Trainee	Public Entity St. Eustatius, Welfare Department
Vincent Holslag	Inspector for Secondary Education, MBO and SKJ in the Caribbean Netherlands	Inspectorate of Education
Justus de Hooge	Head	Ministry of OCW/Directorate of Teachers
Roy Hooker	Member	Council for Education and Labour Market
Dion Humphreys (Mega D)	Leader	Mega D Youth Foundation
Peter van IJsselmuiden	Senior Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW / Directorate for Secondary Vocational Education
Chris Johnson	Commissioner	Public Entity Saba
Jonathan Johnson	Lieutenant Governor	Public Entity Saba
Lynne Johnson	School board	Sacred Heart Primary School Saba
Odevia Johnson	Student	MBO International Hotel Management
Leen de Jong	School Principal	Gwendoline van Putten School
Young people	Drama group	Mega D
Yannick Jordaan	Group 8 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
Terry Keogh	General Manager & Managing Director	NuStar Terminals N.V.
Anneke Kerkhoff	Lecturer Language Policy and Diversity	Fontys Teacher Training Tilburg
Ellen-Petra Kester	Associate professor	University of Utrecht, Department of Languages, Literature and Communication
Saskia Kliphuis	Project Manager, Secondary Vocational Education	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, St. Maarten
Lidy Kooij-Blok	Former school coach	Gwendoline van Putten School
Hans Kuilder	Head	RCN / OCW
Claudette Labega-Forsyth	Cabinet Chief	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Minister's Cabinet, St. Maarten
Francis de Lanoy	Rector Magnificus	University of Curaçao
Eygje Laroo	Department Head MBO	Gwendoline van Putten School
Rozemarijn van der Lee	Coordinating Policy Consultant	Kennisnet
Students		Gwendoline van Putten School, VMBO, and HAVO
Students		Gwendoline van Putten School, MBO
Rachel Leonora	Teacher of Groups 1 through 4, member of the Language Work Group	Governor de Graaff School
Millicent Lijfrock	Councilwoman	St. Eustatius Island Council
Kenneth Lopes	Acting Lieutenant Governor	Public Entity St. Eustatius
Cheriette van der Lugt	Acting Dean	Gwendoline van Putten School

Gérard Maas	Project Director / Acting Director	Ministry of OCW, Caribbean Netherlands Project Unit / Directorate of International Policy
Taheena Maccow	Social worker	NIPA, SBO School (St. Maarten)
Germaine Maduro	Former student and parent	
Jan Willem Majjvis	Caribbean Netherlands Coordinator and Inspector of Primary Education in the Caribbean Netherlands	Inspectorate of Education
Elaine Marchena	Communication Advisor	RCN / OCW
Astrid Mekensia	School board	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Eldred Merkman	Dean	Gwendoline van Putten School
Rueben Merkman	Councilman	St. Eustatius Island Council
Henk Moelands	Director, CITO International	CITO
Jean Marie Molina	Leader Pedagogical Education Accreditation Project	Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences
Rosanne Mulder	Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW, Directorate of Primary Education
Julio Nahr	Manager, Guidance Department, Netherlands	Curaçao Student Financial Aid Foundation (SSC)
Goretti Narain	Language and education expert	Curaçao
Audrey Nortan	Group 7 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
Hans Odijk	Staff officer	Gwendoline van Putten School
Martin van den Oetelaar	School board coach	Primary Education Council
Nolly Oleana	Senior Policy Advisor	RCN / OCW
Esther Padilla-Bomberg	Head	Expertise Centre for Tests and Examinations (Curaçao)
Parents of students		Elementary and Secondary Education
Maaïke Patrick	Dutch teacher	Gwendoline van Putten School
Shaquana Parris	Representative from St. Eustatius	Kingdom Youth Parliament
Naomi van Pelt	Policy Advisor	Public Entity St. Eustatius, Directorate of Society and Welfare
Helen Peroti	Group 8 teacher, language teacher, member of the Language Work Group	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Eelco Poeze	History and geography teacher	Gwendoline van Putten School
Berlushyne van Putten	Student	Rotterdam Business School
Nadya van Putten	Director	Public Entity St. Eustatius, Directorate of Public Affairs and Support
Magda Rafeal	Coordinator of Continuing Teacher Training and USONA Projects	Roman Catholic Central School Board, Curaçao
Jörgen Raymann	Entertainer and motivator	
Alicia Redan	Group 1 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
René Reehuis	Former Head and Task manager	St. Eustatius Directorate of Education and Innovation Department

