



The Caribbean Netherlands in numbers 2023



St Eustatius

33%
born on St Eustatius*



3,293
residents*

47
different
nationalities*

* 1 January 2023

Contents

Introduction	8	How many tourists arrive by air in the Caribbean Netherlands?	46
How does CBS collect data?	10	Are people satisfied with their lives?	50
How do we monitor well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands?	14	How did the economies of the Caribbean Netherlands perform in 2020?	54
Are emigrants returning to the Caribbean Netherlands?	18	Has electricity production from renewable sources increased?	58
What is the state of some bird species on Bonaire and St Eustatius?	22	How did the purchasing power develop in 2021?	62
How have prices developed in the Caribbean Netherlands?	24	Which marine animals are spotted around Bonaire?	66
How many airline passengers fly to and from the islands?	28	How many people work in the Caribbean Netherlands?	68
What is the average annual wage of employees?	32	How does CBS handle your privacy?	74
How many people are religious?	34	Sources	76
Who looks after children when their parents are at work?	38	About CBS	80
What percentage of the population has difficulty making ends meet?	42	Colophon/Contact us	84



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The Caribbean
Netherlands
in numbers

The Caribbean Netherlands in numbers

Are emigrants returning to the Caribbean Netherlands? Who looks after children when their parents are at work? How many people work? How many tourists arrived by air? How many people are religious?

You'll find the answers to these and more questions in this compact and colourful book. This edition approaches every topic through a question, the answer focusing on all three islands, presenting an array of recent data on for example economy, tourism, labour, population and youth, all key aspects of life on Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius.

Do you have any question that was not included here? Feel free to contact us. This publication is available online as well as in hard copy.

Enjoy, as you discover more about the Caribbean Netherlands.

Statistics Netherlands (CBS),
December 2023



How does CBS collect data?

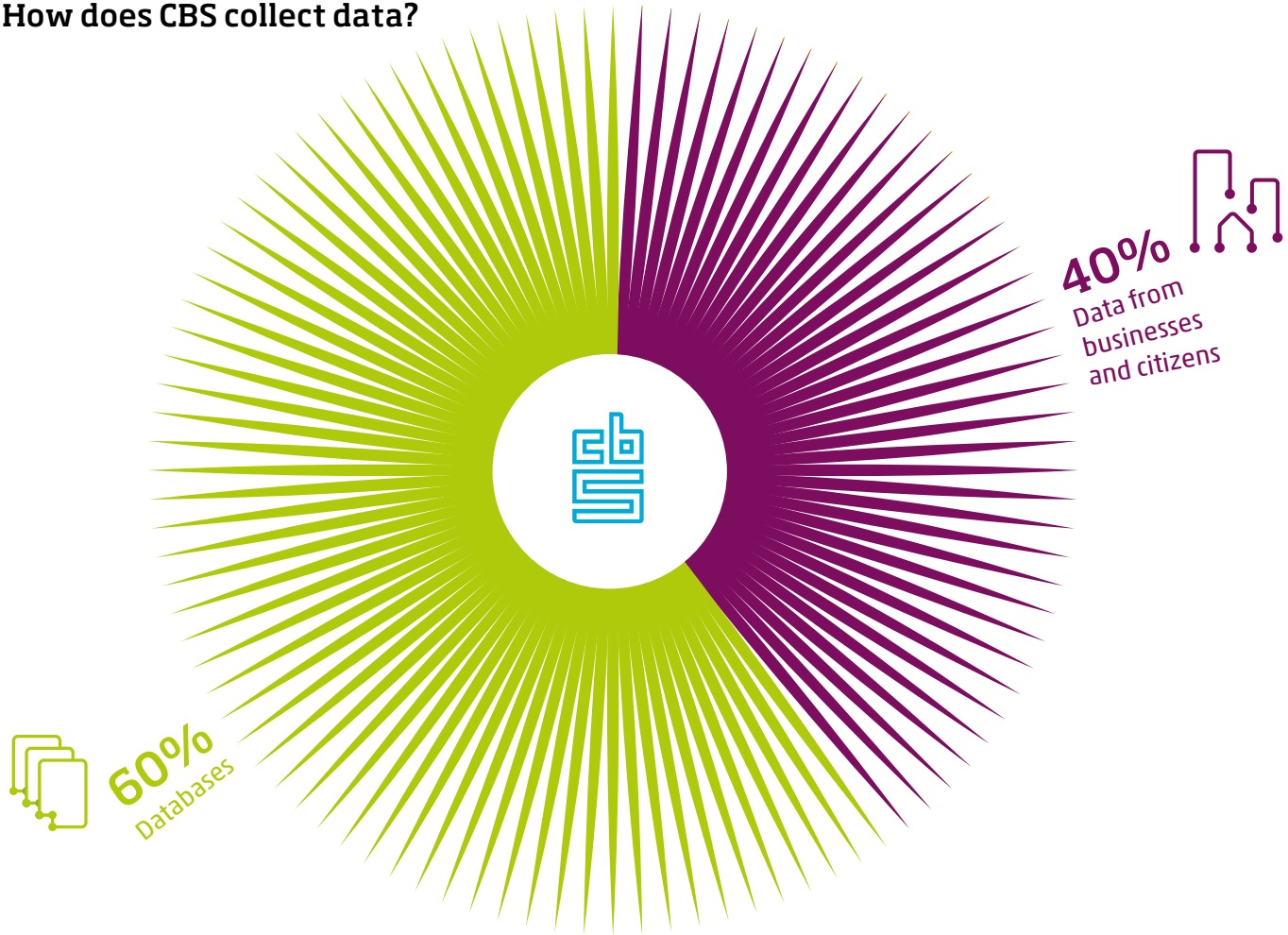
CBS collects as much information as possible from existing government and business registers. The use of this information is regulated by law, with top priority given to privacy and reliability.

Additionally, CBS collects data through its own surveys, keeping in mind that it is required to reduce the administrative burden (from survey taking) to a minimum. CBS' statutory task is to compile and publish the statistics that are mandatory.

Sixty percent of the figures collected and analysed by CBS come from registers of authorities and businesses, such as the PIVA (population register), the Tax and Customs Administration, annual reports from businesses to calculate the GDP, or data from energy companies on household and business energy consumption.

The main advantage of using data from registers is that CBS no longer has to contact individuals and businesses as often, which makes the survey process less intensive and time-consuming for everyone.

How does CBS collect data?



40 percent from surveys

Forty percent of the figures are collected from businesses and citizens. This is done by means of surveys, conducted mostly face-to-face or - on a smaller scale - online.

Combining all these data sources in an innovative and reliable way creates greater possibilities to produce new, up-to-date, society-oriented and more detailed statistics, while keeping a sharp eye on privacy and reliability.

Facts that matter

CBS stands for a well-informed society, with information that is based on facts. CBS provides reliable, objective information for the insight that government and society require. In doing so, CBS contributes to social debate, research, policy development, and decision-making.





How do we monitor well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands?

Well-being means the quality of life here and now, and the extent to which it comes at the expense of the well-being of future generations and people elsewhere in the world. While the gross domestic product describes the material aspects of our society, such as how much we consume and produce and what we earn as a result, well-being concerns everything that is important for a good quality of life.

Although material prosperity is essential to a certain extent, intangible aspects ultimately determine how satisfied most people are with their lives. These include the quality of relationships, health and a pleasant living environment. These aspects determine our well-being 'here and now'.

The Monitor of Well-being & SDGs Caribbean Netherlands analyses the well-being of the Caribbean Netherlands based on the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs serve as the road map for increasing well-being.



Well-being means the quality of life here and now, and the extent to which it comes at the expense of the well-being of future generations and people elsewhere in the world.

Well-being in the future and elsewhere

Alongside aspects that are important in the short term (here and now), it is also essential to consider what will happen in the future (later). Will our children enjoy the same quality of life as we do? Will there still be sufficient natural resources for them, and are those resources distributed evenly? The choices we make also have a direct impact on the prosperity and well-being of people in other countries (elsewhere). Statistics Netherlands pays particular attention to the impacts on the world's poorest countries.

The Monitor of Well-being & the SDGs in the Caribbean Netherlands has been published since 2022 to help us form a clearer picture of well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands



International standard for well-being

The UN has set 17 SDGs that focus on ensuring that everyone can share in our planet's resources and the prosperity they can create, and on improving the quality of life of as many people as possible. These goals set an international standard for well-being, which can subsequently be adapted to local cultures and standards as a guideline for policy. However, this requires systematic monitoring of well-being in general and the progress towards the SDGs in particular. To this end, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) has developed the 'Monitor of Well-being & SDGs Caribbean Netherlands', which complies with the Conference of European Statisticians' guidelines for monitoring well-being.

Monitor of Well-being and SDGs in the Caribbean Netherlands

The Monitor of Well-being and SDGs in the Caribbean Netherlands was published for the first time in 2022 to help form a clearer picture of well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands. Where possible, the well-being of each of the three islands – Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius – is analysed individually.

Monitor of Well-being & the SDGs:
taking account of the regional context of the Caribbean Netherlands



The monitor is a development project. It will be expanded every year to allow us to develop an increasingly comprehensive picture of well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands. This means that the way the dimensions of well-being (here and now, later and elsewhere) and the SDGs are monitored will become more extensive each year.

The potential for expansion is primarily dependent on the availability of high-quality data. There are currently no suitable data sources for several important topics, including nature/biodiversity and harmful substance emissions. Figures must first be generated before these topics can be added to the monitor.

Monitor of Well-being & the SDGs: taking account of the regional context of the Caribbean Netherlands

The main goal of the Monitor of Well-being & the SDGs in the Caribbean Netherlands is to systematically monitor the level and development of well-being. The same concepts and definitions used for the Monitor of Well-being & the SDGs developed for the Netherlands have been followed, although the specific details of the monitor have been adapted to the regional context of the Caribbean Netherlands. This means the indicators differ in some respects from those for the European Netherlands due to the unique nature of the Caribbean area.



More on well-being in the Caribbean Netherlands and the latest figures are available here.



Population

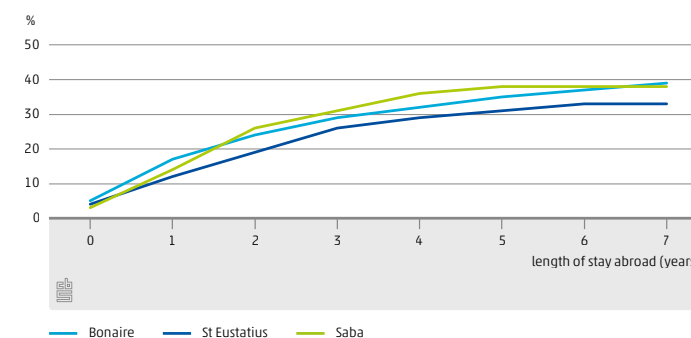
Are emigrants returning to the Caribbean Netherlands?

