

# Labor Market Analysis Caribbean Netherlands



11 juli 2024



This research report was developed by the **Council for Education and Labor Market of the Caribbean Netherlands (ROA CN)**. The council was established in September 2011 and has the statutory task (in accordance with the BES Vocational Education Act) to advise the Minister of Education, Culture and Science about the training courses in the Caribbean Netherlands. This advice involves assessing whether the training course meets the needs of the labour market on the island in question, and whether it can pass the efficiency test. Since these are small-scale islands that almost never pass the efficiency test, the opportunities for advancement in the region are also examined. ROA CN provides solicited and unsolicited advice on the connection

### **Executive Summary**

This report provides insight into the current and future needs on the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands for the five largest sectors; construction, tourism & hospitality, healthcare & welfare, government, and education. Certain sectors have an image problem, which makes them less attractive to local people to work in them. As a result, workers in the more physically demanding professions, such as construction, are often brought in from Latin America. Another part of the

workforce comes from the European part of the Netherlands. These workers usually occupy positions demanding a higher educational level (university positions). The exact quantity is unknown, because data on labour migration of people with a Dutch passport is not available.

In the European part of the Netherlands, approximately a quarter of the working population lacks a starting educational qualification to enter the labour market. The Caribbean Netherlands shows alarmingly high percentages of the working population without a starting qualification, with 51% on Bonaire, 31% on Saba and 62% on Sint Eustatius. Also, poverty is persistent in the Caribbean Netherlands and the gap between rich and poor is increasing. This causes a vicious circle in which poverty is passed on from generation to generation.

The available figures predict a further decline in the number of young people, and an ageing population in the Caribbean Netherlands in the coming years. There is also a persistent brain drain, whereby there is sometimes a desire to return, but various circumstances prevent the island children from taking this step.

Almost all the reports included in this study indicate that more reliable data is needed in order to identify and implement appropriate measures. In addition, several reports reiterate that the government has often introduced temporary measures and pilots in the Caribbean Netherlands, but that it is essential to come up with structural and sustainable solutions. This would be a step in the right direction to increase the confidence of the inhabitants of the Caribbean Netherlands in the government as a whole.

It is important that in this technological age, other suitable solutions are also pursued, to provide education, such as increased cooperation from educational institutions, independent of their geographical location (online education). The first steps in cooperation and hybrid functioning have been taken. Further research into what other possibilities exist, and how these can be implemented, is desirable.

The multiculturalism of the region, in which language plays a major role, also has a major influence on the connection between education and the labour market. The extensive presence of different first languages (Spanish, Papiamentu) add challenges on the labour market and in education.

The recommendations of plain and feasible interventions can be found at the end of the report in chapter 7.

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2 Research Methodology</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Research Questions	7
2.2 Approach	7
2.2.1 Data	7
2.2.2 Interviews	8
<b>3 Caribbean Netherlands labour market</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Labour Market	9
3.1.1 Demographics	9
3.1.2 Starting Qualifications	10
3.1.3 Unemployment and vacancies	12
3.2 Regulatory instruments on the labour market	13
3.3 Distribution of labour across various sectors	14

3.3.1	Construction	16
3.3.2	Tourism and hospitality	16
3.3.3	Government	16
3.3.4	Education	16
3.3.5	Care and Welfare	17
<b>4</b>	<b>Developments on the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands up to 2030</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1	Wage developments	18
4.2	Demographics	19
4.3	Development in the various sectors	21
4.3.1	Construction and technology	21
4.3.2	Hospitality and tourism	21
4.3.3	Government	22
4.3.4	Education	23
4.3.5	Care and Welfare	23
4.3.6	Digitalisation	24
<b>5</b>	<b>Connecting education to the current and future labour market</b>	<b>26</b>
5.1	Small size, big challenges	26
5.2	Training	26
5.3	Missing knowledge and skills	29
5.4	Mentorship	30
<b>6</b>	<b>Future skills and knowledge for the labour market</b>	<b>31</b>
6.1	Developing personnel	31
6.2	21st Century Skills	31
6.3	Lifelong development	32
<b>7</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>33</b>
7.1	Improving the operation of the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands	33
7.2	Addressing the most important labour market developments	33
7.3	Improving the connection of education to the current and future labour market	33
7.4	Increasing skills	34
	<b>Appendix 1: Training courses</b>	<b>35</b>
	<b>Appendix 2: TWV per sector versus supply</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Appendix 3: Literature and sources list</b>	<b>39</b>

## 1. Introduction

The goal of the Strategic Education Alliance (SEA) is to increase the educational success of students from the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom. One of the agreements is to analyse the labour market of all Dutch islands in the Caribbean, which will provide insight into the sectors facing a shortage of workers. Researchers on each of the islands have conducted a similar study and the reports should provide insight into the relevant developments on the labour market in recent years, and the expected developments in the coming years. This report contains the analysis of the Caribbean Netherlands. The reports from the six islands should form the basis for a joint approach for a strategic action plan to implement concrete measures for the six Caribbean islands.

