



St. Eustatius Cultural Agenda

Priorities

2024–2028



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1

Introduction

Former State Secretary Gunay Uslu (Culture and Media) and the public entities of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba (Caribbean Netherlands) signed a cultural covenant in September 2022¹. It was agreed to take joint responsibility for the cultural infrastructure in the Caribbean Netherlands. The aim of the covenant is to create a solid foundation through increased cooperation between the parties involved, to stimulate knowledge sharing and to make national policy instruments available to applicants in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Relationship between the cultural covenant, the cultural agenda, the priorities and the island's cultural policy

The Public Entity of St. Eustatius (OLE) and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) have further elaborated the agreements in the covenant in a joint cultural agenda. The cultural agenda consists of this priority document and an overview of the relevant themes, which are also set out in the cultural covenant. The overview lists objectives, instruments, actions and responsible parties, set out by theme. This priority document highlights some of the key objectives of the agenda up to 2028, which are also linked to national policy (Meerjarenbrief 'De kracht van creativiteit' [The power of creativity], nov 2022). In addition, the objectives will be aligned with St. Eustatius' new cultural policy for the 2023–2026 period (St. Eustatius Cultural Policy Plan 2023–2026) to mutually enhance their effectiveness.

UNESCO defines culture as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2001).²

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¹ <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stcrt-2022-26750.html>

² Cultures - IIEP Policy Toolbox (unesco.org)

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The intended priorities in brief

The OLE has identified a number of priorities that are important in the coming years to create a solid foundation for the cultural sector on St. Eustatius. We (OLE and OCW) will focus primarily on these priorities, which are set out in more detail in Section 3. They are as follows:

A. Vitalising the Department of Culture and Events (DCE)

1. Better positioning of culture within the OLE.
2. Better positioning towards local stakeholders.

B. Strengthening cultural infrastructure together with residents

1. Using participatory working methods to improve access to culture and to ensure broader decision-making around heritage.
2. Strengthening and increasing the visibility of the cultural sector.
3. Use of national policy instruments for professionalisation.

C. Cultural funding: better alignment between subsidy offering and applicants

1. Increasing the visibility and effective accessibility of the schemes and programmes of the national culture funds (Rijkscultuurfondsen) and other funds.
2. Increasing the financial resources of the DCE.
3. Providing guidance to local grant applicants.

D. Organising Statia Day 2026 and developing sustainable cultural tourism

1. Increasing cultural awareness and strengthening cultural identity.
2. Developing sustainable cultural tourism (such as underwater archaeology, hiking, diving, activities around flora and fauna).
3. Strengthening culture and heritage as an economic pillar.

"Creating a solid foundation for the cultural sector on Sint Eustatius"



3

Further elaborating the priorities

The priorities set out in Section 2 are further elaborated here, and the roles, responsibilities and intended outcome are clarified. The OLE, cultural institutions and other stakeholders will elaborate the agreements made in the cultural agenda in their own policy or work plans. For each priority, the intended outcome and timeline, responsible parties and available support are specified. In addition, some topics in the cultural agenda also overlap with the signed St. Eustatius Agreement 2024 – 2027³, which describes the central government’s commitment to the priorities set by the OLE. The relevant priorities are also monitored in this context.

To align and streamline the entire process of implementing the cultural agenda, learning evaluations will take place between OCW and the OLE every six months (2024 – 2028). These evaluations will give the parties involved the opportunity to assess their progress and make adjustments where necessary. The OLE will conduct its own evaluations every three months.

A. Vitalising the Department of Culture and Events (DCE)

The OLE aspires to have a strong culture department, but is not currently equipped to achieve this objective. It does not yet have sufficient knowledge, information, personnel and resources to fulfil its role and responsibilities as a local government in the cultural domain. A transition is needed from the current way of working – with a heavy emphasis on local events and relationship management – to a strong policy organisation.

Strengthening the DCE will contribute to better internal and external positioning. Enhancing knowledge and increasing capacity will strengthen the department’s steering role, help it respond to the needs of the cultural sector, and enable it to leverage its relationships with partner organisations. This will allow culture to

³ See also St. Eustatius Agreement 2024 – 2027 [Afsprakenakkoord St. Eustatius 2024 – 2027](#) | [Convenant](#) | [Rijksoverheid.nl](#)

become an inherent part of local government policy and strategy. In addition, it will allow the DCE to address the challenges it faces more holistically. Cultural heritage, for example, could be included as a permanent component in other policy areas, such as spatial planning and climate adaptation. Further operationalising, implementing and enforcing existing legislation and the Monument Island Ordinance is a prerequisite for good heritage care. In addition, this will make it easier to respond to the needs of local communities and increase their involvement.

"Gain better access to national policy instruments and funds"

A.1 Better positioning of culture and heritage within the OLE

The DCE aims to implement the cultural agenda and its own cultural policy. It is important that staff are aware of international conventions and national legislation, as this will help them draft regulations and policies for the management, conservation, monitoring and accessibility of heritage. It will also support them in drafting policies, implementing programmes and organising activities around cultural participation and education. The DCE will work to ensure that culture and heritage have a place in addressing broader societal challenges that intersect with multiple policy areas, such as youth participation and spatial planning. Furthermore, it will position itself more emphatically within the OLE to improve the visibility of the cultural policy domain. The budget for the OLE resources needs to facilitate the desired staffing.⁴

A.2 Better positioning towards local stakeholders

DCE will strive to:

- Strengthen its connections with cultural stakeholders on St. Eustatius (through networking) by organising monthly platform meetings.

⁴ See also priority C2 and pending policy response to unconditional grant study: Adoption of the budget statements of the Ministry of Kingdom Relations (IV) and the BES Fund (H) for 2024 | House of Representatives.

- Improve coordination between the OLE and local parties in public culture funding (see C.3).
- Work more closely with OCW to increase its knowledge position and gain better access to national policy instruments.
- Increase the visibility of culture on the island.