Between 2011 and 2016, there were 2,480 emigrants born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba. Almost 4 out of 10 (38 percent) returned to the Caribbean Netherlands within seven years. The majority were away for one or two years.

Of the 1,954 Bonaire residents who were born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba and emigrated between 2011-2016, 39 percent had returned to the island seven years later. As for St Eustatius, 33 percent of the 382 emigrants had returned after seven years. On Saba, 144 people emigrated between 2011-2016; seven years later, 38 percent had come back to the island.

Emigrants mainly went to the European Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten.

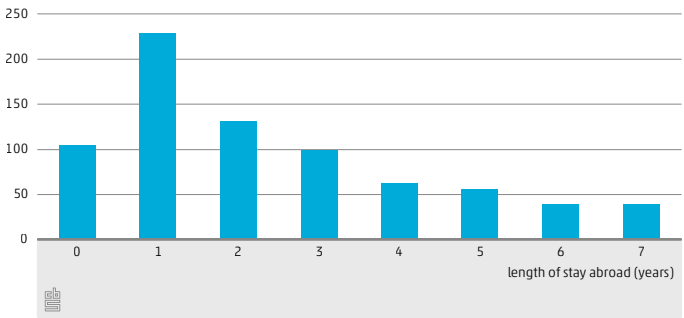
Return of emigrants¹⁾



¹⁾Born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, departure between 2011 and 2016.

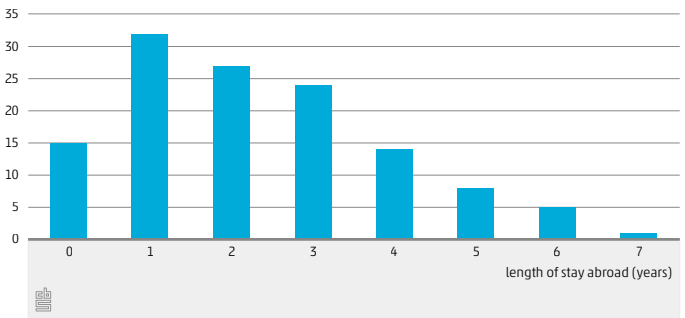
33%
of Statia emigrants back within 7 years

Returning of emigrants, Bonaire¹⁾



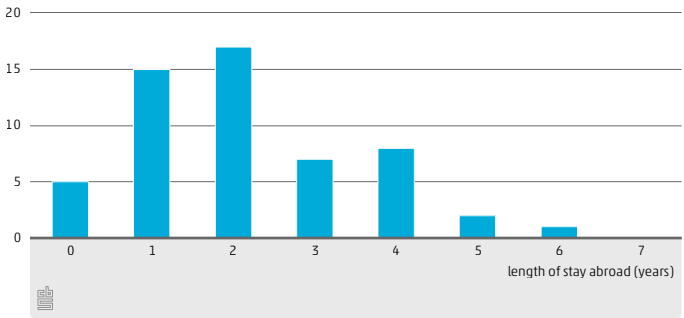
¹⁾Born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, departure between 2011 and 2016.

Returning of emigrants, St Eustatius¹⁾



¹⁾Born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, departure between 2011 and 2016.

Returning of emigrants, Saba¹⁾



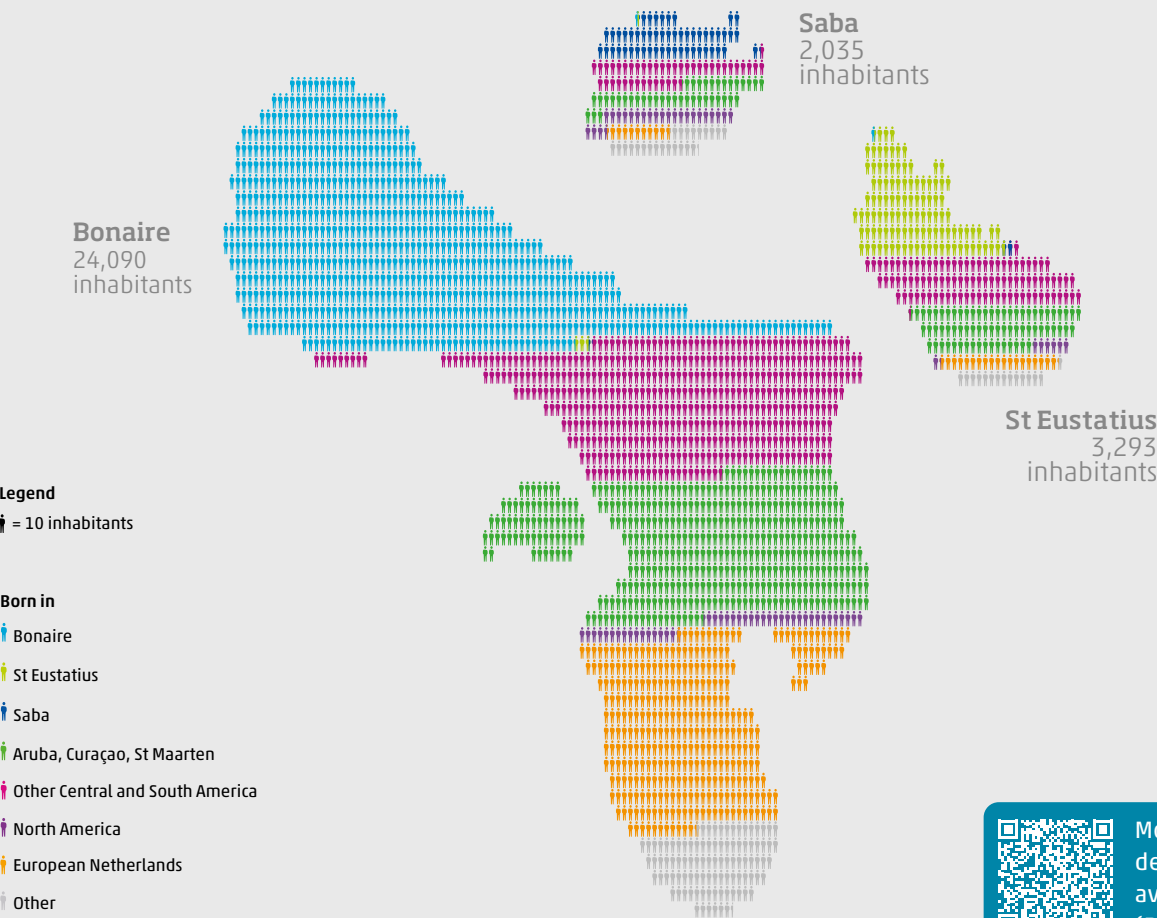
¹⁾Born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, departure between 2011 and 2016.

Return after one year

The largest group of emigrants from Bonaire returned after one year; some after less than a year. The majority of emigrants from St Eustatius returned within one to two years, although compared to Bonaire, relatively more emigrants returned after two to three years. Most Saba residents who were born in the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba and left the island, returned after spending two years abroad. This makes their most common length of stay abroad different from the other two islands. The second most common length of their stay was one year.

Where were people in the Caribbean Netherlands originally born?

1 January 2023



More data on demographics available here (Dutch only).

Nature



More information about nature is available here.

¹⁾ Data provided by Openbaar Lichaam Bonaire

²⁾ Data provided by St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA)

What is the state of some bird species?

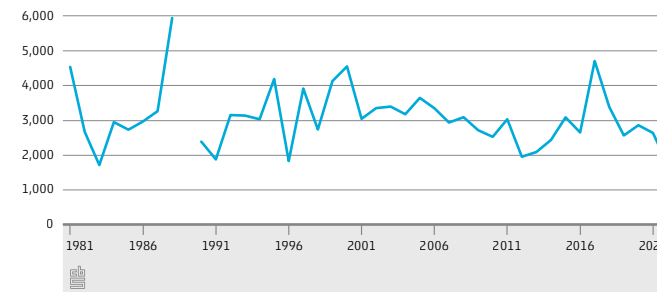
Observing bird populations is a way to monitor the state of nature. A well-known bird on Bonaire is the Caribbean flamingo. The pink bird is a tourist attraction that lives at the salt lakes (saliñas). ¹⁾

In the past, the flamingo could be found on numerous Caribbean islands, but many of those locations have rapidly declined due to habitat destruction. Luckily, the flamingo population on Bonaire has remained stable throughout the years.

Hurricanes chased away bridled quail-dove ²⁾

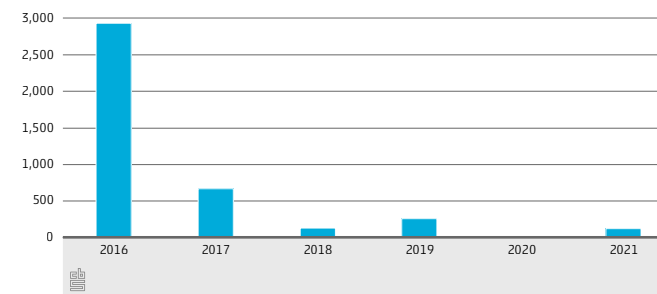
The bridled quail-dove is another bird species native to the Caribbean islands. The bridled quail-dove is not often sighted as it prefers undisturbed closed forests. On St Eustatius, there was a large population of the bird, until hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the island in 2017. The bird species is sensitive to disturbances in its environment and the population has declined rapidly after the hurricanes.

Flamingos on Bonaire*



Source: Openbaar Lichaam Bonaire
* No observations in 1989

Bridled quail-doves on St Eustatius*



Source: St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) and Dutch Caribbean Biodiversity Database
* No observations in 2020



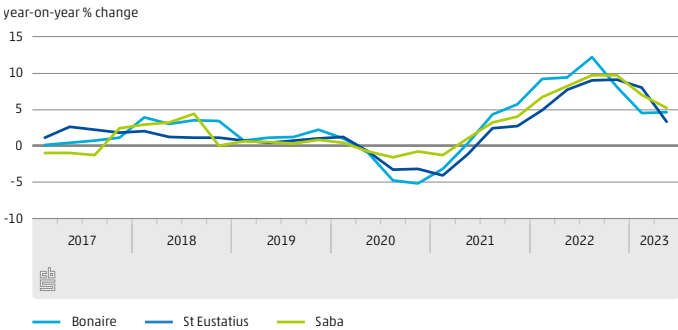
Prices

How have prices developed in the Caribbean Netherlands?

In 2022, consumer prices for goods and services in the Caribbean Netherlands increased compared to the previous year, as indicated by the change in the consumer price index. Among the three islands, St Eustatius had the lowest inflation rate, while Bonaire experienced the highest.