The Caribbean part of the Netherlands (hereinafter: Caribbean Netherlands) consists of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, three islands that differ in character. Additionally, this report will refer to Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten as the CAS countries. These two different denominations should help the reader differentiate when the report is talking about the three Caribbean countries within the Kingdom, and when about Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba.

As of January 1st, 2024, the Caribbean Netherlands has a total population of 30,397 inhabitants. Saba and Sint Eustatius have had a fairly stable population since 2010, with around 2,000 and 3,000 inhabitants respectively. On Bonaire, you see an explosive growth in the number of inhabitants after 10-10-10, from over 15,000 in 2011 to over 25,000 in 2024. A third of the population of the Caribbean Netherlands was born in the Caribbean Netherlands. A fifth of the population was born in one of the CAS countries, this is partly caused by the births of inhabitants of the Caribbean Netherlands that take place there. A significant part of the population, 4,406, was born in the European Netherlands. The remaining 10,272 (34%) inhabitants were born elsewhere, the vast majority of whom come from the Caribbean and South American region.

The six islands in the Caribbean have been colonised by European powers since the end of the fifteenth century: initially by Spain and from the beginning of the seventeenth century by the Netherlands. The colonisation and the use of large numbers of enslaved people brought from Africa had a great influence on the societies that were formed. Part of this influence is still tangible and present in the fabric of society. For example, the Caribbean Netherlands has more of a talking culture, while the European Netherlands has a writing culture<sup>1</sup>, and the way in which certain types of work are viewed influences the functioning of the labour market.

The small scale of the islands and the limited availability of data and (policy) documents make it sometimes complicated to present a complete and accurate picture of the current situation, the bottlenecks and possible solutions. This reality has also influenced this research.

This report presents the results of the labour market research for the Caribbean Netherlands. Due to the small scale of the islands, the numerical substantiation is not always sufficiently available or reliable. It is also challenging to accurately portrait statistical representation when dealing with small numbers. Nevertheless, this report provides as realistic a picture as possible of the labour market now and in the future of the Caribbean Netherlands. After this introduction, the research design is elaborated in Chapter 2, the labour market is described in Chapter 3, future developments in the labour market are mentioned in Chapter 4, the connection between education and the labour market is discussed in Chapter 5, the skills and the necessary knowledge for the future are discussed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 concludes with a number of recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Tourism and the labour market in St. Eustatius, Characteristics and perceptions. Koetsier, 2015

## 2. Research methodology

This chapter elaborates the research methodology. First, the research questions are defined. The research questions have been coordinated with researchers on the other islands in order to contribute to comparability. The approach is then discussed.

### 2.1 Research Questions

In order to gain a good picture of the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands and also with the countries within the Kingdom, a number of research questions have been formulated that should provide clarity about the functioning of the labour market. This makes possible the development of data-based strategic plans and actions, and to make education in the Caribbean Netherlands and the CAS islands more relevant to the labour market. The following research questions have been further elaborated in this report:

1. What does the labour market look like in the Caribbean Netherlands? (see chapter three)
2. What are the most important labour market developments expected by 2030? (see chapter four)
3. How is education aligned with the current and future labour market? (see chapter five)
4. Which skills are lacking and how can we address this? (see chapter six)

### 2.2 Approach

In preparing this report, we looked at studies that have already been conducted in the Caribbean Netherlands, as well as the previous reports and advice made by ROA CN itself, and the data that is available about the islands. In addition, interviews were held to validate and supplement the information.

#### 2.2.1 Data

The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) has figures on the working population and the distribution across the sectors. CBS also shows where the residents were born. Given the small numbers, it is not always possible to make statements based on the data obtained, especially on Sint Eustatius and Saba. In addition, the data quality is sometimes insufficient to be usable. The CBS obtains 60% of its information from databases of the various authorities and 40% of the data is obtained via surveys<sup>2</sup>, which are conducted face-to-face or online.

Social Affairs and Employment of the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands (RCN- unit SZW) keeps track of which work permits are issued. It is currently not clear how many people fill a vacancy with an American or Dutch passport, as this group receives an automatic approval from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND)."

#### 2.2.2 Interviews

With the information and data gathered, ROA CN approached the various stakeholders to complete and verify the information. The information was checked with the deputies of the Public Entities, the directors of the schools, the director and the delegates of the Chambers of Commerce, the HR managers of several organizations and stakeholders from the various sectors.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://longreads.cbs.nl/the-caribbean-netherlands-in-numbers-2023>

### 3. Caribbean Netherlands labour market

This chapter provides a description of the labour market on each of the three islands, discusses management instruments, presents the distribution of work across the various sectors and describes developments in the labour market.