Intended outcome and timeline, responsible parties and available support

Intended outcome and timeline:

A1: Q3 2024, increased level of knowledge on international treaties as well as laws and regulations at the DCE through training/courses. This could be realised through joint training sessions (organised by the OLE, OCW and other relevant partners and knowledge institutions).

A1: 2024 – 2028, increased visibility of DCE among other departments of the OLE, such as Spatial Development. The OLE considers culture and heritage in addressing new cross-domain challenges. The culture coaches support the DCE in its commitment to expanding its cooperation with social workers, improving its visibility in after-school programmes and increasing its involvement in sports (e.g. by organising the Statia Olympics).

A1: 2024 – 2025, evaluation of the Monumentenwet BES [BES Heritage Act] and island ordinances on monuments.

A1: 2025 – 2026, amendment to the Library Act (WSOB) and provisions specifically applicable to CN.

A2: Formalise the cultural platform with stakeholders by organising monthly meetings.

A2: Both the organisation providing the subsidy and the recipient act in accordance with the relevant funding regulations.

A2: Quarterly evaluations with stakeholders.

Responsible parties:

- The DCE has the lead in the implementation of its policy plan and connecting with stakeholders. Where necessary, there is contact with the ministries for support. In addition, the OLE offers suggestions for suitable municipalities for 'twinning'.

Together with OCW and knowledge partners, the OLE also creates an agenda/list of possible training topics.

- OCW: Offers support where requested and provides active feedback, also through knowledge partners. The aim is to offer St. Eustatius access to the same opportunities, arrangements and support that are available to municipalities in the European Netherlands. To this end, coordination also takes place with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) and other ministries.
- Evaluates the Monumentenwet BES [BES Heritage Act] and island ordinances together with the public entities.
- Based on suggestions from the OLE (DCE), suggests to the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) municipalities in the European Netherlands that would be suitable sparring or twinning partners for St. Eustatius and facilitates further contact.

Available support:

- OCW provides full funding for two culture coaches (2 FTEs) for the period from 2023 to 2025. It also helps improve access to knowledge partners and national policy instruments.
- The OLE uses its unconditional grant to provide structural funding for a cultural heritage inspector (1 FTE). From 2022 – 2023, BZK has made available additional structural funding for extra implementation resources.
- VNG acts as a source of information when it comes to finding a sparring or twinning partner on a municipality level, and in other matters.
- The RCE and support organisations such as the National Knowledge Institute for Cultural Education and Amateur Art (LKCA), the National Knowledge Institute for Culture and Digital Transformation (DEN) and the Digital Heritage Network (NDE) ensure knowledge sharing, for example through training/education.

B. Strengthening cultural infrastructure together with residents

The OLE is developing a coherent structure of cultural and heritage facilities that are necessary for a strong, stable cultural sector⁵. The local cultural sector has a need

⁵ Library facilities are part of the integral cultural infrastructure.

for (1) financial support for the accommodation costs of cultural organisations and artists, (2) the realisation of cultural activities/programming, (3) professionalisation opportunities and (4) appropriate heritage regulations.

Key stakeholders (see end of document) say they have insufficient physical space to facilitate their further development. There is a need for a cultural centre where people can meet and participate in cultural activities, and where arts education can take place. Furthermore, it is difficult for individual artists to generate an income from their artistic practice, and there are few development opportunities to stimulate cultural entrepreneurship. With regard to heritage, there is a desire for an archaeological visitor centre at the Amsterdam and Rotterdam fortresses. Appropriate heritage regulations are needed, among other things to prevent the removal of archaeological artefacts from the island. There is also a need for effective enforcement and implementation of existing laws such as the Monumentenwet BES [BES Heritage Act], which will be further operationalised by the Monument Ordinance⁶.

To ensure that the needs of local communities are heard and to generate sufficient support, it is important to give residents a say in local cultural policy. This is a key priority for the OLE.

B.1 Using participatory working methods to improve access to culture

One option would be to use the area biography method (gebiedsbiografie) to map St. Eustatius' cultural experiences and make the local culture visible. This could also support the development of the polyvocal story St. Eustatius wants to tell, which may include the story of the current population's ancestors and their resilience, as well as stories that commemorate the island's history of slavery⁷. Furthermore, attention is paid to the application of the Faro Convention, which focuses on the societal relevance of heritage and responds to local heritage initiatives.

⁶ AB+2020+no+20+Monumenteneilandsverordening+OLE+2020 (1).pdf

⁷ To achieve this goal, archives are important as well. OCW and the OLE aim to improve the available facilities in this area. This process will run parallel to that of the cultural agenda.

B.2 Strengthening and increasing the visibility of the cultural sector

Providing physical spaces where culture can be practised and enjoyed can strengthen and promote the cultural sector.

B.3 Use of national policy instruments for professionalisation

The aim is to make national policy instruments for the professionalisation of artists and cultural organisations effectively accessible. These instruments include training sessions, courses and loans (Qredits) for cultural entrepreneurship.

Intended outcome and timeline, responsible parties and available support

Intended outcome and timeline:

B1: Q1 2024, local stakeholders are informed about Faro grant application opportunities. An important criterion here is whether there is structural change in the organisation and functional heritage care.

B1: OLE will submit an application for an area biography to RCE before 2025.

B1: 2024, alert civil society organisations to funding opportunities under subsidy scheme for activities related to St. Eustatius' history of slavery.

B2: By Q3 2024, there are plans to ensure accommodation for cultural institutions (integrated approach) following consultations between the OLE, BZK and OCW as part of the Region Deal.

B2: By Q4 2024, the OLE has designated the first public spaces for various kinds of cultural activities.