In 2022, the average price level on Bonaire rose by 9.7 percent compared to 2021, while prices on St Eustatius were 7.7 percent and on Saba 8.6 percent higher. These increases were primarily driven by higher prices for food, transportation, housing, water and energy. From the third quarter onwards until the second quarter of 2023, inflation rates decreased on all three islands.

CPI, annual rate of change



* Provisional figures

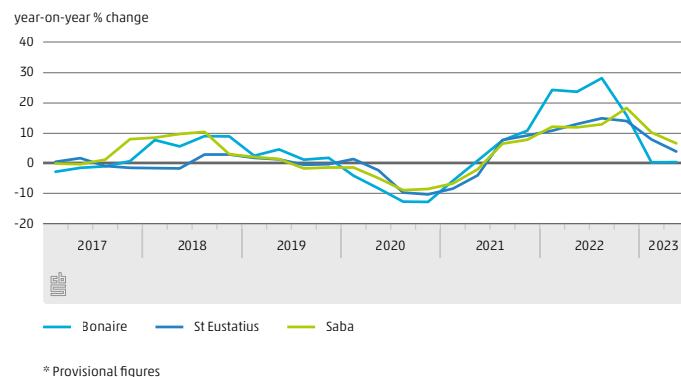
The decrease was strongest on Bonaire and can mainly be attributed to the subsidy on the standing charge for electricity that came into effect on 1 November 2022.

Prices for food and non-alcoholic beverages

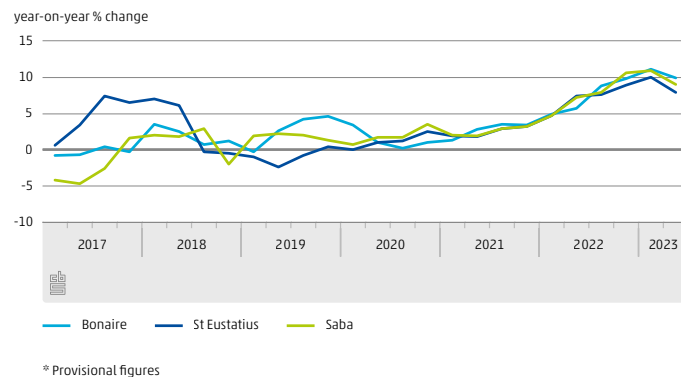
Food prices have been on a steady rise since the start of 2020 and starting from the first quarter of 2022, there has been a notable acceleration in food prices across all three islands. On Bonaire, food prices increased by 9.9 percent in the second quarter of 2023 compared to the same period in the previous year. On St Eustatius, they rose by 7.9 percent relative to the second quarter of 2022. Saba saw a year-on-year increase of 9.0 percent.

Notably, there have been significant price increases for eggs. On Bonaire, egg prices rose by 50 percent in the second quarter of 2023 compared to the same period in the previous year. For Saba, the increase was 28 percent. After a period of steady increase, egg prices on St Eustatius decreased by 27.3 percent in the second quarter of 2023 compared to the same period one year previously.

Housing, water and energy prices



Prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages



50% rise
in egg prices on Bonaire
in 2023



More information on prices
is available here (Dutch
only).



How many airline passengers fly to and from the islands?

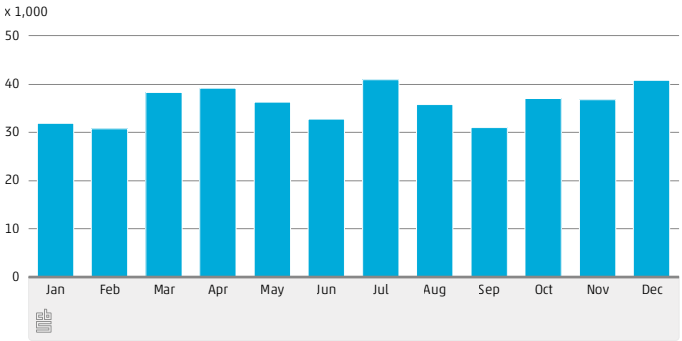
In 2022, more than 475 thousand passengers passed through the airports of Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius. This is nearly 64 percent more than in 2021 and 4 percent more than in 2019. The number of aircraft movements to and from these airports was almost 14 percent higher than in 2021.

The highest number of passengers travelling to and from the three airports of the Caribbean Netherlands was recorded in July and December 2022: 45 thousand in both months.

Most passengers flying to and from Bonaire

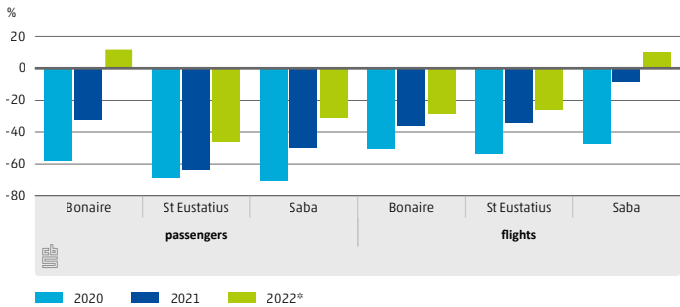
In 2022, nearly 432 thousand passengers arrived at or departed from Flamingo Airport on Bonaire, 91 percent of all passengers in the Caribbean Netherlands. For the airports of St Eustatius and Saba, this was 5 and 4 percent respectively.

Air passenger arrivals and departures, Bonaire, 2022*



* Provisional figures

Flights and passengers in the Caribbean Netherlands relative to 2019

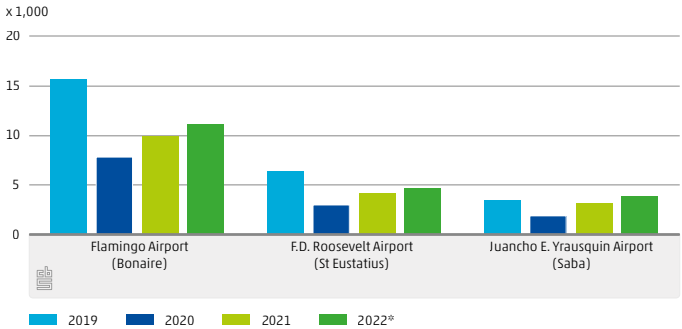


* Provisional figures

Sharpest increase in air passenger traffic on Bonaire

Compared to pre-pandemic year 2019, 4 percent more passengers travelled to and from the Caribbean Netherlands in 2022. These additional passengers all travelled to and from Bonaire, representing an increase of more than 12 percent (from 384 thousand passengers in 2019 to 432 thousand in 2022). Last year, the number of flights to and from Bonaire was far below the level of 2019.

Aircraft movements to and from Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba



* Provisional figures

More flights to and from Saba

In 2022, the airports of St Eustatius and Saba together recorded over 8.6 thousand aircraft arrivals and departures. This was 44 percent of all flights to and from the Caribbean Netherlands and 16.4 percent more than in 2021. Juancho E. Yrausquin Airport on Saba was the only one of the three airports in the Caribbean Netherlands where the number of flights increased in 2022 compared to 2019.

Most flights on Saba and St Eustatius to and from St Maarten

In both 2019 and 2022, most flights on Bonaire were to and from Curaçao and Amsterdam: 84 and 78 percent respectively. Most flights on Saba and St Eustatius together were to and from St Maarten (83 percent in 2022).

4% more passengers travelled to and from the islands in 2022 compared to pre-pandemic year 2019.



More information about air travel to and from the Caribbean Netherlands available here





Wages

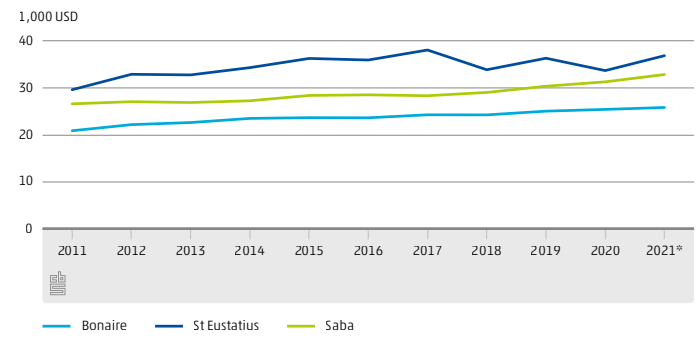
More data on jobs and wages is available here.

What is the average annual wage of employees?

The average annual wage of employee jobs on Bonaire was 25.8 thousand US dollars in 2021. This is 2 percent more than in 2020. On St Eustatius, the average annual wage was 36.9 thousand US dollars and on Saba it was 32.8 thousand US dollars. From 2011 onwards, wages on the three islands separately have increased by 2 percent on average in each consecutive year.

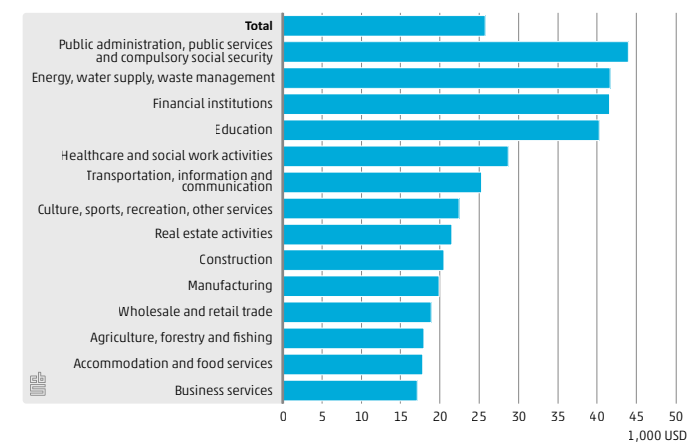
In 2021, the highest average annual wage on Bonaire was found in public administration and services (44.0 thousand US dollars), followed by energy and financial institutions. The lowest average wages were found in the sectors business services, accommodation and food services and agriculture.

Average annual wage of employee jobs



* Provisional figures

Average annual wage of employee jobs, Bonaire, 2021*



* Provisional figures



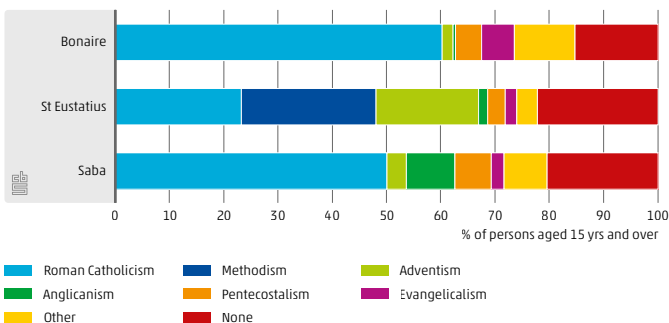
Religion

How many people are religious?

The majority of the population aged 15 years or older consider themselves to be part of a religious group. In 2021, 85 percent of the people on Bonaire belonged to a religious denomination or ideological group; this was 78 percent on St Eustatius and 80 percent on Saba.