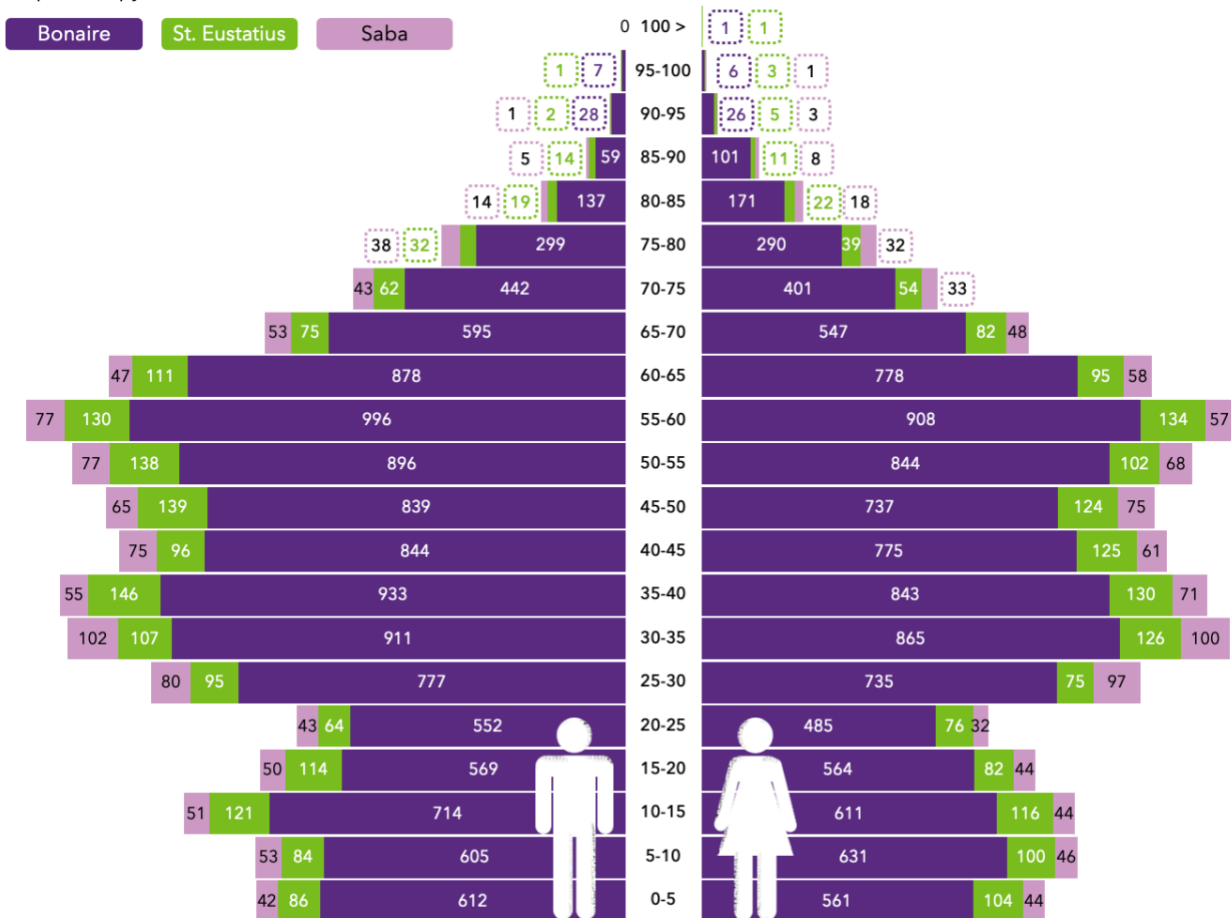
#### 3.1 Labour market

##### 3.1.1 Demographics

On 1 January 2024, the Caribbean Netherlands had a total of 30,397 inhabitants. The figures from CBS indicate that the age groups between 25 and 65 are relatively large. The data also seems to indicate a decline in the size of the population under 25 years old, and those 65 years and older. The sharp decline in the population between 15 and 25 years old is due to the fact that young people move abroad to study during those years, and are no longer registered on the islands. A large part of this group does not return to the islands after their studies, resulting in a major brain drain for the region. The rapid increase in population numbers between 25 and 35 years old seems to indicate that there is a high influx of migrant workers in this age group.

The report of the State Commission on Demographic Developments in the Caribbean Netherlands 2050, “Directed Growth”<sup>3</sup>, shows that the population pyramid of the Caribbean Netherlands was actually pyramid-shaped. However, in 2023, the population structure resembled an “onion” or “urn”, with a narrow bottom, a wider middle and a narrow top. This is a symptom of “Population Aging” (increase of older people and decrease of younger people), plus the migration percentage increase are exerting pressure on the islands.

Population pyramid Caribbean Netherlands - Year 2022



Source: CBS 2022

The CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics) define the working population as all residents aged 15 to 75. In the Caribbean Netherlands, the current retirement age is 65, which generally means that the group of people aged 65 and over is not necessarily active on the labour market anymore. Additionally, in the Caribbean Netherlands, young people up to the age of 18 have a compulsory education and qualification requirement, which means that a significant proportion of the group under the age of 20 are full-time students and do not participate in the labour market (at least not full time).

Economic development over the past decade, especially in Bonaire, has led to large labour migration. CBS figures show that 34% of the population was born outside the Kingdom, and in certain sectors, immigrants are dominant. The (immigrant) owners of companies in these sectors often prefer employees from their country of origin. In total, the BES islands had a settlement surplus of 900 people as of 1 January 2024, with Saint Eustatius being the exception because there the number of emigrants was higher than the numbers of immigrants. The surplus of settlement consists mainly of people from Latin American countries.