B3: By Q4 2024, agreements have been made with OCW and support institutions for professionalisation and positioning opportunities (such as Cultuur+Ondernemen and Platform ACCT) in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Responsible parties:

The DCE is committed to participatory working methods. It responds to local initiatives, has internalised the Faro Convention, seeks to achieve a stronger island fund by initiating consultations, and encourages employees and stakeholders to participate in training. In addition, consultations are being held with BZK and OCW on accommodation for cultural institutions (integrated approach).

- Together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV), the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (EZK), the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (I&W), BZK (Director-General of Kingdom Relations) and OCW are supporting the Region Deal for St. Eustatius.
- OCW is responsible for increasing the accessibility and visibility of the national culture funds and national policy instruments. If desired, OCW and the RCE can also support the OLE in applying for and implementing an area biography and/or participatory activities under the Faro Implementation Agenda.

Available support:

- The RCE supports the DCE with expertise.
- OCW provides full funding for two culture coaches (2 FTEs) for the period from 2023 to 2025. It also provides better access to knowledge partners and national policy instruments and contributes to knowledge sharing.
- OCW funds a media researcher (0.3 FTE) who will inventory the needs of local journalists with a view to strengthening the island's journalistic infrastructure.
- The OLE uses its unconditional grant to provide structural funding for a cultural heritage inspector (1 FTE). From 2022 – 2023, BZK has made available additional structural funding for extra implementation resources.
- The RCE, LKCA and other support organisations for professionalisation and positioning (such as Platform ACCT/ Cultuur+Ondernemen, DEN, NDE) as well as the national culture funds can contribute to knowledge sharing.
- Besides knowledge sharing and training, the Royal Library (KB) also facilitates the modernisation of the library collection.
- Stichting Lezen promotes language skills by expanding school libraries.

C. Better alignment between subsidy offering and applicants

At the moment, there is insufficient alignment between the subsidy providers (national culture funds, private funds and the OLE) and local applicants (individuals and institutions). This is because the existing schemes and programmes do not adequately cater to the context of the Caribbean Netherlands, or because they are insufficiently visible. In addition, grant applicants do not always have the right skills to submit a grant application and/or to be held accountable.

C.1 Increasing the visibility and effective accessibility of the schemes and programmes of the national culture funds (Rijkscultuurfondsen) and other funds

Our aim is to increase the visibility and accessibility of the schemes and programmes of the national culture funds. The national culture funds themselves are also working to enhance their visibility and accessibility, for example by launching a shared portal and hiring a project coordinator specifically for the Caribbean region. They are working on other forms of application and better integration of the Caribbean context.

St. Eustatius' specific wishes for the application procedure are:

- Adapt criteria and deadlines to CN context.
- Simplify procedures and forms.
- Give applicants the option of having someone explain the application process to them.
- Option to submit English-language applications.
- Local point of contact for guidance.

C.2 Increasing the financial resources of the DCE

This is done by:

- a. The OLE earmarking funding for culture within the unconditional grant.
- b. Strengthening the Statia Activity Fund.⁸

The OLE wishes to strengthen the current Statia Activity Fund by pooling available resources from the OLE, OCW, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW), and possibly from other partners. The fund supports youth and cultural activities as well as the implementation

⁸ The island fund was established using resources from the 2020 COVID support package. The fund supports civic initiatives in various areas of society, including social, sports and cultural initiatives. This has led to a number of successful initiatives, such as a dance festival, a bicycle workshop and a youth exchange programme with surrounding islands. The aim now is to provide island-wide access to the island fund. The island fund will be supported by an advisory committee, which is currently being set up.

of anti-poverty policies. OCW's funding included resources from the School and Environment scheme. The fund aims to support societal initiatives that include a cultural component, such as a children's dance festival.

C.3 Providing guidance to local grant applicants

The aim is to support potential local grant applicants by means of writing courses, training and referrals from both the OLE and culture coaches.

Intended outcome and timeline, responsible parties and available support

Intended outcome and timeline:

C1: OCW actively works with the national culture funds to increase accessibility and visibility. By Q1 2024, the island's needs are known to the funds.

C1: By Q3-Q4 2024, the national culture funds have adapted their grant criteria to the Caribbean context, and/or efforts have been made to improve accessibility, also with a view to the 2025–2028 funding period for cultural activities.

C1: From 2024 to 2028, the national cultural funds will maintain an annual overview of the funding applications (including awarded applications) from the CN, and St. Eustatius in particular.

C1: From 2025, there is an increase in applications and a higher number of granted applications on St. Eustatius.

C1: From 2024, the OLE uses culture coaches to connect with funds and provide guidance to local grant applicants.

C1: National cultural funds support training and guidance for applicants.

C2: 25% annual budget increase for culture within the OLE's budget.

C3: By 2025, culture coaches are able to assist local stakeholders with applications.

C3: The OLE has sufficient capacity to handle referrals.

Responsible parties:

- The DCE is committed to improving alignment with the national culture funds and providing guidance to local grant applicants through the culture coaches.
- OCW is working with the national culture funds to increase the effective accessibility of their subsidies and subsidy schemes. It also promotes the

professionalisation of artists and cultural institutions through training and knowledge sharing.

- The national culture funds are committed to adjusting the criteria for programmes and schemes. They also keep an annual overview of the number of grant applications from the Caribbean Netherlands (and St. Eustatius in particular) to determine whether these have increased.

Available support:

- Support institutions for professionalisation and positioning and knowledge centres (such as Cultuur+Ondernemen, Platform ACCT and LKCA) can offer training courses to support cultural entrepreneurship, funding applications for cultural plans and cultural education.
- OCW encourages the national culture funds and the OLE to also seek cooperation with private funds in matters regarding the Caribbean Netherlands (and St. Eustatius in particular).

D. Organising Statia Day 2026 and developing sustainable cultural tourism

1. Increasing cultural awareness and strengthening cultural identity.
2. Developing sustainable cultural tourism (such as underwater archaeology, hiking, diving, activities around flora and fauna).
3. Strengthening culture and heritage as an economic pillar.