On Bonaire and Saba, Catholicism is by far the largest religion. The respective shares of those belonging to the Roman Catholic Church are 60 and 50 percent. On St Eustatius, there are three religious groups of approximately the same size: Methodists (25 percent), Roman Catholics (23 percent), and Seventh-day Adventists (19 percent).

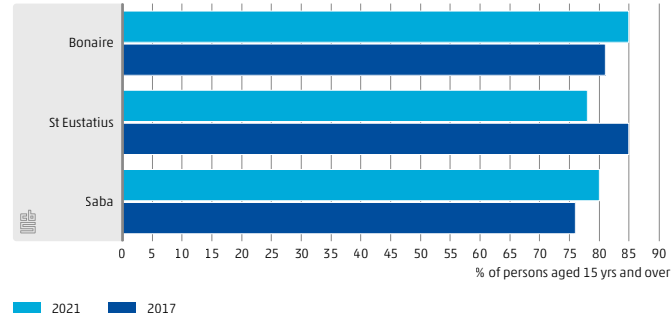
Religions, 2021



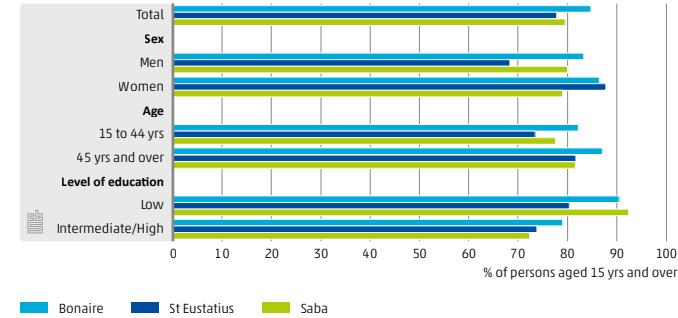
Decline on St Eustatius

On St Eustatius, the percentage of people who say they are part of a religious denomination or ideological group decreased from 85 percent in 2017 to 78 percent in 2021. There were no significant differences between these years on Bonaire and Saba. However, the percentage of Evangelists on Bonaire rose from 3 percent in 2017 to 6 percent in 2021. On St Eustatius, the percentage of people describing themselves as Pentecostals fell from 7 percent in 2017 to 3 percent in 2021.

Religious



Religious, personal characteristics, 2021



Lower educated more likely to be religious

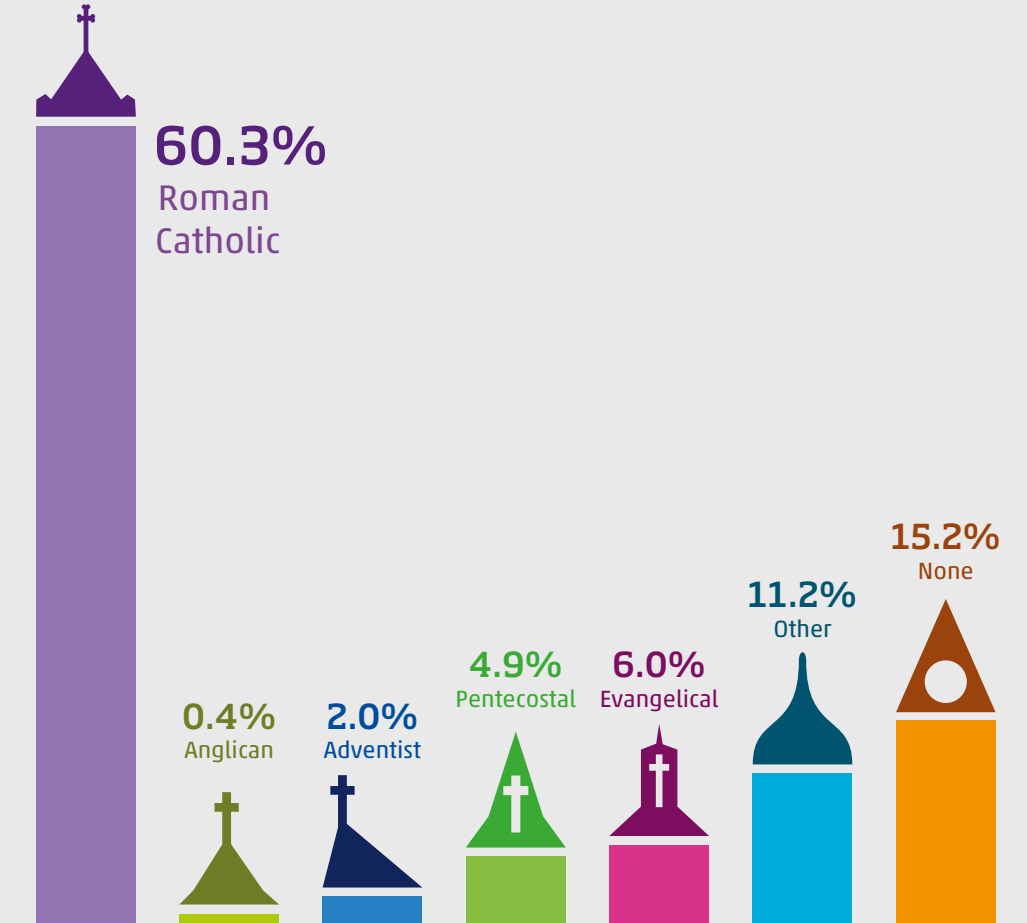
On Bonaire and Saba, people with a low level of education are more likely to be religious than people with a high level of education. The biggest difference can be witnessed on Saba, where 92 percent of the population with a low education level are religious, against 72 percent of those with an intermediate or high education level. On St Eustatius, more women (88 percent) than men (68 percent) are religious. In the European Netherlands, a much smaller share of the population consider themselves to be part of a religious denomination or ideological group: 43 percent in 2022.

88% of women are religious on St Eustatius

More data on religion is available here (Dutch only).



Religious denominations on Bonaire, 2021





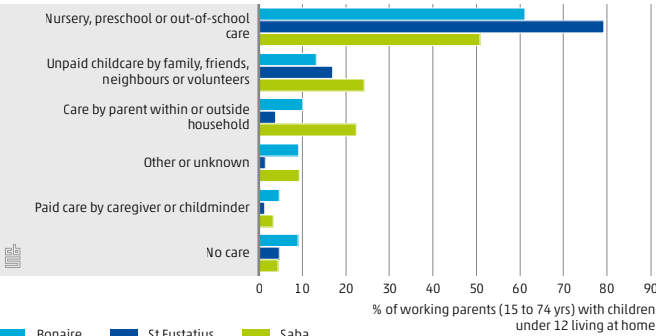
Childcare

Who looks after children when their parents are at work?

In 2022, there were almost 3,300 parents on Bonaire with children under 12 living at home, over 500 on St Eustatius and nearly 300 on Saba. Of all working parents with young children, 63 percent used formal childcare at least once per week, such as a nursery, preschool or out-of-school care. The highest share was seen on St Eustatius at 79 percent, versus 61 percent on Bonaire and 51 percent on Saba.

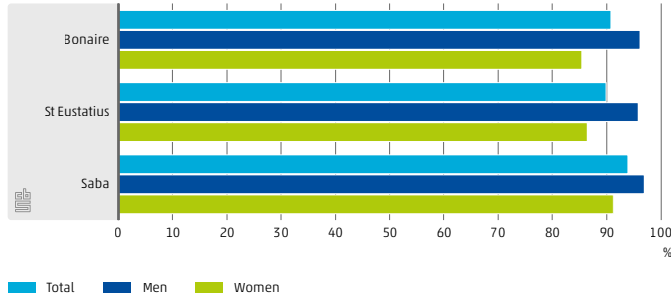
Instead of formal childcare, parents can also opt for (several) other types of childcare, including unpaid childcare by family, friends, neighbours or a voluntary organisation. This was most common on Saba at 24 percent, while on St Eustatius and Bonaire the respective shares were 17 and 13 percent. On Saba, children were also more likely to be cared for by a parent than on the other islands (22 percent).

Forms of childcare used (at least once per week)¹⁾, 2022



¹⁾ Multiple answers are possible.

Net labour participation rate of parents¹⁾ (15 to 74 yrs), 2022



¹⁾ With children under 12 living at home

This took place both within and outside the household (if parents do not live together). Eight percent used childcare less than once per week or not at all. This was true for more parents on Bonaire (9 percent) than on Saba (4 percent) and St Eustatius (5 percent).

9 in 10 parents in the Caribbean Netherlands had paid work

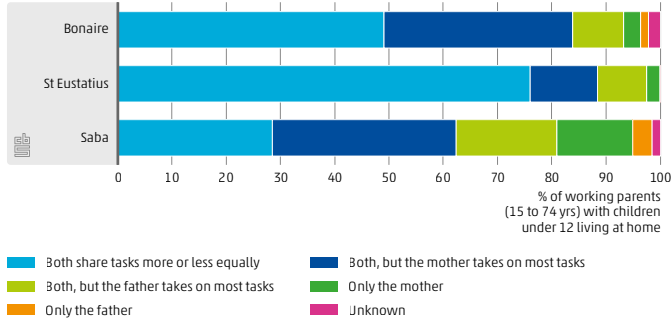
On Saba, 94 percent of the parents with children under 12 living at home were in paid employment, against 91 percent on Bonaire and 90 percent on St Eustatius. This is the net labour participation rate.

On St Eustatius, the average working time of parents with children under 12 living at home was 39.9 hours per week, which was higher than on Bonaire (38.0 hours) and Saba (37.2 hours).

Equal division of childcare mainly on St Eustatius

Couples in the Caribbean Netherlands with children under the age of 12 living at home were also asked how they divide the care for their children. On St Eustatius, 76 percent of parents shared their care tasks more or less equally. On Saba, it was lower: 29 percent.

Division of childcare tasks, 2022



Definition

Net labour participation rate

The employed labour force as a share of the overall population (both included and not included in the labour force). This definition concerns the population residing in the Caribbean Netherlands (excluding the institutional population). Data are generally presented for the population aged 15 to 74 years.

9 in 10 parents in the Caribbean Netherlands had paid work in 2021



More information about childcare is available here (Dutch only).



Making ends meet

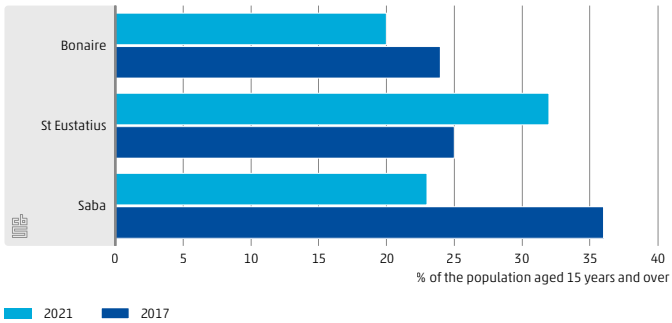
What percentage of the population has difficulty making ends meet?