Bonaire is challenged <sup>3</sup>by overpopulation due to migration of workers, both rich and poor. In order to keep the islands viable, choices must be made and actions must be taken, according to the State Commission Demographic Developments Caribbean Netherlands.

### 3.1.2 Starting qualification

A starting qualification is a diploma at the level of havo, vwo, mbo2, CVQ2 or higher.

In 2018 the Central Planning Bureau issued a memorandum regarding the value of the starting qualification on the labour market<sup>4</sup>, and this document indicates that, possessing a higher level of education increases the odds of finding a job, and reduces the chance of ending in a low-income job occupation. More than half of the working population in the Caribbean Netherlands is below the starting qualification for the labour market mentioned above. In 2022, 51% of the working population on Bonaire, 62% on Sint Eustatius and 31% on Saba had an educational level below the starting qualification. This is in stark contrast to the European Netherlands, where “only” 25% lack starting qualification. The figures for Saba give a distorted picture due to the students of the medical school who live there temporarily. The forecast is that the number of people without a starting



**The governments of the BES islands face more challenges than large cities in the Netherlands**

**Richard van Zwol**  
**Chairman of the State Commission**

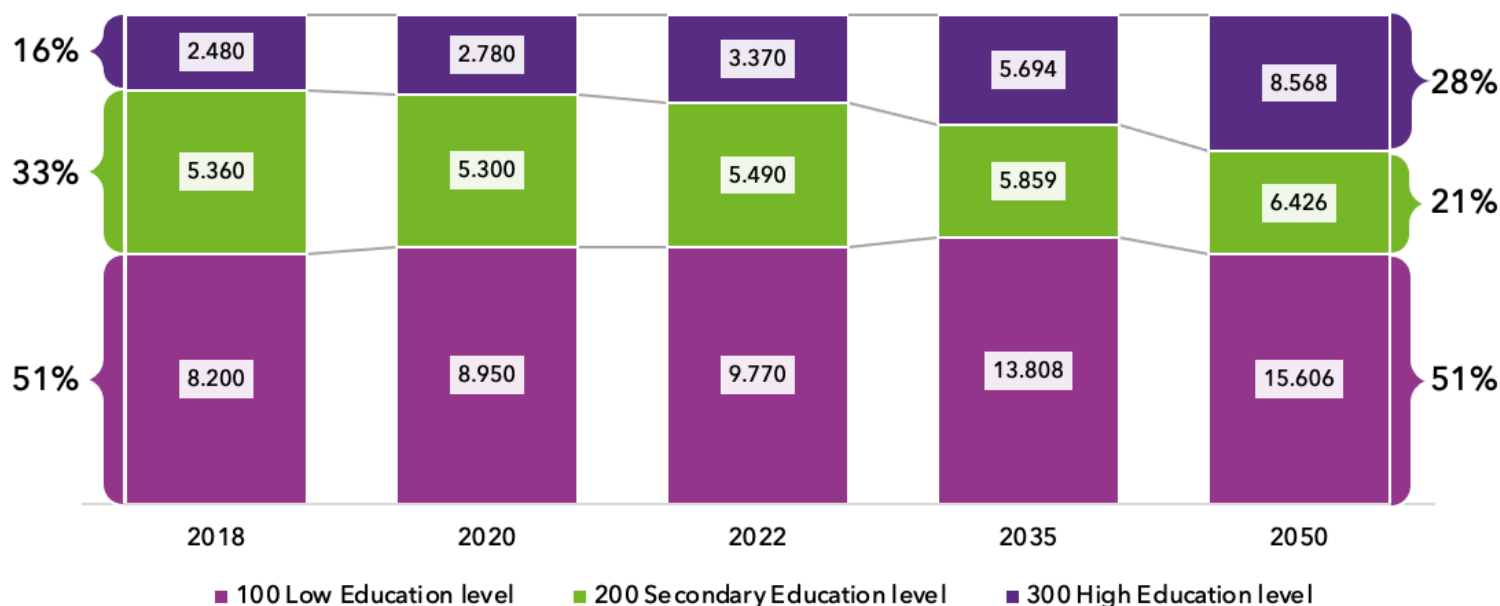
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.staatscommissie2050.nl/documenten/rapporten/2024/07/04/rapport-staatscommissie-demografische-ontwikkelingen-caribisch-nederland-2050>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cpb.nl/sites/default/files/omnidownload/CPB-Notitie-8feb2018-Waarde-van-een-startkwalificatie-op-de-arbeidsmarkt.pdf>

qualification will continue to rise if no intervention takes place.