The sub-goals listed above vary in scope but are interrelated. The goal of Statia Day 2026 is to increase cultural awareness and strengthen cultural identity. In addition, the OLE aims to further develop cultural tourism in the run-up to Statia Day 2026, which will bring more visitors to St. Eustatius and increase the visibility and usability of the island's heritage. Specifically, cultural tourism on St. Eustatius is centred around underwater archaeology, hiking, diving, flora and fauna. Better positioning of cultural tourism can help unlock the economic value of culture and heritage.

The reason for strengthening this specific economic pillar is twofold: on the one hand, it is about showing young people that they can generate income from a cultural practice (at the moment, they are focused only on hospitality and nursing);

on the other hand, it is about strengthening the cultural sector itself (professionalisation and positioning). The planned activities for Statia Day 2026 are based on the above three sub-goals.

D.4 Increasing cultural awareness and strengthening cultural identity by organising Statia Day

Organising and celebrating Statia Day 2026 will help increase cultural awareness. In 2026, the celebrations will be bigger and last longer than the usual week. There will be more visitors, including from the surrounding area. Strengthening ties with regional partners and other islands and active involvement of the local cultural sector will help raise cultural awareness.

At the local level, the OLE aims to increase community awareness of the significance of the First Salute and the role it plays in the lives of Stadians today. Key themes include making the local population more aware of their cultural identity as Stadians, building a sense of self-worth, and raising awareness of complex and sensitive chapters of history.

In addition, the OLE aims to organise a number of activities that will contribute to cultural awareness, such as:

- Making the island's 80 or so historic brick kilns visible and accessible, and publishing a cookbook of traditional Stadian recipes.
- Organising the Euson festival, which will spotlight oral traditions and literature, and offer lectures.

D.5 Developing sustainable cultural tourism

This is about developing sustainable cultural tourism (culture and cultural heritage) that spotlights both tangible and intangible heritage. Specifically, cultural tourism on St. Eustatius is centred around underwater archaeology, hiking, diving, flora and fauna.

It is important to use a broad definition of culture in this context, and to include the positioning of creative industries (such as design, audiovisual production and digital arts) as well as the digital and green transitions. The island's rich history can

be approached from different angles. Key here are the connection to the region and indigenous culture, input from local communities, genealogy and the general perception of the history of St. Eustatius globally. Sustainable cultural tourism also involves avoiding negative impacts, such as divers retrieving blue beads from the ocean and taking them home as souvenirs.

*"Statia Day 2026:
Increase cultural awareness and strengthen cultural identity"*

D.6 Strengthening culture and heritage as an economic pillar

In the run-up to the Statia Day 2026 celebrations, the local cultural sector will be closely involved and encouraged to promote their creative offerings. The goal here is to effectively position individual artists and cultural organisations, and to encourage cultural entrepreneurship.

Intended outcome and timeline, responsible parties and available support

Intended outcome and timeline:

- D1:** 2025, increasing visibility of cultural awareness and cultural identity.
- D1:** 2026, Statia Day 2026 is well attended by local residents and visitors from the region and beyond.
- D1:** Present to 2028, strengthening ties with regional partners and other islands and active involvement of the local cultural sector to raise cultural awareness on St. Eustatius.
- D1:** Q4 2024, ensure digital access to public archives so that people can consult historical sources.
- D1:** Q4 2024, organise symposia to highlight and discuss the different sides of St. Eustatius' 'own' history.
- D1:** Organise an open monument day (see Jewish Synagogue) at least twice a year, in February and November.
- D1:** 2025 and beyond, highlight various perspectives (polyvocality) on the history of St. Eustatius and create room for different narratives.

D2: Cultural tourism that also generates income.

D2 & D3: 2026, organise Statia Day 2026 with visible creative offerings and close involvement of local cultural sector.

D3: 2024 and beyond, provide professionalisation opportunities for individual artists and cultural institutions. Focus on cultural entrepreneurship to position the local cultural sector more firmly.

Responsible parties:

- The OLE organises Statia Day together with BZK and EZK.
- BZK is implementing the Region Deal in cooperation with OCW and EZK (Tourism Vision Plan 2019).
- OCW facilitates the relationships with support organisations and partners such as Cultuur+Ondernemen, Platform ACCT, LKCA, Open Monuments Day, NDE, etc.

Available support:

- Region Deal.
- Support from BZK for Statia Day 2026.
- Project ABGA under Faro Implementation Agenda: including recruitment and training of guides.



4

Key Stakeholders

St. Eustatius Monument Council, St. Eustatius Historical Foundation (including Simon Donckers Club), St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA), St. Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research (SECAR), St. Eustatius Tourism Development Foundation (STDF), Gertrude Judson Bicentennial Public Library St. Eustatius, New Challenges Foundation, Gwendolyn van Putten School (G.V.P.), four primary schools (Bethel Methodist, Golden Rock, Seventh Day Adventist, Governor de Graaff), St. Eustatius Sports Facility Foundation (SSFF), Out of School centres (DOTK, MYF, A+ APTC), St. Eustatius Lion's Club (Lion's Denn), St. Eustatius Social Welfare Work Foundation (Community Center), cultural foundations and key persons (music school, Gateway 2 Success, Dream Artistry Foundation, Senior Citizen Cultural Foundation, dance groups, Christina Timber cultural dance, others). Descendants committee (airport), St. Eustatius African Burial Ground Alliance (ABGA).

5

Signature St. Eustatius

Reuben Merkman

Commissioner of Finance, Education,
Culture and Social Domain
Public Entity of St. Eustatius

Barbera Wolfensberger

Director-General for Culture and Media (DGCM)
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science



6

Overview of themes

This overview reflects the topics addressed in the cultural covenant concluded by the Public Entity of St. Eustatius (OLE) and OCW in September 2022. It is a dynamic document that will be updated periodically, every three months.





