



Culture Covenant 2022 – 2025, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science – Public Entities of the Caribbean Netherlands

Parties,

The state secretary for Education, Culture and Science, Günay Uslu, acting in the capacity of the administrative body, hereinafter referred to as: OCW,

and

Island governors, central government commissioner, and island commissioners of the public entities of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba, in this matter duly represented by central government commissioner Alida Francis and commissioners James Kroon and Bruce Zagers, hereinafter referred to as: PEs,

Whereas,

- the parties are jointly responsible for promoting the cultural infrastructure in the Caribbean Netherlands;
- for the purpose of the desired policy coordination, the parties have conducted a dialogue concerning the principles and priorities of the cultural policy in the Caribbean Netherlands and for each specific public entity;
- a structural foundation for cultural policy at the local level is missing and, to date, a predominantly project-based approach to cultural activities has taken place;
- the parties want to make joint agreements on the policy priorities and responsibilities in the cultural policy for the period 2022 – 2025;
- the parties conclude that the National Culture Funds have conducted a successful policy to also stimulate art forms that fall both in and outside of the traditional canon and also fulfil a role in intensifying the cultural foundational infrastructure in the Caribbean Netherlands;
- the attention paid to our shared slavery past has become increasingly significant in recent years. The parties will conduct an open dialogue to understand and feel the impact of the past to ensure that the acknowledgement of our shared history, which must occur, can be as healing and reconciling as possible;
- these agreements aim to establish a foundation for developing a cultural agenda for each public entity and a cultural policy in the Caribbean Netherlands that must be further developed,

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:



Paragraph 1. General provisions

Article 1. General

The parties inform each other about the policy in the field of culture they implement at the national, inter-island, and local levels.

Paragraph 2. Shared responsibility

Paragraph 2.1. General

Article 2. Custom approach for the Caribbean Netherlands

1. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works with the PEs to create a cultural agenda for each island based on this covenant.
2. If the PEs work on an agenda for each island as of 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science or other organisations to be contacted can offer support. The PEs use the agendas to indicate the priorities in the implementation for each island, based on the subjects set out in this covenant, to continue working on promoting and further embedding the cultural life in the public entities.
3. The parties discuss the structural forms of support and resources needed to develop, promote, and embed the cultural infrastructure in the Caribbean Netherlands. These matters will be included in the agendas to be created.

Article 3. International cooperation

1. The parties emphasise the importance of promoting culture in the region because of the distance between the Caribbean Netherlands and the European Netherlands.
2. The parties also emphasise the importance of international cooperation and the opportunities this offers to the PEs.
3. The parties will share information with each other about the possibilities and desires for cultural cooperation in the international cultural policy (hereinafter: ICP) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Within the ICP, there are possibilities for international cultural cooperation in and outside of the region with a focus on 23 countries.
4. The parties also want to expand the knowledge about the opportunities for cultural cooperation within the European Creative Europe subsidy programme and consider in this respect that the Creative Europe Desk (Dutch Culture) can offer advice to the PEs and cultural organisations about the subsidy schemes and can assist with applications in the field of media and culture.



Article 4. Inter-island cooperation, island-based projects, and the National Culture Funds

1. The parties emphasise the importance of cooperation between the PEs and the opportunities offered to them. The parties value cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and culture.
2. The parties also emphasise the importance of cooperation with the countries in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.
3. The Minister of Education, Culture and Science conducts, also on behalf of the PEs, an annual ministerial four-country consultation with the ministers of the countries with cultural cooperation among the agreements. The parties will keep in contact about this matter and coordinate where necessary.
4. The Minister of Education, Culture and Science and the National Culture Funds will promote expanding the visibility and accessibility of the National Culture Funds to potential applicants in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Article 5. Shared vision on cultural policy after 2025

During the period of this covenant, the parties strive to think about a continuation of the cultural policy for the Caribbean Netherlands as of 2025, taking into account the roles and responsibilities of the individual parties.