In order to encourage employers to further train employees, there is a BBL wage cost subsidy for employers in shortage sectors, such as construction, technology and hospitality. This subsidy has not yet achieved the desired effect. The number of applicants has been low, and most companies are not aware of the existence of this grant. At the beginning of 2024, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency

### Bonaire education level



Source: CBS 2023

started exploring the possibilities to declare the subsidy for practical training<sup>5</sup> applicable in the Caribbean Netherlands. This set-up would allow employers who employ and supervise a student to be eligible for a subsidy. This subsidy is a contribution towards the costs incurred by the employer for supervising the student.

#### 3.1.3 Unemployment and vacancies

Unemployment is relatively low on the islands. In 2022, 3% of the working population was unemployed on Bonaire, 3.9% on Sint Eustatius and 2.5% on Saba.

Labor participation	Bonaire	Sint Eustatius	Saba
Unemployed labour force	390	70	30
Unemployment rate	3,0%	3,9%	2,5%

People with disabilities are often unable participate in the work process. There is a form of compensation for this in the Caribbean Netherlands, the Social Assistance, but not the same

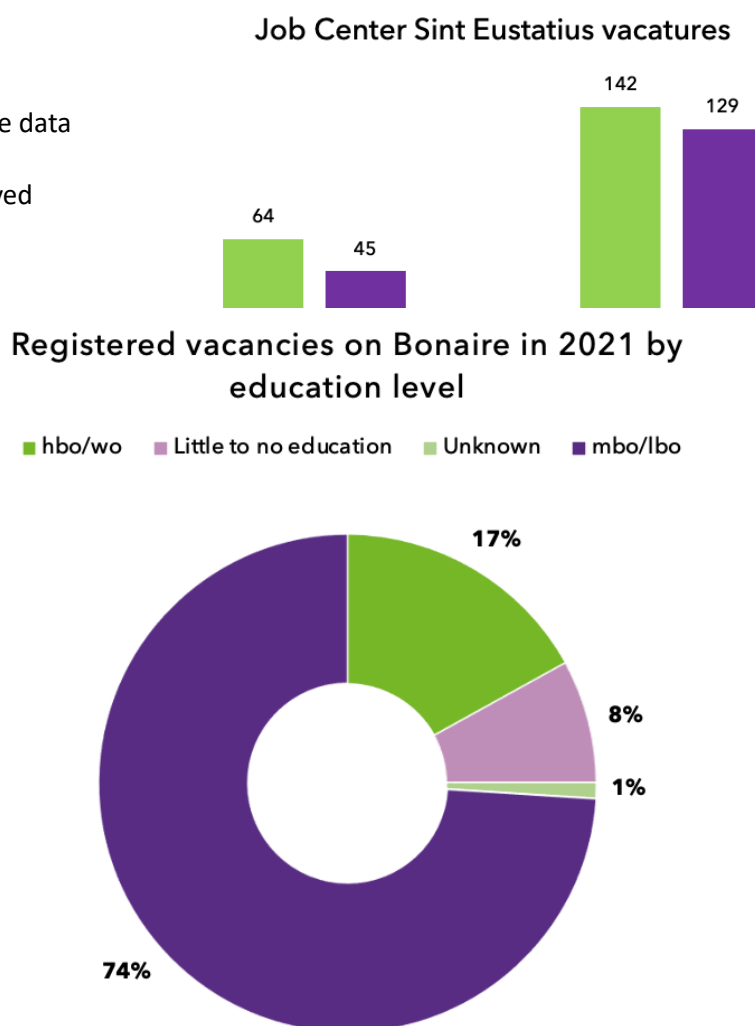
<sup>5</sup> <http://www.rvo.nl/praktijkleren>

regulations (Wajong, WIA or the Participation Act) as in the European Netherlands. People with disabilities often do not qualify for social assistance due to their partner's income.

There is not a clear and accurate registry of vacancies in the Caribbean Netherlands. The data on the type and number of vacancies is insufficient, and its quality has to be improved further, in order to get a clearer picture.

### Bonaire

In 2021, Plenchi di Trabou had 1077 vacancies registered. The hbo/wo positions represent one sixth of the vacancies. Not all hbo/wo positions are registered with Plenchi di Trabou. Teachers, doctors, nurses and other specialists are recruited through other channels. Almost three quarters of the registered vacancies are at mbo level or lower, and half of the demand is for craftsmen. This occupational classification includes mostly vacancies in construction and construction-related professions.



Source: Plenchi di trabou 2022

### The Windward Islands

In the past two years, Sint Eustatius has mainly had vacancies in the tourism sector and construction, including welders for the oil terminal. The majority of job seekers has an administrative profile. The Public Entity has a structural problem when it comes to fill specialist positions and vacancies at higher professional education level. In general, these positions are recruited within the Kingdom.

On Saba, the vacancies are published using Facebook and the Central Bulletin Board.

### 3.2 Regulatory instruments on the labour market

The Foreign Nationals Employment Act (Wav BES) optimises the functioning of the labour market and protects local workers. The law obliges employers to always recruit locally first. Policy rules have been drawn up for the implementation of this Act (decision on the implementation of the Wav BES). A vacancy must be reported to Plenchi di Trabou (Bonaire) or to the Labour Unit of Sint Eustatius or Saba. The list of exceptions below has been drawn up for a number of specific activities, which allows for direct external recruitment. The exemption list for Sint Eustatius has yet to be formalized.