In 2021, approximately 20 percent of the population aged 15 years or older on Bonaire and Saba said they had difficulties making ends meet with their income. This figure was higher on St Eustatius, namely over 30 percent. In 2017, the situation on Saba was different: 36 percent of the population said they had difficulties making ends meet.

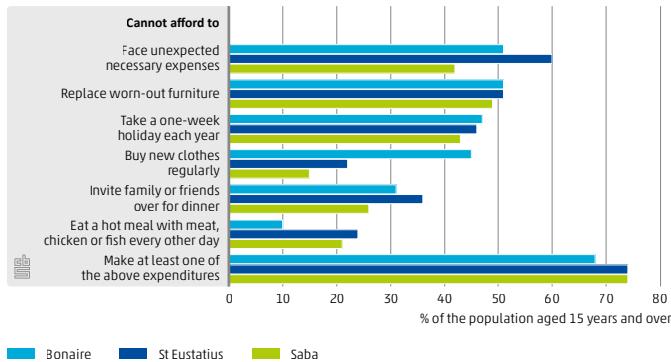
In 2021, around 15 percent of the population on the three islands said that monthly housing costs were a major financial burden for them. This percentage was higher in 2017 on Saba and Bonaire, but not on St Eustatius.

Differences based on education level
The experienced difficulties are linked to people's level of education. On St Eustatius, people with a low level of education were almost twice as likely to experience difficulties making ends meet than people with a high level of education; 40 and 20 percent respectively. On Bonaire, this was almost three times (29 percent) compared to those with medium or high level education (10 percent). On Saba, there was no difference between the lower and higher educated.

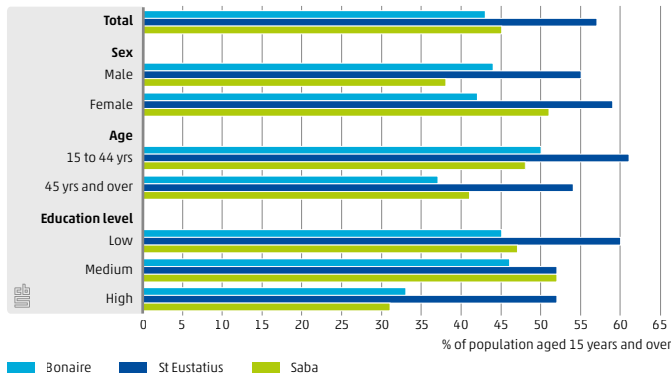
Difficulty making ends meet



Financial constraints, 2021



Many concerns about financial future, 2021



Not enough money for specific purchases

Around 70 percent of the population on all three islands said they did not have enough money for one or more specific expenses. This varied from paying for a hot meal featuring meat, chicken, fish or meat substitute every other day (lowest on Bonaire, namely 10 percent) to paying for unexpected financial expenses (highest on St Eustatius, namely 60 percent). On all three islands, half of the population did not have enough money to replace worn-out furniture while approximately 45 percent were unable to afford a one-week holiday every year.

The percentage of people saying they did not have enough money to buy new clothes on a regular basis varied greatly per island: from 15 percent on Saba to 45 percent on Bonaire. Also different per island was the percentage of people with not enough money to invite family or friends to dinner at least once a month. This was over 25 percent on Saba and over 35 percent on St Eustatius.

Concerns about financial future

On St Eustatius, almost 60 percent of the population had many concerns about their financial future (See: explanation). This was around 45 percent on Bonaire and Saba, where people with low and medium education levels in particular were very concerned. On Bonaire, people between 15 and 45 years of age were more concerned about their financial future (50 percent) than people aged 45 and over. Particularly on Saba, women (51 percent) were more concerned about this than men (38 percent).

Explanation

Concerns about financial future

The level of concern about their financial future was determined using the following question: *'On a scale of 1 to 10, could you say how often you are concerned about your financial future?'* 1 stands for 'never' and 10 for 'continuously'. A score between 7 and 10 is classified as 'many concerns' about their financial future; a score of 5 and 6 as 'few concerns'; and a score between 1 and 4 as 'no concerns'.

40% of people on St Eustatius with low education have difficulties making ends meet



More information on income is available here.



24,090
residents*



33%
born on Bonaire*

70
different
nationalities*

Bonaire

How many tourists arrived by air in the Caribbean Netherlands?

In 2022, altogether 183.7 thousand tourists flew to the islands of the Caribbean Netherlands. The number of tourist arrivals by air on Bonaire rose by 55.6 percent relative to the previous year and exceeded the level of 2019, the last year before the coronavirus crisis. Inbound tourism by air on Saba and St Eustatius recovered partially, but was not yet back at its pre-pandemic level.

In 2022, 173.2 thousand tourists visited Bonaire by plane, against 111.3 thousand in the previous year. The number of tourist arrivals was even 9.8 percent higher than in 2019, when 157.8 thousand visitors flew to Bonaire.

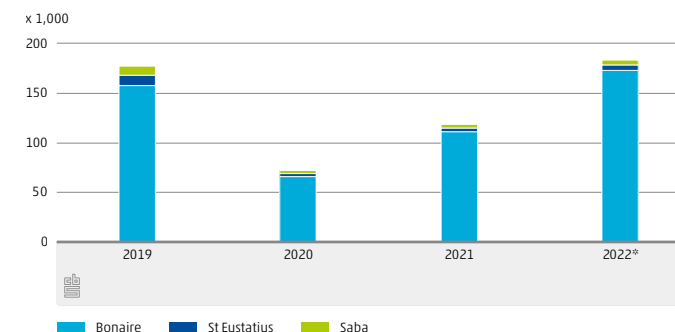
Tourist arrivals by air on St Eustatius up by half in 2022

The number of tourists travelling to St Eustatius by air in 2022 increased by 55.6 percent year on year, to 5.6 thousand. However, this is still 46.7 percent less than in 2019, when 10.5 thousand visitors flew to the island.

Tourism by air on Saba not yet at pre-pandemic level

Saba also saw an increase in air visitor numbers last year: by 22.5 percent to 4.9 thousand. This is still 44.3 percent less than in 2019.

Inbound tourism by air, yearly



* Provisional figures

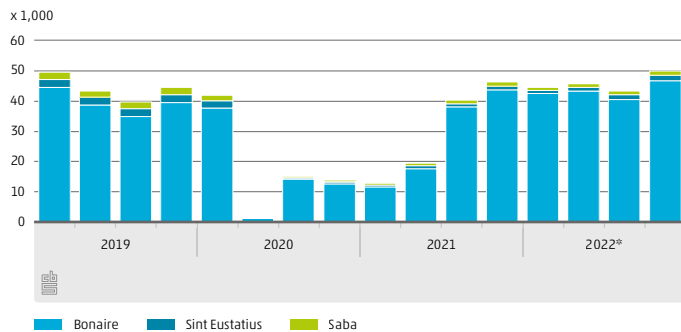
Lower share of Dutch nationals visiting Bonaire

The share of tourists with Dutch nationality – i.e. the European Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten – arriving on Bonaire by air declined from 71 percent in 2021 to 64 percent one year later. The number of visitors with Dutch nationality did increase, however, from around 79 thousand to 111 thousand. The lower share is related to an increase in the number of visitors from the United States. St Eustatius also saw a decline in the share of visitors with Dutch nationality, while Saba recorded a slight increase.

Some of the tourists holding Dutch nationality are residents of Aruba, St Maarten and Curaçao. In 2022, 10 percent of tourist arrivals by air on Bonaire originated from these islands. This share was 15 percent in the previous year. The number of visitors from Aruba, St Maarten or Curaçao did increase last year, by 3.7 percent to more than 17 thousand.

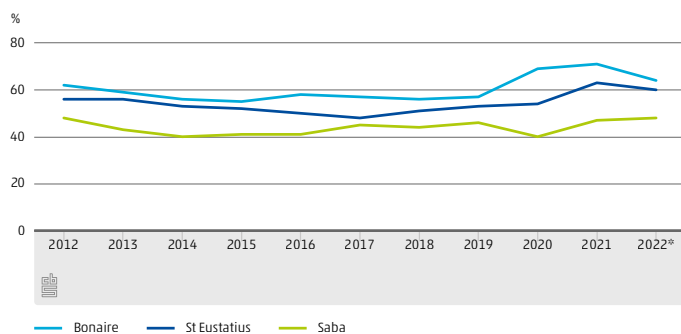
22.5%
increase in visitors to Saba
arriving by air in 2022