Vernon Richards	Principal	SBO School (St. Maarten)
Tamara Richardson	Group 3 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
Clasina Rivers	Chair, school board	Gwendoline van Putten School
Marja Rix	Employee	RCN / Human Resources
Sirma Rouse	Singer	
Audrey Sandries	School board	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Chantal Schaminee-Ringeling	Head	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Inspection Division, St. Maarten
Ineke Schram	Team Leader	Centre for Youth and Family (Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin)
Cheryl Seaton	Acting Director, teacher of groups 4 and 5, and English teacher	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Ronald Severing	Director	Language Planning Foundation, Curaçao
Maritsa Silberie	Senior Policy Advisor	RCN / OCW
Delroy Sinclair	IT teacher	Saba Comprehensive School
Ernie Simmons	School board	Bethel Methodist School
Jos Slotema	MBO 1 teacher	Gwendoline van Putten School
Kantika Smith	Member, management team	Buzzy Bees
Mieke Smits	Director	Taalunie Centre for Dutch as a Foreign Language
Koos Sneek	Chair	Chamber of Commerce
Nora Sneek-Gibbs	Vice Chair, School Board	Gwendoline van Putten School
Adelka Spanner	Councilwoman	St. Eustatius Island Council
Claudine Spanner	Group 4 teacher	Bethel Methodist School
Misha Spanner	Coordinator of the Museum Club for youngsters, the "Simon Doncker Club"	St. Eustatius Historical Foundation Museum
Raquel Spanner	Unit Manager	Public Entity St. Eustatius, Directorate of Society and Welfare
Iris Sporken	Dutch teacher	Gwendoline van Putten School
Jessica Stannard	Senior Education Evaluator	Nuffic
Lavern Suares	Group 7 teacher	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Carlyle Tarr	Commissioner	Public Entity St. Eustatius
Lydia Telgt	Senior Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW, Caribbean Netherlands Project Unit
Marvin Timber	Head Planning	Public Entity St. Eustatius, Directorate of Public Works
Maureen Tjin Liep Shie	Acting School Principal	Gouverneur de Graaff School
Mariëlle Visser	Senior Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW, Directorate of Secondary Education
Marjan de Visser	Head of Education Affairs	University of St. Maarten
Wim de Visser	Director	Milton Peters College (St. Maarten)
Sandra Voorneman	Supervisor	Centre for Youth and Family (Centrum

		voor Jeugd en Gezin)
Jan-Bart de Vreede	Services Manager	Kennisnet
Gianne de Weever	School Principal	St. Dominic High School (St. Maarten)
Aimée de Wilde	Policy Advisor	Ministry of SZW, Directorate of Child Care
Diane Wilson	School Principal	Sacred Heart Primary School, Saba
Franklin Wilson	Former Principal	Sacred Heart Primary School, Saba
Chriselma Woodley	Teacher of groups 3 and 4	Lynch Plantation SDA School
Czaigany Woodley	Representative from St. Eustatius	Kingdom Youth Parliament
Ellis Woodley	School Principal	Bethel Methodist School
Kevin Woodley	Student	MBO Shipping, Rotterdam
Jetske Woudstra	Policy Consultant, strategy and education	MBO Council
Hemmie van Xanten	School Principal	Saba Comprehensive School
Reginald Zaandam	Commissioner of among others Education	Public Entity St. Eustatius
Jan Zoller	Coordinating Policy Advisor	Ministry of OCW, Directorate of Primary Education
Adriaan Zeillemaker	Acting Director	Ministry of OCW, Directorate of Primary Education
Mariëtte Zuidgeest	Teaching coach	Maestro Kompas