Bonaire	Saba
Car Painter	Teacher
Car Mechanic	Dive Instructor and Dive Master

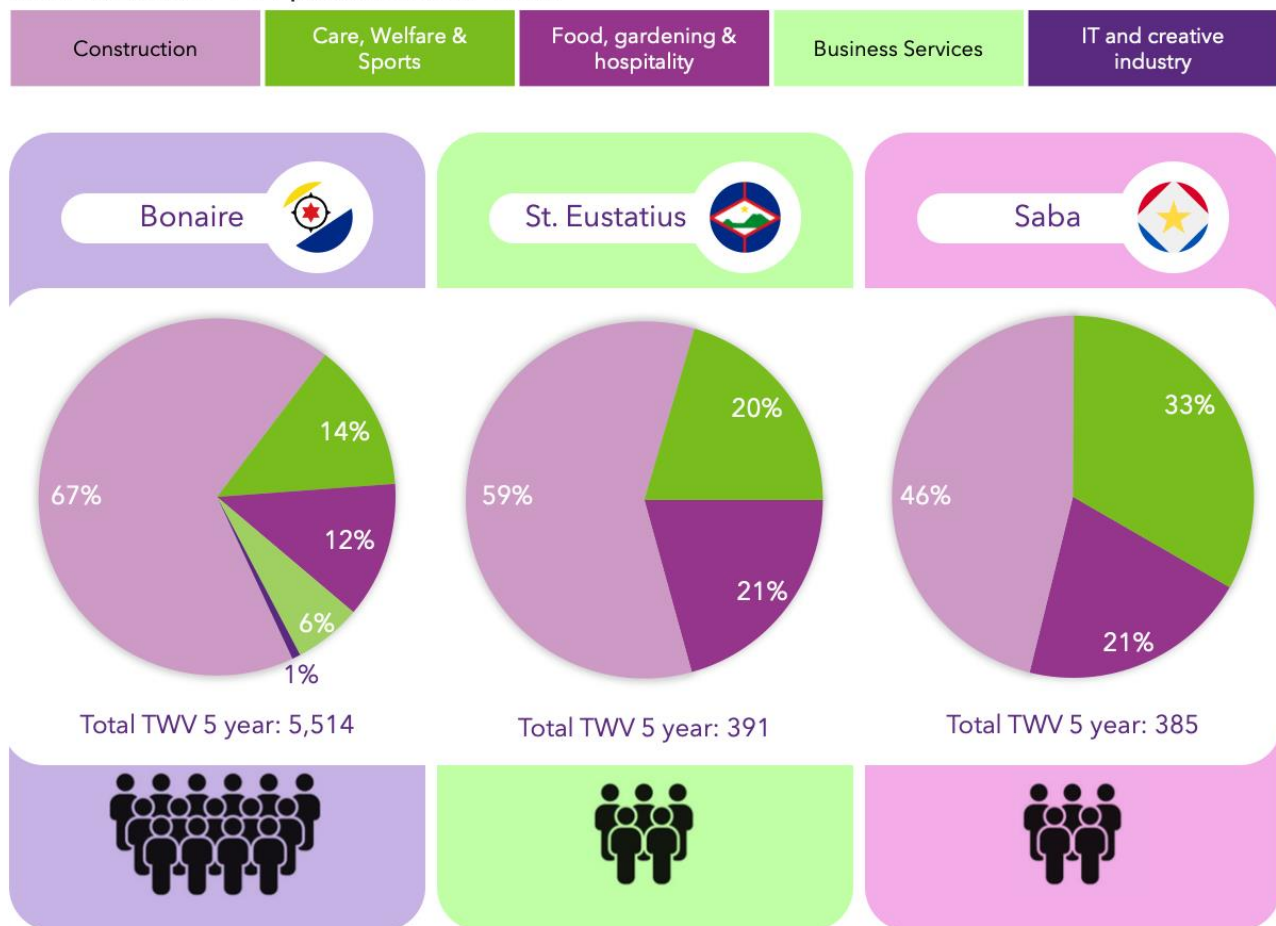
Car Garage Worker	Certified Chefs
Auto Technician	Physician and Professional Medical Personnel
Carpenter / Mason	Positions with salaries above USD 50,000
Metal Worker	
Refrigeration Technician/Cooling Mechanic Electrician	
Electrical Engineer	
Diving Instructor	
Physician and Medical Specialist	
Graphic Designer	
Docent / Educator	
Air Traffic Controller and Related Functions	
Pastry Baker	
Self-Employed or Specialized Chef	
Hairdresser	
Car Painter	
Car Mechanic	

Source: RCN-unit SZW, July 2024

If no suitable candidate can be found locally, an employee from outside the Caribbean Netherlands or outside the Kingdom can be recruited. The employer is required to apply for a work permit (TWV) for the migrant worker. The figures from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment indicate that most work permit applications are for executive professions in the industries of construction and hospitality. The next largest sector is Care, Welfare & Sports, which includes domestic workers, nurses and teachers. The recent adjustment of the minimum wage also has an effect on the

residence regulations in the Caribbean Netherlands <sup>6</sup>and the recruitment of workers from abroad. In the past 5 years, 6,290 work permits have been applied for in the Caribbean Netherlands.