Theme	Objective	Explanation/need	Instrument/means	Time frame	Who/parties and role	Monitoring agreements/evaluation
General	A. Strengthening steering role and implementation capacity of Department of Culture and Events (DCE).	<p>Currently, the OLE does not have sufficient knowledge, information, personnel and resources to fulfil its role as a subsidy provider and supervisor/adviser in the cultural domain. Insufficient budget for basic funding of the OLE's culture domain (including heritage). Annual overrun of current culture budgets (unconditional grant).</p> <p>Include cultural heritage as a fixed component in other policy areas. In other words, implement an integrated vision in which heritage is embedded (construction projects, housing, agriculture, infrastructure, economy).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OLE's own cultural policy with action points, adopted in February 2023. • Deployment of cultural heritage inspector (1 FTE, funded by BZK), culture coaches (2 FTEs, funded by OCW) and other temporary personnel, such as trainees and interns (e.g. through knowledge institutions, municipalities, etc.). • Deployment of cultural heritage inspector is structural. 	<p>Culture coaches: 2023 – 2025</p> <p>Cultural heritage inspector: structural (as of 2023)</p>	<p>OLE: implementation, entering into performance agreements with local implementation agents. Continuation of COVID support package, activity fund to stimulate civic initiatives, formalisation of youth fund for sports and culture on St. Eustatius.</p> <p>OCW: facilitation and support through knowledge partners</p> <p>BZK: facilitation, administrative link</p>	<p>In priority document. Consultation between OLE, OCW and BZK on culture and unconditional grant.</p>

Theme	Objective	Explanation/need	Instrument/means	Time frame	Who/parties and role	Monitoring agreements/evaluation
General	B. Strengthening the cultural infrastructure.	<p>The island does not yet have a coherent structure of facilities that are necessary to maintain a strong, stable cultural sector. To create a future-proof cultural ecosystem, there is a need for:</p> <p>(1) financial support for cultural organisations to help pay for accommodation/physical space (2) professionalisation opportunities for artists and other cultural professionals. It is difficult for artists to generate an income from their artistic practice, and many artists work multiple jobs.</p> <p>Connect with knowledge partners in EN and the region, and promote opportunities available in both EN and CN.</p> <p>Following the COVID support package, an activity fund was set up. This meets many local support needs (participation, talent development, facilitating performers, regional exchange, bringing new forms of art, dance and knowledge to the island). One problem in this context is the limited funding currently available, given the large number of applications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-annual funding of cultural stakeholders through performance agreements. • Continuation of activity fund for civic initiatives. • Formalisation of youth fund for sports and culture. • The 6 national cultural funds are working to improve their visibility and accessibility. • Improve visibility and accessibility of professionalisation opportunities for cultural stakeholders, e.g. by offering training sessions/courses on cultural entrepreneurship. • Culture coaches who are more heritage-minded and can bridge the gap between heritage/culture and other domains, such as welfare and sports. 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCW, A&O Team (E&K) and RCN: how can fair practice schemes be better tailored to CN (communication and accessibility)? • Platform ACCT Cultuur+Ondernemen Qredits: BES Culture Loan BZK Also VWS for youth fund 	In priority document.
General	C. Realising effective alignment between subsidy offering and national culture funds applicants, and unlocking private funds.	<p>The current subsidy offering does not match local needs. Customisation is not available and funds are insufficiently visible and accessible. Local applicants need guidance/support in writing applications, implementing their plans, and measuring and reporting the outcomes. There is also a need for simplified procedures and administration requirements as well as adaptation to the CN context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCW supports national culture funds in increasing visibility and accessibility in CN. • LKCA writing courses (time frame: 2024 – 2025). • Alignment with A&O Team talks in relation to consultations with private funds (after summer 2024). 	2024 – 2028	OLE, OCW, private funds and subsidy providers, key stakeholders in cultural and social matters (i.e. social matters with a cultural component)	In priority document.

Theme	Objective	Explanation/need	Instrument/means	Time frame	Who/parties and role	Monitoring agreements/evaluation
1. International cooperation	Increase international cooperation opportunities, including regionally.	International: opportunities for cooperation with the US (Statia Day 2026).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new ICB framework (2024) offers opportunities for international cultural cooperation within the region and beyond. Diplomatic relations with the US. 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BZK: contact with BZ and US consulate in Curaçao OCW/BZ: ICB OCW: consultation to collect input on ICB 	-
2. Inter-island cooperation	Promoting cooperation within CN and/or with neighbouring islands. More inter-island cooperation on slavery history (' <i>na de komma</i> ' process).	<p>There is particular interest in cooperation between Sint Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius (3-5), with the aim of unlocking opportunities that are not available to a single small island, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to local expertise. Access to regional networks. Exchange on the islands' shared history of slavery. 	Initiate 3-5 consultations between culture departments. (Regarding sports, the OLE is exploring the possibility of regional reinforcement and exchanges together with VWS, the OLS, the OLB and Sint Maarten).	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OLE OCW 4LO Inter-island network 	-
3. Cultural education	Strengthen/support the development of cultural education in CN inside and outside school. Pursue regional cooperation in this area through 4LO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and adults still cannot sufficiently participate and learn about art, heritage, culture, historical democratic awareness and their own cultural identity. <p>Focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation on culture and education. Demand-driven approach to culture in education. Scope for local customisation. Increasing expertise of teachers and cultural organisations. Opportunities for primary (PO), secondary (VO) and secondary vocational education (MBO). Increase capacity of implementing parties. Increase presence of cultural facilities for recreation, meeting or expression. Regional canon for St. Eustatius needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deployment of culture coaches. LKCA is available as a knowledge partner, also for learning networks. Regional canon may eventually be used as teaching material (not yet completed). <p>Move towards more/structural funding, support and facilitation of implementing parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Cultural Education (CMK) scheme, funds (FCP) and support from LKCA. Culture specialists at school by training internal culture coordinator through LKCA. Culture Card budget available to VO and MBO. Schools receive lump-sum funding, which they can spend as they see fit on cultural education (cultural education is a compulsory part of the curriculum). The School and Environment grant scheme offers customisation options for CN (broader education scheme, can also be used to develop cultural activities). 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OLE (DCE) Schools Cultural institutions and providers on St. Eustatius LKCA Netherlands Open Air Museum FCP OCW OCW/RCN as discussion partners in cultural education policy development Cultural education working group (4LO) 	-