Paragraph 2.2. Culture education, talent development, and culture participation

Article 6. Culture education

1. The parties bring the regional lesson methods for culture education in primary and secondary education to the attention of each other and potential users, possibly in cooperation with the countries in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.
2. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science strives, in cooperation with the organisation responsible for the Canon of the Netherlands, to offer accessible and available Caribbean regional canons to enable organisations in the Caribbean Netherlands to develop these and maintains contact for subsequent processes for this purpose.
3. The PEs welcome the deployment of the "Culture Education with Quality" programme in 2021 – 2024 from the Cultural Participation Fund (hereinafter: FCP).
4. The parties strive to work with the National Knowledge Institute for Culture Education and Amateur Art (hereinafter: LKCA) on the further development of the internal culture coordinators in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Article 7. Talent development

The parties emphasise the value of further development of talent, such as cultural talent development aimed at personal development and the further development of talent in various art disciplines, taking into account local cultural expressions.



Article 8. Culture participation and the Faro Convention

1. The parties emphasise the importance of participating in culture and the cooperation with the social domain. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has, in cooperation with the Cultural Participation Fund, prepared the Culture Participation programme 2021 – 2024 for the Caribbean Netherlands. The Caribbean Netherlands will remain a focus in the further development of this programme. The implementation of this programme (or elements thereof) is worked on with the PEs in this respect.
2. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science strives to pay attention to the Caribbean Netherlands in the implementation agenda of the Framework Convention of the European Council concerning the value of cultural heritage to society (hereinafter: Faro Convention) and works with the PEs to determine which existing cases on the islands qualify for the application of the Faro Convention.

Paragraph 2.3. Cultural heritage

Article 9. General provisions

1. The parties emphasise the importance of sound and careful use of cultural heritage, specifically: built heritage, archaeology, underwater archaeology, museum collections, and intangible heritage based on the BES Monuments Acts, and the monuments (island) ordinance.
2. The parties also emphasise that the goal of protecting the heritage is having it be of significance to society, in which respect spatial developments can contribute to the quality of the living environment.
3. The parties acknowledge the importance of an overview of the heritage for the purpose of protecting it. The parties promote the creation of a heritage inventory of the Caribbean Netherlands.
4. The parties explore the development of a vision on the future of the heritage in the Caribbean Netherlands.
5. The parties pay special attention to heritage contributing to the dialogue about our shared history, specifically colonial (slavery) history.

Article 10. Public collections

The parties acknowledge the importance of maintaining, managing, and ensuring the physical and digital accessibility of public collections. The parties strive to achieve this by:

- a. having the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science support the PEs with developing the management and maintenance of heritage collections by stimulating the cooperation between museums and other forms of cooperation and the exchange of knowledge; and
- b. informing each other about national and local policy related to the careful return and handling of collections with a colonial context.



Article 11. Built heritage

1. The parties strive to maintain the built heritage in the Caribbean Netherlands.
2. The PEs are responsible for maintaining the heritage on their islands and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science strives to support the PEs in this respect.
3. The parties discuss the maintenance and reallocation of monuments, including instruments like a monuments register, financing options, financing of monuments in private possession, and the Revolving Fund with the National Restoration Fund Foundation and the Monument Funds on the islands.
4. The parties cooperate with the countries in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom in the Dutch Caribbean Heritage Platform.
5. The PEs take care of the heritage in their possession, just like the local government in the European Netherlands and the Central Government.

Article 12. Intangible heritage

1. The parties cooperate and support each other with the implementation of the Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Ts. 2011, 151 (hereinafter: UNESCO convention 2003).
2. The cooperation specifically focuses on but is not limited to:
 - a. supporting the preparation of implementation frameworks and manuals for governments, designated organisations, NGOs, and communities;
 - b. including intangible cultural heritage in the cultural policy and, insofar as possible, intersectoral policy;
 - c. the preparation of inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in a manner tailored to the situation on each island in accordance with Article 12 of the UNESCO convention 2003.

Article 13. Archaeology

The parties exchange information about the protection of archaeological heritage, for example, using value maps, including the context of the BES Monuments Act and the island ordinances, as well as in relation to the European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage concluded on 16 January 1992 in Valletta, Ts. 1992, 97.

Article 14. Underwater archaeology

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works with the PEs on the preparation of regulations on the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, Ts. 2017, 3. The practical working group, founded two years ago, led by the Dutch State Service for Cultural Heritage, will work on improving maritime heritage management in practice with representatives of the heritage bodies of the public entities. The goal is to complete the preparation of the regulations and the practice in 2022 and to send the proposal to the House of Representatives for ratification. After the ratification, the parties will continue to cooperate to ensure the proper implementation of the convention in practice.