### Dutch Caribbean - TWV per sector 2019 - 2023



Source: SZW 2024

### 3.3 Distribution of work across sectors

The diversification of income sources on the islands is limited. Tourism and related activities are the largest source of employment and the islands are therefore highly dependent on this. On Sint Eustatius, the oil terminal GTI Statia also provides a lot of jobs.

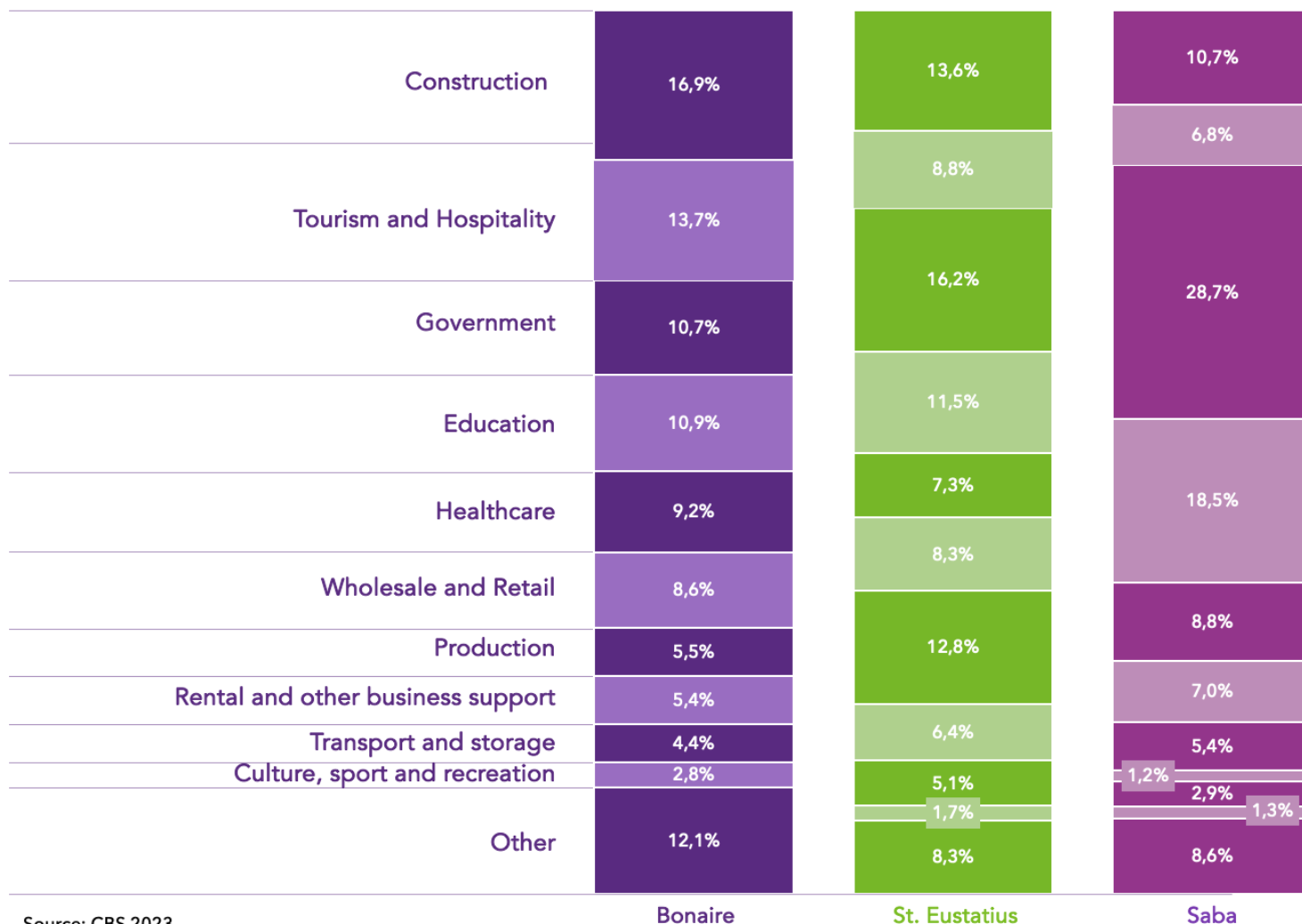
It should be noted that the financial situation of the oil terminal is precarious<sup>7</sup>. A bankruptcy of the oil terminal would have a major impact on employment on Sint Eustatius. These often specialist professionals are not easy to redeploy locally, but they are very much in demand in other countries, so the probability of them leaving the region is high

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/actueel/nieuws/2024/juni/21/belangrijke-wijzigingen-in-verblijfsregels-per-1-juli-2024>

<sup>7</sup> Letter from the Financial Supervision Board of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba to the government commissioner of the public body of Sint Eustatius, dated May 10, 2023.