Inbound tourism by air, quarterly



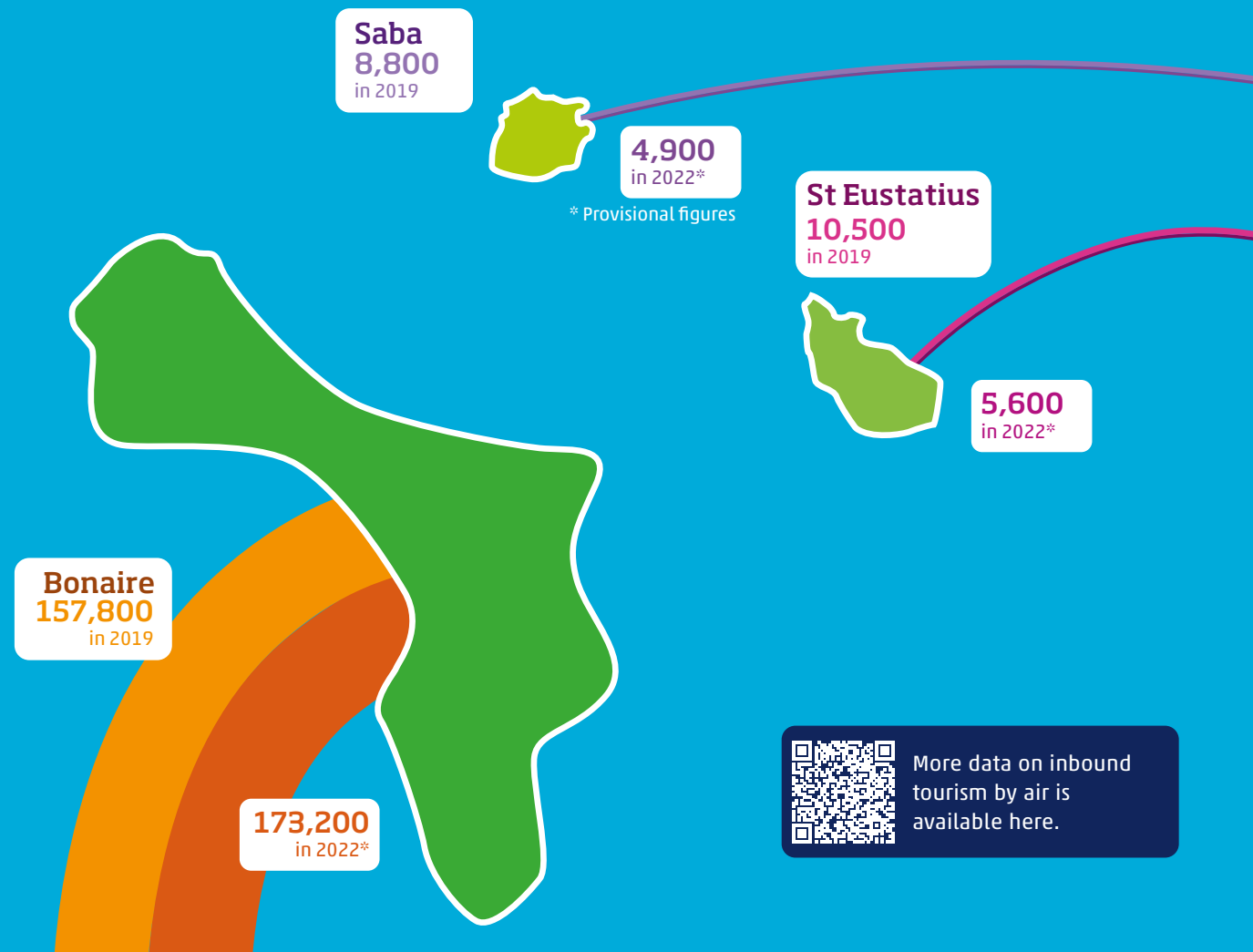
* Provisional figures

Inbound tourism by air, Dutch nationals



* Provisional figures

How many people visited Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius by plane?



More data on inbound
tourism by air is
available here.

Life satisfaction

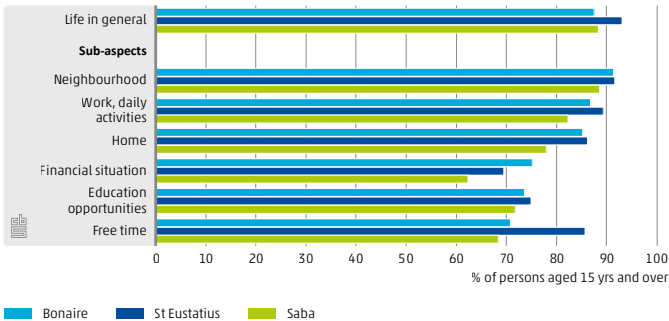


Are people satisfied with their lives?

In 2021, approximately 90 percent of the population aged 15 years and over on Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba were satisfied with their lives. They were most satisfied with the neighbourhood they live in. Residents of St Eustatius and Saba were least satisfied with their financial situation. Bonaire residents were least satisfied with the amount of free time and education opportunities.

On St Eustatius, 93 percent of the population were satisfied with their lives in 2021. This was 85 percent in 2017. On Bonaire and Saba, 88 percent of the population were satisfied with their lives, similar to the percentage in 2017. On all three islands, people were most satisfied with the neighbourhood they live in, followed by their work or daily activities, and their home.

Satisfaction, 2021



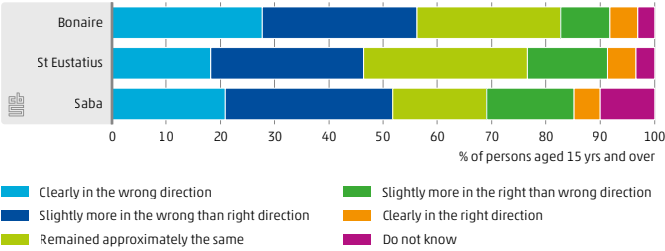
Lower educated people are less satisfied
The extent to which people are satisfied with their lives differs per level of education. For example, on all three islands people with a low level of education were less satisfied with their education opportunities than people with a high education level. Lower educated people on Bonaire and St Eustatius were also less satisfied than highly educated people when it comes to their financial situation and the home they live in.

Bonaire residents with a low education level also said they are less satisfied with their work or daily activities and with their life in general than people with a high education level.

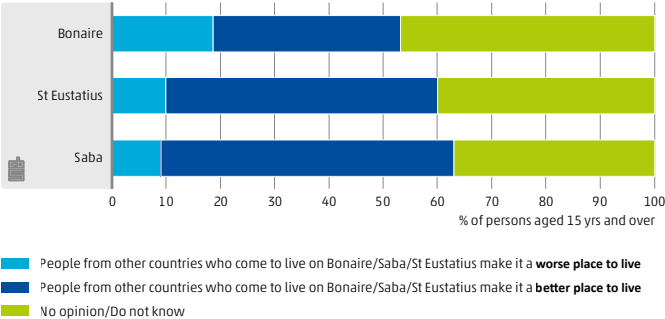
Opinions on norms and values divided

In 2021, almost 30 percent of the people on Bonaire, and around 20 percent of the people on St Eustatius and Saba, said that norms and values on their island were clearly going in the wrong direction. Nevertheless, residents of St Eustatius and Saba were slightly more positive about norms and values on the island than Bonaire residents. On St Eustatius and Saba, more people believed that norms and values are going slightly more in the right direction than in the wrong direction. Compared to the inhabitants of Saba, more people on Bonaire and St Eustatius felt that norms and values had remained the same.

Norms and values, 2021



Opinion about immigrants, 2021



Bonaire residents more negative about immigrants

In 2021, 19 percent of Bonaire residents felt that people from other countries who come to live on the island make it a worse place to live. This share was twice as high as on St Eustatius and Saba. Over half of the inhabitants of St Eustatius and Saba believed that the arrival of people from other countries makes the island a better place to live. This view was held by a third of the people who live on Bonaire.

9* out of 10 Bonaire and Saba residents are satisfied with their lives (*nearly)



More information on well-being is available here (Dutch only).





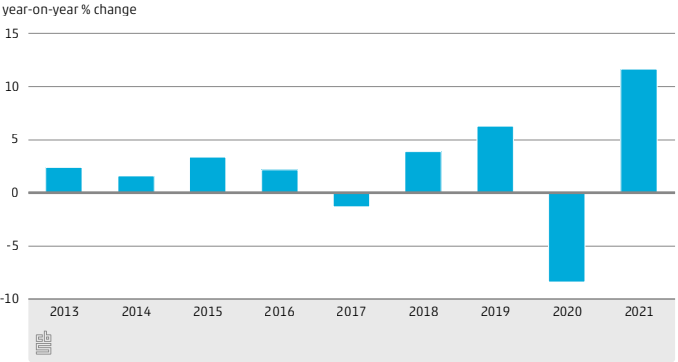
Macroeconomics

How did the economies of the Caribbean Netherlands perform in 2021?

In 2021, the economy of Bonaire grew by 11.7 percent. This is mostly a rebound effect after the strong economic decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The economies of St Eustatius and Saba grew by 21.1 and 3.0 percent, respectively.

The number of inbound tourists by air on Bonaire increased from 66.0 thousand in 2020 to 111.3 thousand in 2021 as travel restrictions due to COVID were further lifted in 2021. As a result, the value added of hotels and restaurants and of culture, sports and recreation (namely casinos and diving schools) increased by 47.1 and 28.1 percent, respectively.

Volume of gross domestic product, Bonaire



There was also high demand for business services. This was partly due to increased demand for car rental by tourists, but strong growth was also recorded by employment agencies, notaries and accountants. In total, the value added of business services increased by 17.7 percent. The construction sector continued its strong growth of the past few years. The value added of construction companies increased by 10.2 percent in 2021.

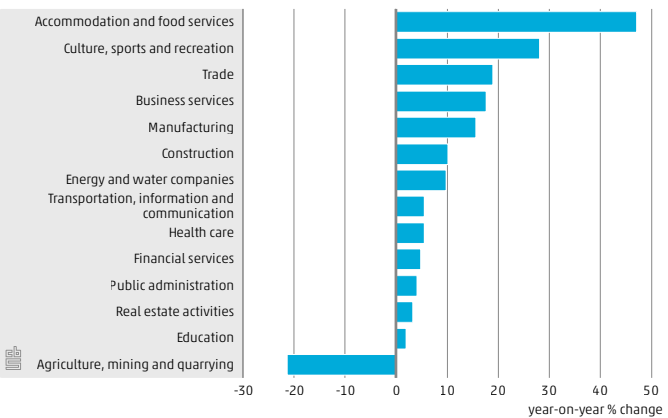
Strong recovery of the economy of St Eustatius

The increase of 21.1 percent on St Eustatius was mainly related to a few large companies on the island. Their production is mainly export-oriented. Demand for the products and services of these companies decreased in 2020 and remained at that lower level in 2021 due to regional developments in the oil sector. Nevertheless, the value added increased as these companies succeeded in lowering operating costs in 2021.

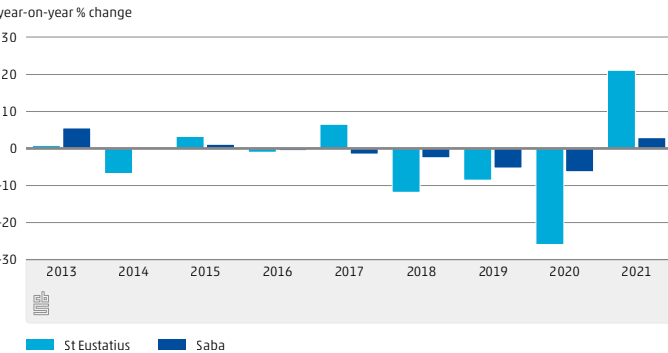
Modest recovery Saba due to more inbound tourism

The number of inbound tourists by air increased from 2.7 thousand in 2020 to 4.0 thousand in 2021 as Saba welcomed tourists from low-risk countries as of 1 May 2021. This resulted in higher demand for restaurant, hotel and taxi services and for electricity on the island. These positive contributions to the 3.0 percent GDP growth were dampened by a decline in the value added of public administration and education.

Volume of value added by sector, Bonaire, 2021



Volume of gross domestic product, St Eustatius and Saba



11.7%
economic growth on Bonaire
in 2021



More on gross domestic
product is available here.

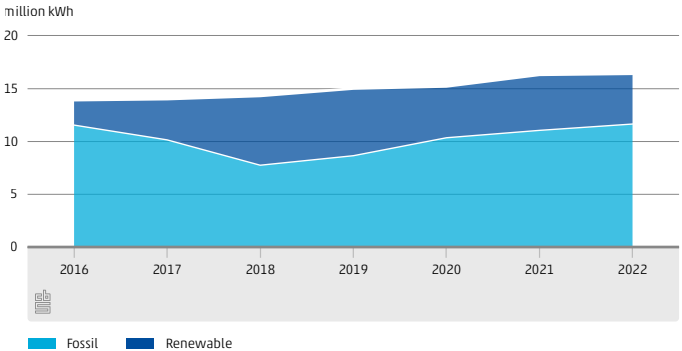


Has electricity production from renewable sources increased?