Appendix III Bibliography

- Andersson Effers Felix (AEF). (2011). *Onderzoeksrapportage Midterm Evaluatie Onderwijs en Jongeren Samenwerkingsprogramma 2008 – 2012 Curaçao en Sint Maarten* (Midterm Evaluation Report on the Education and Young People Cooperation Program, 2008-2012 in Curaçao and St. Maarten).
- Beek, S. (2013). *Zorg op Statia, Onderzoek naar de ondersteuning van leerlingen met specifieke onderwijsbehoeften op St. Eustatius* (Care on Statia, a Study of the Support of Students with Specific Educational Needs on St. Eustatius). KPC Groep.
- Berben, M and Visscher, A.J. (2010). *Het Nederlands op de BES-eilanden: Een 'vreemde taal'?! Het taalniveau Nederlands van (pre)eindexamenleerlingen op Bonaire, Saba en Sint Eustatius in relatie tot de taalgebruiker, het taalbeleid en het taalaanbod* (Dutch on the BES Islands: A 'foreign language'?! The level of Dutch reached by students upon their pre-graduation and graduation examinations on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba in relation to the language user, language policy, and language courses offered). University of Twente. Enschede.
- Berlo, van, H. (2013). *Nederlands op de Caribische eilanden: Europees of Nederlands referentiekader?* (Dutch in the Caribbean Islands: European or Dutch Reference Framework?). The Hague/Brussels.
- Berlo, van, H. (2013). *NVTiC – Nederlands als Vreemde Taal in het Caribisch gebied* (NVTiC – Dutch as a Foreign Language in the Caribbean). Brussels/The Hague.
- Berlo, van, H. (2013). *NVT – NT2: één pot nat?* (Dutch as a foreign language – Dutch as a second language: A rose by another name?). Brussels.
- Broek, van den, E., Graaff, de, R., Unsworth, S., Zee, van der, V. (2014). *Voorstudie Pilot Primair Tweektalig Onderwijs* (Pre-Study Pilot Program Bilingual Elementary Education). GION, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (lead author) and Utrecht University, en Universiteit Utrecht, Faculty of Humanities.
- Bruijn, de, J., Kriek, F. and Vaan, de, K. (2014). *De aanpak van huiselijk geweld op de Bes-eilanden* (Combating domestic violence in the BES Islands. Regioplan). On the request of the Ministry of Security and Justice and the Ministry of OCW.
- CINOP. (2010). *Referentieniveaus taal en rekenen in het mbo: een vergelijking op hoofdlijnen* (Language and mathematics reference levels in MBO programs: a general comparison). Den Bosch.
- Complementair Didactisch Overbruggingsprogramma, VO klas 1 en 2* (Complementary Didactic Transition Program for Secondary School Years 1 and 2). Version dated September 12, 2013.
- Curconsult. (2013). *"Samen verder bouwen", Tweemeting Belevingsonderzoek Caribisch Nederland* (Continuing to Build Together, Second Baseline Survey of the Caribbean Netherlands).
- Donker, van, H., Beek, van, L., Boom, van der, E. en Bergh, van den, R. (2013). *De arbeidsmarkt in Caribisch Nederland* (The job market in the Caribbean Netherlands Ecorys). Rotterdam.
- Drewes, M. (2012). *Armoede in Caribisch Nederland, een verkenning* (Poverty in the Caribbean Netherlands, an Exploration).
- Driessen, G. (2012). *Variatie in Voor- en Vroegschoolse Educatie. Een onderzoek naar de uiteenlopende wijzen waarop in gemeenten vorm wordt gegeven aan VVE* (Variation in Preschool and Early Elementary Education. A study of the various ways in which municipality structure their preschool and early elementary programs). ITS, Radboud University Nijmegen. Nijmegen.
- Expertise Centre St. Eustatius. (2013). *Eilandelijk Zorgplan, 2013-2014, Sint Eustatius* (Island Care Plan 2013-2014, St. Eustatius).
- Gwendoline van Putten School. *Schoolgids 2012-2013* (2012-2013 School Handbook).
- Faraclas, N., Kester and E., Mijts, E. (2013). *Language of Instruction in Sint Eustatius. Report of the 2013 research group on language of instruction in Sint Eustatius*.
- Fulbright Centre. (2013). *Informatiebladen Studie in de Verenigde Staten* (Information sheets on studying in the United

States).