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4. Talent development	Strengthening talent development among St. Eustatius children, adolescents and young adults, with a particular focus on individual young people with exceptional qualities and/or skills.	<p>Children, adolescents and young adults have few opportunities to participate in cultural activities on the island. This means that many of them have little opportunity to express themselves creatively or develop their talents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader local cooperation between the OLE and local stakeholders that includes shared tasks and funding. • Identify potential local opportunities, including mentoring of talented youth by cultural stakeholders; creating accessible/affordable leisure activities as well as the meeting places needed to facilitate them. • Identify opportunities/offers in the region and in EN. • Offer young people the chance to gain experience somewhere not on St. Eustatius at least once. • Bring knowledge and expertise to the island (including art, drama, theatre, music, media, dance and expression). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand/adapt or develop existing programming (e.g. 13+ programme and overview of national youth policy for CN) in such a way that cultural activities with a focus on youth and young adults can be embedded in it. • Deployment of culture coach who can connect with young people and help them access resources based on their own interests. • Cultural participation programme 2021 – 2024. • CMK scheme: there is more demand than supply on St. Eustatius. • Community Service (MDT) project, application currently pending with MDT (OCW). Involvement of apprenticeship company Boombastic. 	From 2024 onwards	Further development with BES(t)4Kids and the 13+ cooperation covenant (OLE, OLB, OLS, VWS, SZW, OCW, BZK, JENV) MYF, A+, NCF, GVP and OLE (by organisation and jointly through Boombastic)	-

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5. Cultural participation and the Faro Convention	Promoting heritage participation and cultural participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects should contribute to the structural improvement of the organisation and functioning of heritage care to better align with the Faro standards. ‘System-oriented’ approach to promote cooperation between society and organised heritage care, and to improve heritage care (system world and living world). <p>Promising initiatives, including those derived from this cultural agenda, could focus on identifying, together with the communities on Sint Eustatius, buildings, building remains, archaeological sites and intangible heritage that locals and experts consider important. Together, they could then devise appropriate protection, management and exploitation measures. Initiatives could also focus on increasing the accessibility of funds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FCP cultural participation scheme 2021 – 2024. <p>There will be two more rounds, in 2024 and 2025. Applications for 2024 are open until 12 July. Ideas that fit the Implementation Agenda will be published on the Faro Platform. If necessary, the RCE will support the development of the proposal into an application with an activity plan and budget (deadline 6 September). Decision-making will take place in the autumn. Applications will be assessed by platform participants and an independent committee. Approved applications can be funded through a subsidy (Jan/Feb 2025), or a government grant (June 2025). For inspiration, see the 2023 projects on the Faro Platform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make Heritage Academy courses accessible in CN, also in relation to Faro since many heritage participation courses/modules have already been developed in that context, and these could perhaps be reused. Share lessons learned (e.g. with the other two islands or interested parties in EN). 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OLE RCE OCW UNESCO SECAR SteNaPa ABGA 	-
Cultural heritage (see general provisions as in culture covenant)	Solid foundation for heritage: leveraging heritage in addressing societal challenges (SDGs).	Develop public and digitally accessible inventories of designated or protected heritage (intangible, monuments, archaeology, collections).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old documentation present and currently being updated. Deployment of cultural heritage inspector. A lot of documentation is available worldwide, but this is not accessible on St. Eustatius. Bringing back documentation, artefacts and collections to St. Eustatius. 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OLE RCE BZK OCW Historical Foundation Museum 	-

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6. Colonial history/ slavery history	A structural increase in the attention paid to the island's history of slavery. More knowledge and awareness about the history of slavery and its impact on the present.	Special attention paid to heritage (management and conservation, regulations): archaeology (including underwater archaeology), graves of enslaved people, collection and archive research on removed Statian heritage. Dialogue on slavery history in relation to Statia Day 2026 (First Salute anniversary).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemoration Year schemes: FCP and MF. • 'Na de komma' process. • Local link with National Slavery Museum. • De Nederlandsche Bank. • Use of Canon. • Emancipation Day (1 July). • Metamorfoze, or other possibilities through National Archives and KB. • Application to be included on UNESCO's Routes of Enslaved Peoples list: UNESCO Caribbean. 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BZK • OCW • RCE • NUC (Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO) • Canon: OLE, Netherlands Open Air Museum offers advice and guidance • Inter-island network working group • Heritage Center • ABGA 	-
7. Museum collections (public collections)	Solid foundation for collections.	Collection inventory (also digital), preservation, management and return of collections from EN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from RCE (knowledge and expertise), more integral approach to collections with a colonial context by including built heritage, archaeology, intangible heritage and archives. • Free webinars offered by the Heritage Academy (in collaboration with the RCE), available throughout the Kingdom (basic topics). • Support research (including provenance research) on collections (through NWO) – under development, more clarity this summer. 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCW: development of collection policy • RCE • Heritage Academy in consultation with RCE: developing webinars for parties throughout Kingdom • OLE • Leiden University 	-

