



INFORMATION BULLETIN

BONAIRE, ST. EUSTATIUS AND SABA

10.10.10 is approaching. The country the Netherlands Antilles will be dissolved on 10 October 2010. Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba will become 'special' public bodies of the Netherlands. What are the consequences of these changes for the three islands? And what is the role of the Regional Service Centre in this? This information bulletin provides an explanation of the political changes and the how and why of the Regional Service Centre. In addition, the bulletin provides answers to frequently asked questions.

10-10-10

Big changes will be taking place this year for the inhabitants of the Netherlands Antilles. In various referendums in 2004, the inhabitants opted for a future separate from the country Netherlands Antilles. Curacao and St. Maarten will become independent countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In 2006, the choice was made that Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba would become public bodies of the Netherlands. On these three islands, the Netherlands will assume the role of the Netherlands Antilles. Special laws will be introduced for Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba as it concerns three special communities. Laws that do justice to the culture, the character and the requirements of the islands. Examples of this are their own tax system, their own general healthcare insurance, their own environmental laws and their own currency, the dollar. The tasks of the Netherlands Antilles will be assumed by the Netherlands, for instance the police force, fire brigade and taxes. In addition, tasks regarding benefits (state old age pensions, social security, unemployment), public health, youth care and education will become the responsibility of the Dutch government. The Netherlands will work together closely with the island authorities of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba through the Regional Service Centre when carrying out these tasks. The local government will retain most of its current tasks and can carry out additional tasks in consultation. The local influence thus is and remains considerable.



WORKING TOGETHER ON A BETTER FUTURE FOR BONAIRE, ST. EUSTATIUS AND SABA

A better future; that is the common goal. These changes should result in improvements for the population of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba. The following improvement projects have been launched:

Education

- ▶ Catching-up programmes for language skills and mathematics, new teaching methods, free school-books
- ▶ Training of teachers, school principals and school administrations
- ▶ Improvement of school buildings

Youth and Family

- ▶ Advice and information under one roof: Centre for Youth and Family
- ▶ More assistance for families and children
- ▶ More qualified personnel and facilities
- ▶ Training for youth workers

Healthcare

- ▶ Introduction of healthcare costs insurance for everyone
- ▶ Expansion of healthcare facilities
- ▶ Expansion of sport and exercise facilities

Security

- ▶ Setting up a new police force and fire brigade
- ▶ Permanently staffed emergency room for the police force, fire brigade and ambulance service

- ▶ Intensifying emergency assistance
- ▶ Doubling of crime investigation capacity
- ▶ Construction and renovation of police stations and fire stations
- ▶ Renovation and construction of detention centre and prison

Infrastructure

- ▶ Improving airports and ports

Environment and housing construction projects

- ▶ Providing for a responsible disposal of wastewater and waste
- ▶ Promoting good spatial planning
- ▶ Investing in rental homes for people with low incomes (new construction and renovation)

Finance

- ▶ Setting up a pension fund
- ▶ Introduction of a new currency: dollar
- ▶ Introduction of new tax laws and reorganising the Tax and Customs Administration
- ▶ Preparing the legal framework, adjustment and indexation of benefits
- ▶ Restructuring various debts

2004	Referendums over the future of the Netherlands Antilles
2006	Laying down agreements with the Executive Committees of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba
2006-2010	Elaboration of agreements in laws and projects
2008	Establishment of Regional Service Centres on Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba
2009	Agreement on the division of tasks between St. Eustatius, Saba and The Netherlands
10-10-10	Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba will become 'special' municipalities within The Netherlands.

THE REGIONAL SERVICE CENTRE (RSC)

The Netherlands strives for a transparent, efficient and good cooperating national government on Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba. In order to achieve this, a Regional Service Centre (RSC), an office of the Dutch government, has been established on each island. A team of experienced staff of the Dutch ministries works together with the local authorities and the local organisation on the islands on the transition from the Netherlands Antilles to the Netherlands. The Dutch government has appointed Henk Kamp as the Commissioner for Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba to supervise the transition. The Dutch civil servants are stationed on the islands temporarily. The Regional Service Centres are local organisations. For the execution of the tasks for which the Netherlands will be responsible, personnel will be recruited on the islands themselves.