Inspectorate of Education. (2011). *De basiskwaliteit van het primair en voortgezet onderwijs in Caribisch Nederland* (The basic quality of elementary and secondary education in the Caribbean Netherlands). Utrecht.

Inspectorate of Education. (2011). *De basiskwaliteit van het middelbaar beroepsonderwijs (mbo) en de Sociale Kanstrajecten Jongeren (SKJ) in Caribisch Nederland* (The basic quality of secondary vocational education (MBO) and social opportunity programs for young people (SKJ) in the Caribbean Netherlands). Utrecht.

Inspectorate of Education. (2011). *Basiskwaliteit zorg in Caribisch Nederland* (Basic quality of care in the Caribbean Netherlands). Utrecht.

Inspectorate of Education. (2009). *Het onderwijs op Bonaire, Sint Eustatius en Saba* (Education in Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba). Utrecht.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Primair Onderwijs bij de Bethel Methodist School* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of Elementary Education at the Bethel Methodist School). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Primair Onderwijs bij de Golden Rock School* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of Elementary Education at the Golden Rock School). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Primair Onderwijs bij de Governor de Graaff School* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of Elementary Education at the Governor de Graaff School). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Primair Onderwijs bij de Lynch Plantation SDA primary school* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of Elementary Education at the Lynch Plantation SDA primary school). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Primair Onderwijs bij de Sacred Heart School* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of Elementary Education at the Sacred Heart School). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen. Kwaliteitsonderzoek Expertisecentrum Onderwijszorg (EOZ) bij het Expertise Centre Education Care St. Eustatius (ECE)* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of the Expertise Centre at the Expertise Centre Education Care St. Eustatius (ECE)). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Voortgezet onderwijs bij de Gwendoline van Putten School, afdelingen pro, vmbo en havo* (Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO and HAVO Departments at the Gwendoline van Putten School). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Voortgezet onderwijs bij de Saba Comprehensive School, afdelingen pro, vmbo en havo* (Report of Findings, Quality Inspection of Secondary Education of the Practical Education, VMBO and HAVO Departments at the Saba Comprehensive School). Tilburg.

Inspectorate of Education. (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek bij SKJ New Challenge Foundation* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection at SKJ New Challenge Foundation).

Inspectorate of Education (2013). *Rapport van bevindingen, Kwaliteitsonderzoek Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs bij de Gwendoline Van Putten School* (Report of findings, Quality Inspection of Vocational Education at the Gwendoline Van Putten School). Tilburg.

Kibbelaar, J. (2012). *De rol van taal in het Curaçaose onderwijs, Een verkenning van kansen en knelpunten* (The Role of Language in Education on Curaçao, an Exploration of Opportunities and Challenges).

Kloosterboer, K. (2013). *Kind op Sint Eustatius, Kinderrechten in Caribisch Nederland* (Child on St. Eustatius, Children's Rights in the Caribbean Netherlands). UNICEF. Voorburg.

Meijerink, H.P. (Chair). (2009). *Brochure Doorlopende leerlijnen Taal en Rekenen* (Brochure on Continuous educational pathways in Language and Mathematics). By order of OCW. Enschede.

Meijnen, Wim (editor). (2003). *Onderwijsachterstanden in basisscholen* (Educational Deficits in Elementary Schools). Antwerp (Belgium)/Apeldoorn (Netherlands): Garant.