Article 15. Heritage and spatial development

The parties can use the knowledge of the other parties when developing and revising spatial plans.

Article 16. Cultural heritage during crises

1. The parties strive to enhance the attention paid to cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, in case of disasters and calamities, including precautions, to prevent or mitigate damage and loss to the greatest possible extent.
2. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science consults the PEs to determine how culture is included in the crisis plans of the islands.
3. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works with The National Office of the Caribbean Netherlands, the representative of the Netherlands in Willemstad, and the Dutch UNESCO Commission to have culture be part of the civil mission in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.

Paragraph 2.4. Libraries

Article 17. Libraries

1. The parties jointly strive to modernise the libraries in the Caribbean Netherlands, addressing bottlenecks and challenges.
2. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science promotes the participation of the National Library in a general working group with the six libraries of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom to, among other things, promote cooperation and access to the schemes. The parties strive to support this working group, when necessary.
3. The parties strive to also implement the national library programmes in the Caribbean Netherlands and offer a customised approach where necessary.
4. The parties strive to focus on promoting reading, for example, through the Art of Reading programme, and on potential future schemes, and to make these accessible to the Caribbean Netherlands and offer a custom approach where necessary.
5. The parties strive to give the libraries on the islands a role in the lifelong learning process of the Diertens resolution (*Parliamentary Papers II 2017/18, 30012, no. 93*).

Paragraph 2.5. Digitisation

Article 18. Digitisation

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science promotes the support offered by the Digital Heritage Netherlands Foundation, the knowledge institute for culture and digital transformation, to cultural institutions in the Caribbean Netherlands for their digital transformation in the form of training and community building.

Paragraph 2.6. Archive sites



Article 19. Archives and archive sites

1. The PEs jointly strive, with the support of the National Archive of the Netherlands (hereinafter: NAN) to establish a fixed selection list for the archives of the public entities and their services.
2. The PEs strive, with support of the NAN, to create suitable archive sites to ensure the lasting storage of the paper archives.
3. The parties strive to maintain and preserve old archives.
4. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science offers cooperation concerning the scan facilities of the NAN to ensure that the PEs, in cooperation with the National Archive of Curaçao (hereinafter: NAC) can digitise the paper archives.
5. The parties study, in cooperation with the NAN, the option of storing their digital archives in an e-depot.
6. The parties cooperate to make digital archive materials findable and available for the residents of the islands.

Paragraph 3. Miscellaneous provisions

Article 20. Competition and tenders

The application and development of this covenant or the resulting measures may not violate European or national competition and tender regulations.

Article 21. Monitoring and evaluation

1. The parties identify and capture the progress on the agreements of this covenant halfway through and at the end of the effective period of this covenant. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science takes the initiative to conduct this monitoring, including by scheduling periodic bilateral meetings with the PEs at the administrative level.
2. After the covenant, the parties will focus on the evaluation of the results achieved and the potential future progress.

Article 22. Changes

If unforeseen circumstances arise of such a nature that this covenant should reasonably be changed, the parties will discuss a potential change to this covenant.

Article 23. Termination

If a party terminates the covenant in writing, the covenant will be terminated for this party. The covenant will remain in force for the other signatories.

Article 24. Nature of the covenant

This covenant cannot be legally enforced.



Paragraph 4. Final provisions

Article 25. Effective date and duration

1. This covenant takes effect from the date on which it is signed by the parties and ends with effect from 1 January 2026.
2. The parties will discuss a potential renewal of this covenant no later than one year before the end of this covenant.

Article 26. Publication

The text of this covenant will be published in the Government Gazette within six weeks of the date on which it is signed.

Thus agreed and signed in quadruplicate,



The Hague, 27th of September 2022

Günay Uslu, state secretary of Education, Culture and Science



Bonaire, 27th of September 2022

James Kroon, commissioner for culture, nature and spatial development, Bonaire



Sint Eustatius, 27th September 2022

Alida Francis, central government commissioner, Sint Eustatius



Saba, 27th September 2022

Bruce Zagers, commissioner for constitutional affairs, finance and infrastructure, Saba