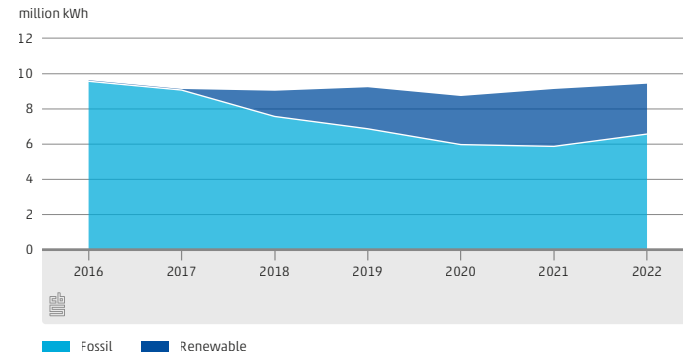
In 2022, electricity production from renewable sources on St Eustatius and Saba increased considerably compared to 2016, when it first started. St Eustatius managed to double its renewable electricity production, while on Saba it increased almost thirty-fold. Bonaire has a longer track record when it comes to generating electricity from renewable sources. At the same time, renewable electricity production increased less rapidly there.

Electricity production on St Eustatius amounted to 16.4 million kWh in 2022. Renewable electricity accounted for 4.7 million kWh (28 percent). This was 2.3 kWh in 2016. In 2022, renewable electricity production decreased by 10 percent year on year. In 2018, the share of renewable electricity peaked at 45 percent. This electricity was mainly produced using solar panels. Solar power generation began in 2016 with the first phase of a solar farm. The second phase was completed in November 2017 and increased solar energy production on the island significantly.

Electricity production, St Eustatius



Electricity production, Saba



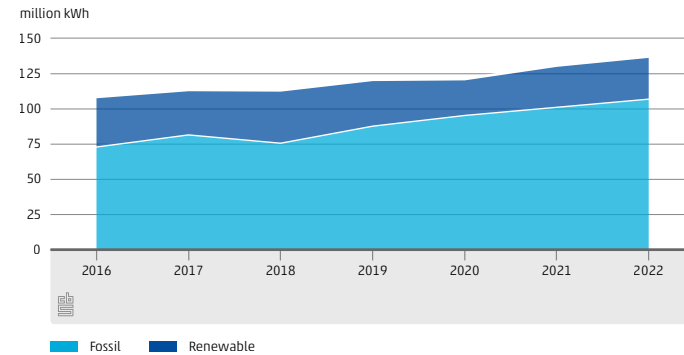
Solar farm on St Eustatius meets daytime needs

The solar farm on St Eustatius meets the island's entire electricity demand during the day. In the evening and at night, and when weather conditions are unfavourable (such as cloudy weather), the system automatically switches to diesel generators for electricity production.

Renewable electricity production declined on Saba last year

Electricity production on Saba amounted to 9.4 million kWh in 2022. 2.9 million kWh was renewable, 14 percent less than in the previous

Electricity production, Bonaire



year. In 2016, 0.1 kWh of the generated electricity was renewable. In total, 30 percent of Saba's electricity production came from renewable sources in 2022 – primarily from solar farms.

Saba currently has two solar farms. The first became operational in February 2018 and the second in February 2019.

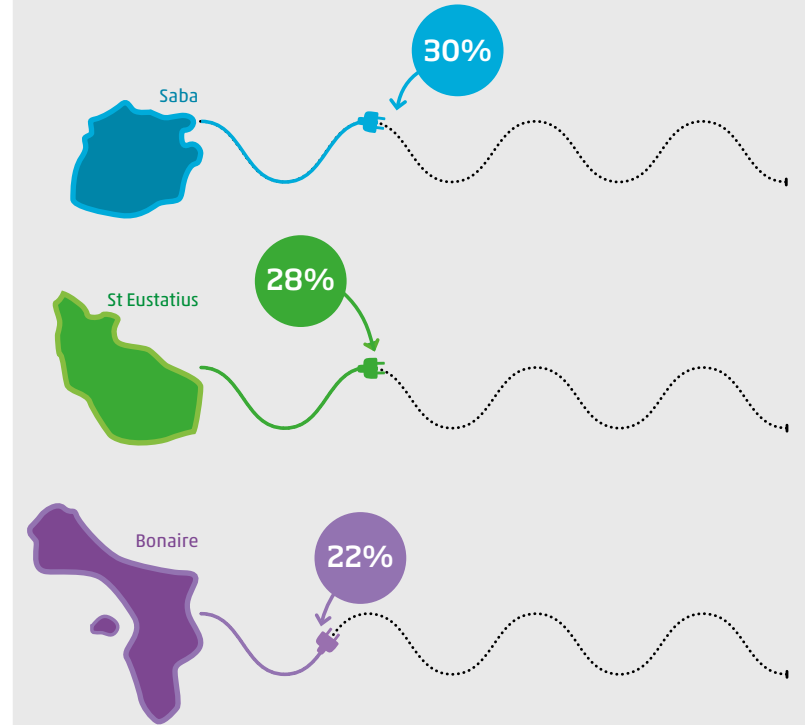
22% renewable energy production on Bonaire in 2022

Most renewable electricity on Bonaire produced by wind power

Bonaire has been producing electricity from renewable sources since 2007. In 2022, electricity production on Bonaire amounted to 137.1 million kWh. 29.8 million kWh (22 percent) was renewable. Compared to the previous year, production increased slightly (by 2 percent) in 2022. Unlike the other islands, almost all renewable electricity (99 percent) is generated using wind turbines. The remaining percent was provided by solar panels.

The share of renewable electricity on Bonaire peaked in 2014, at 42 percent. It was between 20 and 30 percent in the years that followed.

How much electricity in the Caribbean Netherlands is renewable?



More information on energy and water connections and production is available here.



Purchasing power

How did the purchasing power develop in 2021?

In 2021, the purchasing power of the population in the Caribbean Netherlands improved. The population of Bonaire gained 1.1 percent relative to 2020; on St Eustatius this was 0.5 percent, while Saba residents gained 0.1 percent.

To improve the livelihood security in the Caribbean Netherlands, a number of structural steps have been taken since 2019 to raise minimum wages and benefits, lending a boost to local purchasing power.

In 2021, the child benefit was raised. The COVID-19 emergency support measures to offset income losses for employees and self-employed were still in effect. Benefits and minimum wages were not adjusted for the deflation in 2020. In 2021, rising average price levels reduced the purchasing power on Bonaire and Saba. On St Eustatius, the average price level fell slightly, which had a favourable effect on purchasing power.

Purchasing power up for the employed population

On all three islands, the median purchasing power improved for people in households with a primary income from employment. On Bonaire the purchasing power grew by 1.7 percent. A median purchasing power development of 1.7 percent means a gain of at least 1.7 percent for one half of the population and less than 1.7 percent for the other half. On St Eustatius and Saba the growth was 0.4 percent and 1.1 percent respectively. Benefit recipients on St Eustatius gained purchasing power, whereas on Bonaire and Saba they faced a loss.

Most people gained purchasing power

Individual changes in purchasing power differ from person to person. In 2021, most people in the Caribbean Netherlands benefited from improved purchasing power. On Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, the respective shares of the population who were positively affected were 53, 56 and 51 percent. Likewise, for more than half of the employed population the purchasing power went up. On St Eustatius, more than 3 out of 4 persons in households with mainly income from social benefits gained purchasing power, whereas on Bonaire and Saba the purchasing power fell for most social benefit recipients.

Young people benefited most often

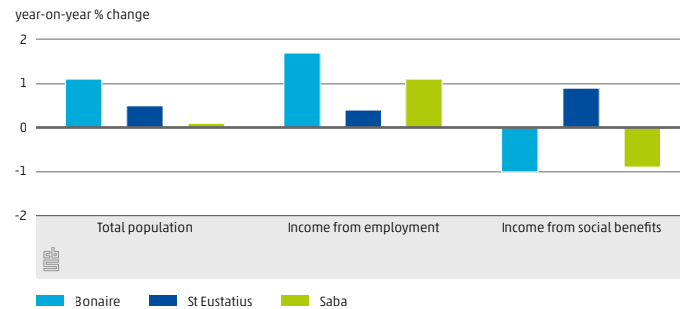
On all three islands, people in households with a main earner up to the age of 40 were most likely to benefit from improved purchasing power. On St Eustatius, 67 percent of this group saw an increase in purchasing power; on Bonaire and Saba, this was 58 percent. The majority of these main earners are employed and in the process of climbing the career ladder. Their incomes rise as they gain more work experience and obtain better-paying jobs. In households with a middle-aged main earner, most people gained purchasing power as well. The same applies to households on St Eustatius with a main earner over the age of 60.

2021 saw improved buying power for most of the Caribbean Netherlands

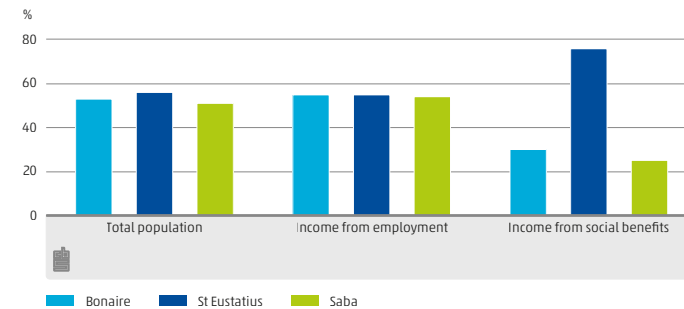


More data on purchasing power development is available here.

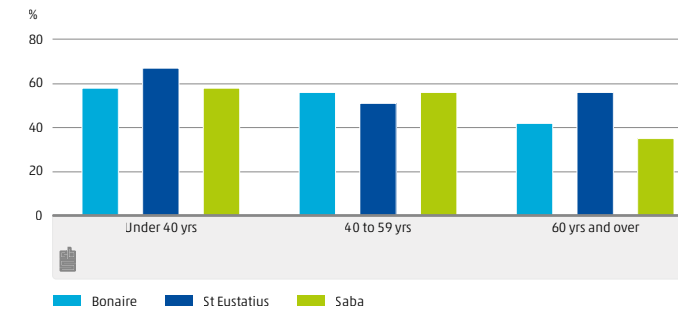
Median purchasing power development by primary source of income, 2021*



Persons with improved purchasing power by primary source of income, 2021*



Persons with improved purchasing power by age of main earner, 2021*



Nature



More information about nature is available here.