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations [*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*] and the University of the Dutch Antilles [*Universiteit van de Nederlandse Antillen*]. (2009). *De positie van de Antilliaanse en Arubaanse vrouw in het heden, verleden en in de toekomst* (The position of Antillean and Aruban women, then, now, and in the future). The Hague: Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

Ministry of OCW. (2012). *Brief aan de Voorzitter van de Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal. Onderzoek naar onderwijs in Engelse taal in Caribisch Nederland* (Letter to the Chair of the Senate of the Dutch Parliament regarding Education in the English Language in the Caribbean Netherlands). The Hague.

Ministry of OCW. (2011). *Evaluatie Onderwijsagenda voor Caribisch Nederland – 2012/2013* (Assessment of the Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands). The Hague.

Ministry of OCW. (2013). *Onderwijsagenda voor Caribisch Nederland: samen werken aan quality* (The Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands: Working Together on Quality). The Hague.

Molina, J.M. (2014). *How to get the educational system to work for the St. Eustatius Child: A pedagogical perspective. (Part 1)*. Broadcast on St. Eustatius News on March 6, 2014.

Motion of the St. Eustatius Island Council regarding the language of instruction for the public entity St. Eustatius. May 8, 2014.

Narain, G. (2010). *The Boy Problem. Gendersverschillen in onderwijsloopbaan op de eilanden van de Nederlandse Antillen. Een onderzoek in opdracht van de Nationale Unesco Commissie Nederlandse Antillen* (The Boy Problem. Gender differences in academic careers on the islands of the Dutch Antilles). National Unesco Committee of the Dutch Antilles. Willemstad.

Nuffic, Diploma Evaluation Department [*Afdeling Onderwijsvergelijking*]. (2013). *Landenmodule Aruba, Waardering van buitenlandse getuigschriften in Nederland, Nuffic, Nederlandse organisatie voor internationale samenwerking in het hoger onderwijs* (The Aruba country module. Assessing foreign credentials in the Netherlands, Nuffic, the Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education). The Hague.

Nuffic, Diploma Evaluation Department. (2013). *Landenmodule Curaçao, St. Maarten en BES-eilanden, Waardering van buitenlandse getuigschriften in Nederland, Nuffic, Nederlandse organisatie voor internationale samenwerking in het hoger onderwijs* (The Curaçao, St. Maarten and BES Islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba) country module, Assessing foreign credentials in the Netherlands, Nuffic, the Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education). The Hague.

Nuffic, Diploma Evaluation Department [*Afdeling Onderwijsvergelijking*]. (2013). *Landenmodule United States, Waardering van buitenlandse getuigschriften in Nederland, Nuffic, Nederlandse organisatie voor internationale samenwerking in het hoger onderwijs* (The United States country module Assessing foreign credentials in the Netherlands, Nuffic, the Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education). The Hague.

Education Council [*Onderwijsraad*]. (2008). *Advies Vreemde talen in het onderwijs* (Advisory Report on Foreign Languages in Education). The Hague.

Poortvliet, J. (2012). *Nieuwe inzichten dankzij uitwisseling. Friese en overzeese schoolleiders twinnen* (New insights thanks to exchange. Twinning Frisian school principals with their overseas counterparts). In: *School Management Totaal*, March 2012.

Poortvliet, J. (2013). *Taaldilemma's in Caribisch Nederland* (Language Dilemmas in the Caribbean Netherlands). In: *Vakblad voor leidinggevenden in het primair onderwijs*. Jaargang 19, nummer 1. September 2013. Utrecht.

RCN, OCW Division. *Brochures met betrekking tot onderwijs in Caribisch Nederland (01.0 tot en met 07.0)* (Brochures on education in the Caribbean Netherlands (0.10 through 0.70)).

Saba Comprehensive School, 5 year curriculum overview. (2014). Saba.

Statistics Netherlands. *The Caribbean Netherlands in Figures 2012*. The Hague/Heerlen/Bonaire.

De Visser, W. *Tweetalig onderwijs op St. Maarten* (Bilingual Education on St. Maarten).

