



## PRESS RELEASE

### *KITLV Opinion Survey in the Dutch Caribbean, irregularities on St. Maarten*

Between September and November 2015, the KITLV executed a large-scale opinion survey on all six Caribbean islands of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. On each island, a random sample of addresses was drawn to be visited by a locally-recruited interviewer. KITLV researcher Dr. Wouter Veenendaal organized and supervised the survey, closely cooperating with local coordinators and interviewers on all islands. The first round of analyses of the survey has now been completed, and Wouter Veenendaal and KITLV's director Professor Gert Oostindie had been scheduled to present preliminary results later this month on the three Windward Antilles. They still intend to present the results on Saba (21 January) and St. Eustatius (25 January), but have had to cancel the presentation on St. Maarten due to serious suspicions of irregularities.

On St. Maarten, a sample of 1.000 randomly selected addresses was provided by the Department of Statistics (STAT). The completed questionnaires from all six islands have now been entered into a software program. Unfortunately, the analysis of the reported results from St. Maarten pointed to widespread irregularities in the data collection process. As a result, the opinion survey on St. Maarten must be considered a failure.

It should be emphasized that STAT had no further institutional involvement in the survey, and hence cannot be held responsible for what apparently went wrong afterwards. On an individual basis though, STAT's fieldwork coordinator supervised the interviewing process on this island, and the interviews were conducted by experienced interviewers who had participated in earlier STAT research projects. Once the research team has gathered more evidence and has completed number of checkups, it will be possible to draw final conclusions about the irregularities in the data collection process on St. Maarten, and a new update will be provided.

Professor Gert Oostindie and Wouter Veenendaal will be visiting the islands later this month for the presentations on Saba (21 January, between 8:00 and 9:30 pm at the Eugenius Johnson Centre in Windwardside) and St. Eustatius (25 January, between 2:00 and 3:30 pm at the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute). There will be no presentation of the results on St. Maarten, but the researchers will be available for meetings with the local press on Saturday 23 January. If you want to schedule an appointment to discuss this, or if you are interested in additional information, please contact Wouter Veenendaal at [veenendaal@kitlv.nl](mailto:veenendaal@kitlv.nl).