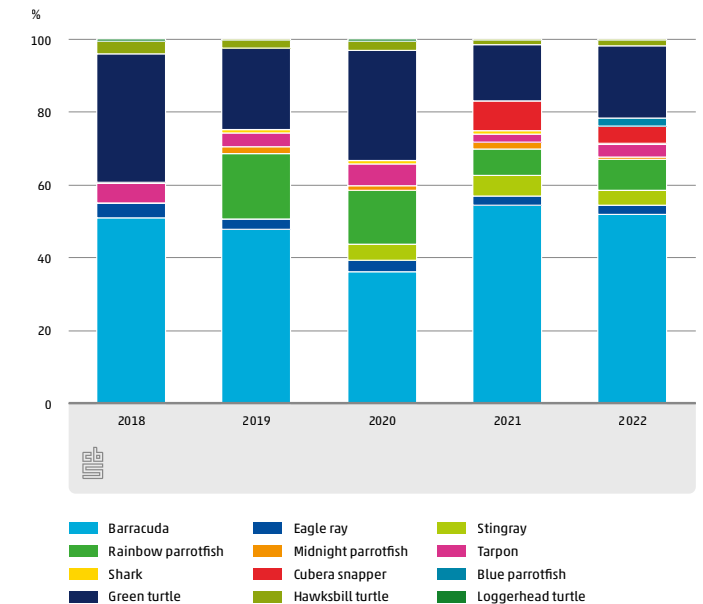
Which marine animals are spotted around Bonaire?

In the waters surrounding Bonaire a large variety of marine animals, from turtles to rays, sharks and various fish types, are observed on a regular basis. To see how the marine ecosystems surrounding Bonaire perform, marine animals are monitored every year.¹⁾

The monitoring of marine animals is performed on three locations: Northwest Bonaire, Klein Bonaire and Southwest Bonaire. The barracuda is the most often spotted marine animal, followed by the green turtle. The marine animal composition in Bonaire's waters fluctuates a little over the years. Nonetheless, the barracuda and the green turtle are the two most observed species. The three different turtle species found in the waters of Bonaire lay their eggs on the beaches. The loggerhead turtle is only spotted in Bonaire's waters during the nesting season.

¹⁾ Data provided by Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire

Marine animals on Bonaire



Source: Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire and Dutch Caribbean Biodiversity Database



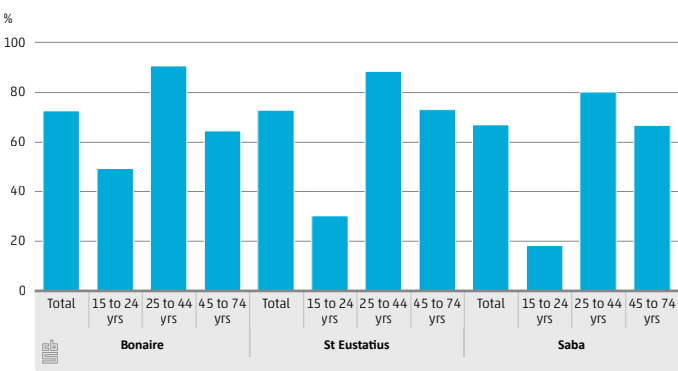
Labour

How many people work in the Caribbean Netherlands?

In 2022, the size of Bonaire’s working-age population (all persons aged 15 to 74 years) was slightly over 17.7 thousand, of whom 72.5 percent were in employment. On St Eustatius, 72.9 percent of the 2.5 thousand strong working age population were in work, on Saba 67.0 percent of 1.5 thousand.

On all three islands, labour force participation was relatively low among young people (15 to 24 years). Especially so on Saba, because of its relatively large population of medical students. Less than one out of five in this age group were working. On Bonaire, almost half of the young population were in employment, on St Eustatius slightly more than 30 percent. Participation was highest among people aged 25 to 44 years. In the senior age group (45 to 74 years), over 60 percent were in employment.

Net labour participation, 2022



Caribbean Netherlands: 1 out of 6 work in construction

On all three islands, public administration and services, construction and education rank among the top 5 of economic activities with the largest shares of workers. On both St Eustatius and Saba, public administration and services was the economic activity with the largest share of the working population.

On Bonaire, construction has the largest share of workers, followed by accommodation and food services.

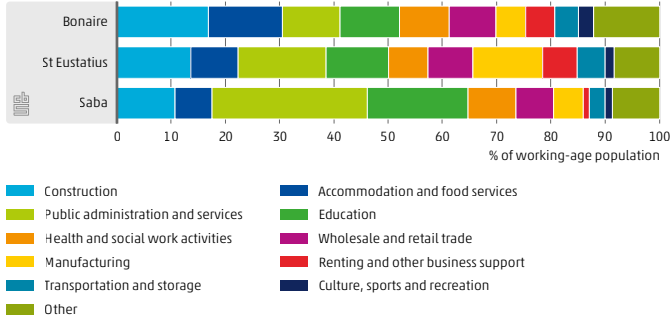
Unemployment on the islands was relatively low in 2022, with rates ranging from 3.9 percent on St Eustatius to 2.5 percent on Saba. Bonaire had a 3.0-percent unemployment rate, equivalent to 390 unemployed.

Bonaire: More than 7 out of 10 in working-age population are working

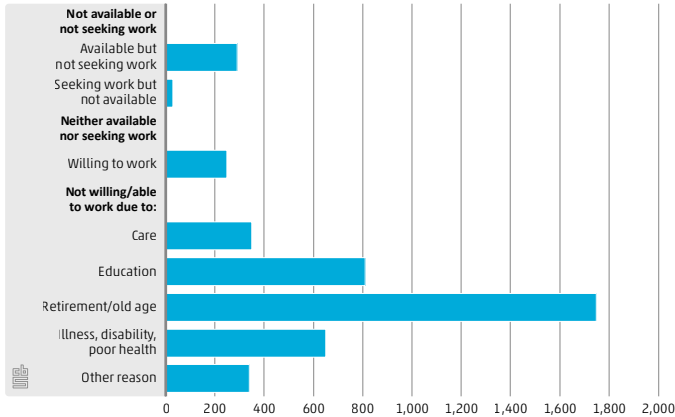
Bonaire has by far the largest working-age population: 17.7 thousand. Just under 4.5 thousand of them were not part of the local labour force: they were either not looking for work or not available. In most cases, they were neither of the two. A large group (39 percent) were unwilling or unable to work due to old age or retirement. For 18 percent of those outside the labour force – young residents

in particular – education was the predominant reason why they were not looking for work or unavailable. Other, smaller, groups included people unable to work due to a disability or poor health (15 percent), or because they had to take care of their families (8 percent). The overall picture on the other two islands is similar to the situation on Bonaire, with the following exception: on Saba, 4 in 10 were not looking for work or unavailable because of education.

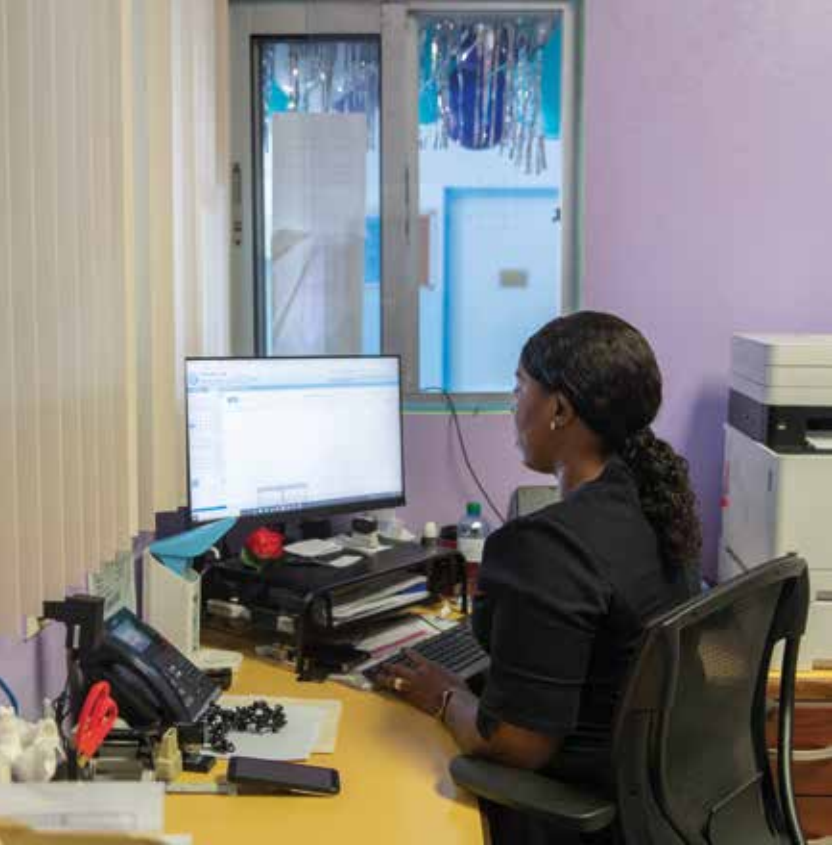
Working population (15 to 74 yrs) by economic activity, 2022



Population Bonaire (15 to 74 yrs) outside the labour force, 2022



72.9% of St Eustatius' working-age population were employed in 2022



More information about labour force participation is available here.

Saba


2,035
residents*

24%
born on Saba*

48
different
nationalities*

* 1 January 2023

1. CBS selects a random group of people and businesses in the Caribbean Netherlands

2. You fill in the questionnaire, or you are contacted by an interviewer from CBS

3. Your personal data are separated from your answers

4. Your answers are processed into anonymous data

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How does CBS handle your privacy?

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- When you complete a survey or submit any data, this information is delivered to CBS in encoded form. The data are received by CBS in a secured environment. Only authorised personnel who require the data for their work shall have access to these data.
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– Data analysis by Wageningen University and Research in collaboration with CBS.

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Statistics Netherlands (CBS)

As a society we want information based on reliable figures so we know what is going on around us. CBS' statutory task is to compile relevant and independent figures on a wide range of topics that are important to society and thus support public debate, policy development and decision-making. Whichever the issue or topic, we respond to the need for transparent and accessible information. All outcomes are made publicly available.

Through time, CBS has grown into an innovative knowledge institution, with continuous adoption of new technologies and developments in order to safeguard the quality of its data and its independent position.

CBS in the Caribbean Netherlands

CBS opened an office on Bonaire in 2010. The Bonaire office is responsible for all statistics referring to the three islands of the Caribbean Netherlands: Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba. Topics include prices, population, labour, income, the economy, tourism and trade.

StatLine

StatLine is the database of CBS. It offers a wealth of figures about the economy and society in the Netherlands and Caribbean Netherlands, freely available as tables, graphs or maps.

CBS StatLine



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