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8. Built heritage	<p>Solid foundation for heritage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of historic buildings in order. • Legislation/regulations in order. • Related procedures and instruments in place (e.g. with regard to licensing). • Associated implementation in order (including advice, supervision and enforcement). • Adequate funding system for monuments. • Including heritage in spatial development plans (ROPs). • Making publicly owned heritage more sustainable and encouraging repurposing of historic buildings. 	<p>There are 51 listed monuments but the formal designation procedure was never completed, so not all buildings are protected. Cityscape Oranjestad is protected, however.</p> <p>No officially established monument fund, but in the past low-interest loans to corporate clients have been provided in cooperation with NRF.</p> <p>RCE: for the Statia Day celebrations in 2026, ensure long-term function, repurposing, restoration and conservation of buildings that are of value to Sint Eustatius' history and the protected cityscape of Oranjestad. To this end, start implementation of established cultural policy (master plan), including plans to restore four buildings. First ensure completion of process for legal protection of the 51 monuments and expansion of the list of monuments if necessary during the process.</p> <p>Then establish link between regional canon (through participatory process with input from Stadians) and cultural heritage (visible traces of history in the city). Ensure adequate funding for the restoration and conservation of the monuments, including in the longer term (with the help of NRF and other parties and funds). If requested, the RCE can make available personnel to reinforce the OLE.</p> <p>Need for an overview (Excel) of all the monuments: how many are there, who owns them, their structural condition, their function, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from RCE (knowledge and expertise). • Monumentenwet BES [BES Heritage Act], Sint Eustatius Monuments Ordinance 2020. • Establish an active monument fund. • NRF budget in revolving fund for business owners (not private owners). • Income tax break for private owners (see info on RCN website). • Subsidy scheme for sustainable social real estate (DUMAVA). • Heritage Deal. • Networking through Dutch Caribbean Heritage Platform (DCHP). • Training opportunities through DCHP: use Heritage Academy (e.g. module on making monuments more sustainable, or to think about networks and tasks). • Opportunities for strengthening implementation through OCW's Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme. 	From 2024 onwards	<p>St. Eustatius Monument Council</p> <p>OLE: responsible for monument policy</p> <p>BZK, OCW: monuments in relation to DUMAVA and ROP</p> <p>NRF, OCW (E&K and RCE): setting up NRF budget, exploring possibility of revolving fund for private individuals</p> <p>E&K (in cooperation with RCE, IPO and VNG): exploring link between OLE and Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme</p>	-

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9. Intangible heritage	Solid foundation for intangible heritage: Valuing intangible heritage and its stakeholders. Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003 UNESCO Convention).	Create and publish an inventory of intangible heritage using participatory method (together with KIEN and other parties). Awareness and restoration of cultural identity, history and traditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange and capacity building through 4LO intangible heritage working group, with EN, CN, countries, KIEN and NUC. • Work towards a cooperation agreement between the seven parts of the Kingdom, following the 2019 statement of intent. • Separate inventories for each public entity. • Supporting the preparation of implementation frameworks and guidelines for governments, designated organisations and NGOs, and communities. • Inclusion of intangible cultural heritage in cultural policy and, as far as possible, in intersectoral policy. 	From 2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OLE • OCW • KIEN • FCP 	-

Theme	Objective	Explanation/need	Instrument/means	Time frame	Who/parties and role	Monitoring agreements/evaluation
10. Archaeology	<p>A. Solid foundation for archaeology: regulations and related instruments, procedures and implementation (including staffing and expertise for advice, monitoring and enforcement), and physical facilities.</p> <p>B. Necessary short-term intervention to ensure protection of graves (against sea erosion).</p> <p>C. Return of archaeological collections (William and Mary University).</p> <p>D. Designate known archaeological sites as protected areas (including graves of enslaved people).</p> <p>E. Inventory archaeological expectations across island and integrate results in spatial instruments/ procedures.</p>	<p>A. The Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme should also be accessible to CN to help create a solid foundation.</p> <p>D. Complete survey on privately owned areas: designate as protected areas to protect archaeological sites (including graves of enslaved people) and architectural remains.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from RCE (knowledge and expertise), including connection to digital registration system Archis. • Monumentenwet BES [BES Heritage Act], Valletta Convention. <p>Policy response <i>Archeologie bij de Tijd</i> (2022): MF scheme/grant for public archaeology presentations and public participation (e.g. participatory archaeological research, augmented reality project for visitors: archaeology and slavery history).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for strengthening implementation through OCW's Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme. • Research and innovation platform for archaeology is accessible on Sint Eustatius. • Accessibility and knowledge of available budgets for research and internships. • C. Assistance from BZ, if desired. 	From 2024 onwards	<p>OCW, RCE</p> <p>OLE (heritage expert/ inspector) and SECAR</p> <p>Cooperation with BZK for 'na de komma' process</p> <p>Cooperation with <i>Natuurbeheer</i> in relation to landscape, e.g. support RCE in drawing up area biographies (gebiedsbiografieën)</p> <p>NDE, DEN</p> <p>E&K (in cooperation with RCE, IPO and VNG): exploring link between OLE and OCW's Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme</p>	-

Theme	Objective	Explanation/need	Instrument/means	Time frame	Who/parties and role	Monitoring agreements/evaluation
11. Underwater heritage	A. Solid foundation for heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of underwater heritage. • Improving maritime heritage management in practice: • Knowledge building. • Data sharing. • Improving facilities. • Staffing. • Information and public outreach. • Inter-island cooperation. 	A. The Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme should also be accessible to CN to help create a solid foundation. Involvement in ratification process of the 2001 UNESCO Convention. After ratification, parties continue to work together for a smooth landing. OCW commissioned a legal analysis for BES island in relation to 2001 UNESCO Convention. Among other things, this will lead to draft regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BES Maritime Management Act. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from RCE (knowledge and expertise), including by establishing connection to MaSS and MACHU systems (MaSS: mass.cultureelerfgoed.nl). • 4LO working group (OLE and SECAR participate in practical working group): promotional video to raise awareness of underwater archaeology in Caribbean waters; improvements to support maritime heritage management. <p>Policy response Archeologie bij de Tijd (2022): MF scheme/grant for public archaeology presentations and public participation (e.g. participatory archaeological research). Incentive and support programme for smaller municipalities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for strengthening implementation through OCW's Erfgoed & Overheid [Heritage & Government] programme. • Research and innovation platform for archaeology is accessible on Sint Eustatius. 	From 2024 onwards	OCW/RCE: maritime heritage OLE (heritage expert/inspector), SECAR and SteNaPa BZK 4LO: underwater heritage Public Works and Water Management	-
12. Heritage and spatial development	Solid foundation for heritage: better alignment between heritage policy and spatial planning (operational objective).	Alignment with processes, instruments and procedures of Spatial Development Directorate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture. • Library in RO. • Public housing (possibly repurposing historic buildings). • Monuments, protected cityscapes. • Archaeological value maps and area biographies. • BES Maritime Management Act. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from RCE (knowledge and expertise). • Finalise list of monuments and designation procedure. • Identify known archaeological sites. 	2024 – 2033	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCW, BZK • BZK is responsible, takes the lead on ROP • OLE (supported by RCE) is responsible for designating monuments Public Works and Water Management 	-