Whitton, D. (2013). *Onderzoek twinning programma BES eilanden* (Study of the Twinning Program with the BES Islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba)).

Appendix IV Research Team

Tineke Drenthe

Tineke Drenthe has had a wide variety of experience in education. She taught biology from 1970 until 1981, after which she held various management positions at school for secondary education in Dordrecht, the Netherlands. From 1997 until 2005, Drenthe served as the Inspector of Secondary Education, Adult and Vocational Education [*Beroeps- en Volwassen Educatie (BVE)*] and Cultural Education, based in the Dutch cities of Rotterdam, Breda and Utrecht. Between 2005 and 2011, she was a member of the Board of LMC Secondary Education [*LMC Voortgezet Onderwijs*] in Rotterdam. Drenthe served as a member of the Education Council from 2007 to 2011.

Professor Wim Meijnen

After studying to be a teacher, Wim Meijnen studied sociology at the University of Groningen. He then worked in that university's Sociology Department, receiving his Ph.D., *cum laude*, for his dissertation on environment-specific family socialization and its effects on children's intellectual development. Meijnen was appointed as a Professor of Education at the University of Amsterdam in 1987. From 1987 to 1997, he also served as the research director of the SCO Kohnstamm Institute. Meijnen served as a member of the Education Council from 1997 to 2005, after which he served as a member emeritus. From 2008 to 2012, he served as the Chair of the Program Council for Education Research [*Programmaraad voor Onderwijsonderzoek*] of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research [*NWO*]. Until 2014, he also served as the Chair of the Inspectorate of Education Advisory Board [*Raad van Advies van de Onderwijsinspectie*]. In 2008, he established the Expertise Centre for Development, Parenting and Education [*Expertisecentrum voor Ontwikkeling, Opvoeding en Onderwijs (ECO3)*]. He led dozens of research project in the fields of educational deficits, school effectiveness, Going Back to School Together [*Weer Samen Naar School*], the pedagogical duties of education, cohort research, and so on. He has been involved in reviewing many HBO programs and university institutions and has served on advisory committees. Meijnen has been published in national and international journals, has written books, and has supervised doctoral candidates.

Dr. Rose Mary Allen

Rose Mary Allen studied anthropology at the post-graduate level in Nijmegen, obtaining her Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Utrecht. She has performed a variety of anthropological studies relating to the oral folk culture of the islands of the former Dutch Antilles and has been published many times on migration history, the post-emancipation period, national and cultural identity, and gender studies. From 2009 to 2012, Allen served a research fellowship on the project entitled *Citizenship, national canons and the issue of cultural diversity: The Netherlands in international perspective*, Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR), University of Amsterdam, Faculty

of Social and Behavioural Sciences. She is currently a guest lecturer in Caribbean Studies at the University of Curaçao (UoC).

Professor Gert Oostindie

Gert Oostindie is the director of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies [*Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV-KNAW)*] and Professor of Caribbean History at Leiden University. Oostindie studied social sciences and history at the VU University Amsterdam (doctorate, *cum laude*, 1982) and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Utrecht (*cum laude*, 1989). He has published and edited some 30 books on Dutch colonial history, particularly in relation to the Caribbean, as well as post-war decolonization, post-colonial migration from former colonies to the Netherlands, and the present-day repercussions of colonialism. He has served on various committees advising on the Antilles and/or Kingdom Relations and regularly contributes to the media on these themes.

Monica van Leeuwen-Laan

After studying Public Administration at the University of Twente, Monica van Leeuwen-Laan worked as a policy advisor at various ministries. From 2003 until the end of 2009, she worked at the directorate of Kingdom Relations at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. In 2007, she was seconded to serve at the Dutch Embassy in Paramaribo. From 2009 until the end of 2012, Van Leeuwen served as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Representation of the Netherlands [*Vertegenwoordiging van Nederland*] in Willemstad, Curaçao. Since 2013, she has been working as a Senior Policy Advisor on the Directorate of International Policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, including for the Caribbean Netherlands Project Unit.