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13. Cultural heritage in times of crisis	<p>Solid foundation for heritage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using existing inventories to create an integral digital inventory of designated or protected heritage and making it digitally accessible (knowing what is protected). Include culture and heritage in disaster and emergency preparations. Include heritage in crisis plan and digital crisis map. 	<p>Annual hurricane season and sea level rise/ coastal erosion threaten heritage.</p> <p>Crisis manager and heritage policy officer in close contact.</p> <p>Be well prepared for crises.</p> <p>Connection to network with Caribbean Civil Protection Mechanism (CCPM).</p>	<p>Formalise that a heritage expert (RCE) must be available for civilian mission after crisis.</p> <p>OCW and BZ in contact with RCE about hub for wider Caribbean region.</p> <p>VNW fund for 6 islands: learning from traditions and customs with regard to hurricanes, learning from historical construction.</p>	From 2024 onwards	<p>OLE</p> <p>OCW, VNW connection with CCPM network</p> <p>RCE</p> <p>Private property owners</p>	-
14. Library	<p>Further development, modernisation and expansion of the library to create a culture and media centre.</p>	<p>The library needs support with regard to the development of multi-annual plans, training, network building and management, collection renewal and accommodation challenges.</p> <p>By the end of 2025, the library must have made significant progress in updating and renewing its collection.</p> <p>Local library members should have access to the online library collection in EN.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duty of care in the revised library act (WSOB) Provincial Support Institute (after this: POI) pilot: inventory what the libraries need. In consultation with Sint Eustatius library, POI Rijnbrink will develop approach for the coming years in mid-2024. KB develops training courses and facilitates knowledge sharing. KB supports library in modernising and updating its collection, (also focusing on English-language materials) and in accessing online library EN. Stichting Lezen, through Biblionet Groningen, takes care of the rollout of the Library at School in PO and VO, Bookstart handles rollout in childcare and trains reading consultants. 	From 2024 onwards	<p>OCW, KB, POI and Sint Eustatius library, OLE, Stichting Lezen</p>	-

Theme	Objective	Explanation/need	Instrument/means	Time frame	Who/parties and role	Monitoring agreements/evaluation
15. Digitisation	Promoting expertise, innovation and cooperation on heritage preservation, usability and accessibility. Implementing digital transformation in all aspects of cultural institutions' operations, as well as in the way the public is engaged.	The island's history is not yet sufficiently accessible to residents and visitors. The OLE, cultural institutions and the library need support in the digital transformation. This should lead to accessibility of existing knowledge, collections and objects, which requires better digital skills as well as new organisational models and a good ICT infrastructure. At the same time, citizens need support in increasing their digital skills so they can access a variety of resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture coaches. • DEN's training offering (e.g. in the form of webinars on digital strategy and transformation; will be clarified in a new activity plan). • Exploring possible deployment of a digital heritage coach through the Digital Heritage Network (including possibility of networking with other islands). • Cultuurloket DigitALL created a scheme for CN at the request of OCW. The scheme went online at the end of March. NDE assesses need for knowledge sharing and networking in Caribbean region (or expansion of current network in EN to Caribbean). 	From 2024 onwards	OLE, OCW, DEN (kenniscentrum Cultuur & Digitale Transformatie), NDE (Netwerk digitaal Erfgoed), Cultuurloket DigitALL	-
16. Archives and archive repositories	Professionalising the archive (creating a solid foundation).	Creating a solid foundation for archive and information management requires the realisation of suitable archive repositories, the sustainable preservation and digitisation of paper archives, and making archival materials accessible to the island's residents, which is important after the Dutch government's apology for its past involvement in slavery. There is a need to experience, discuss and process the past, and to come to terms with it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory the island's needs through an archival agenda (to be created). • Inventory what is needed to preserve, manage and make archives available (accessible). • Support from and knowledge sharing with archival and information professionals. • Explore the possibility of connecting to the National Archives' e-Depot. 	From 2024 onwards	OLE, National Archives, OCW	-
17. Culture and entrepreneurship	Promoting cultural entrepreneurship and professional development in the creative sector.	Low-interest loan scheme through Qredits insufficiently known among small entrepreneurs and artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BES Culture Loan available (see Qredits website). • Ability to adapt existing training courses, webinars, etc. to CN context. • Permanent Professional Development programme (PPO programme) for the creative sector. 	-	Cultuur+Ondernemen, Platform ACCT and other support organisations	-

In addition to covenant:

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18. Media	Empowering and professionalising journalists.	An independent study on journalism and the media landscape in CN found that journalists need professionalisation and training support. Most journalists in CN depend on advertisers for their income and livelihood. There are no incentives and support facilities as in EN.	A temporary media and journalism researcher to further identify the needs of local media professionals and stakeholders, and to support the sustainable development of a local network and media infrastructure.	2024 – 2025	OCW, OLE, RCN	-