The CBS figures for 2022 show in which sectors the working population was employed. The top 5 sectors are the same for the three Caribbean Dutch islands, although the order differs per island. These 5 sectors are: Construction, Tourism & Hospitality, Government, Education and Healthcare & Welfare.

## % Work population Dutch Caribbean ages 15 to 74 by economic activity, 2022



Source: CBS 2023

### 3.3.1 Construction

The construction sector consists of a number of large companies and many subcontractors and self-employed people without personnel. A lot of immigrants work in this sector, mainly due to a severe shortage of specialist professionals such as bricklayers, electricians, etc., but also a lack of unskilled / regular workers in general. This sector is mostly looking for specialists at mbo level. Immigrants with a non-Dutch passport mainly perform operational activities. The management positions are mostly filled by European Dutch employees. Differences in culture, language and expertise tend to become obstacles in the execution of projects. Companies that uphold high safety and quality standards complain that the lack of regulation leaves too much room in this sector. This results in a lot of construction work. An additional obstacle in this sector is the often inadequate determination between the different effects and the failure to manipulate the limited legislation and regulations.

More expertise to act in accordance with legislation and regulations is therefore necessary. This requires qualified personnel who can examine up-to-date work.

### 3.3.2 Tourism & Hospitality

This sector is comprised by a number of large hotel chains and resorts, but also many small and medium-sized companies. The large chains are often Dutch or American owned, as are also a majority of the restaurants. There is also a great diversity of local restaurants, food trucks and tourist activities. On Bonaire, at the larger companies, you see a lot of European Dutch students in the service. On Saba, in addition to the local employees, many people from the Philippines work in the hospitality industry. This often involves unskilled or people with different qualifications, who receive on-the-job training.

### 3.3.3 Government

The public bodies and the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland are major employers on the islands. The vacancies at the public bodies are generally for mbo and hbo positions. The mbo positions are mainly filled with local staff. For the HBO positions and the more specialized positions, it is sometimes unavoidable for these to be filled by people from elsewhere in the Kingdom. At the Rijksdienst is common to see that employees are temporarily transferred from the ministries in The Hague in order to keep the operation going. The Top Trainee program on Bonaire trained island children with an HBO diploma between 2017 and 2023 to become the policymakers and managers of the future. A number of trainees were initially unable to find a job on their own island.

### 3.3.4 Education

The educational institutions are struggling with a high turnover of employees. The teachers often come from the European Netherlands and stay on the region temporarily. Recruitment is increasingly taking place in the region, and teachers recruited locally are less likely to emigrate, as opposed to teachers recruited abroad. Teachers must have a higher professional education diploma to be allowed to work in education.



### 3.3.5 Care & welfare

A large part of the staff in healthcare comes from outside the BES islands<sup>8</sup>. Due to the small scale of the region, there is a significant dependency from the outside when it comes to personnel. On Saba, the majority of the nursing staff is not Saban, but from other islands within the Dutch Kingdom, Suriname, the Caribbean or the Philippines. The nursing staff on Sint Eustatius mainly comes from Sint Maarten, but also from Russia. In addition, the small scale of the region can also pose a challenge for healthcare staff from the European Netherlands to maintain their BIG (“Beroepen in de Individuele Gezondheidszorg” or “Professions in Individual Healthcare”) registration, because they have to meet a minimum number of prescribed procedures per year. Staff from abroad must be able to demonstrate that they meet the quality requirements set by law and regulations. The vast majority of vacancies are at mbo level. The employees for the positions that require an HBO or WO diploma are often difficult to find locally.

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<sup>8</sup> The Caribbean Netherlands, Health system review. Health system in Transition. Vol. 26 NO. 2 2024, Nathan Shuftan.

## 4. Developments on the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands until 2030

This chapter describes future developments on the labour market, taking into account regional and global developments. First, wage developments and the ageing population in the Caribbean Netherlands are discussed. Then, future developments per sector are discussed.

### 4.1 Wage developments

In the report “A dignified living”<sup>9</sup> from the Caribbean Netherlands Social Minimum Committee, the committee argues that it should your geographical location in the Netherlands should not determine whether you can participate in society or not. Based on this report, the minimum wage in the Caribbean Netherlands was increased as of 1 January 2024 and 1 July 2024 in order to make working worthwhile. Benefits were also increased in the Caribbean Netherlands as of 1 July 2024. The Committee also noted that there is no unemployment benefit in the Caribbean Netherlands, as in the European Netherlands, which means that people can very quickly descend into financial troubles when in between jobs.

The report shows that prosperity in the Caribbean Netherlands lags far behind compared to the European Netherlands. The figures from before the pandemic, in 2019, show that the Caribbean Netherlands is relatively poor compared to the European Netherlands. The sectors where the minimum wage is prevalent are; hospitality, trade, construction and business services. Due to the high cost of living on the islands, a large part of the population works in the informal economy, and/or have a second or third job. This survival mode means that the population does not go back to school and that students leave their courses early to earn money.

**Table 2.1** Economic key figures of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba in prospective

	GDP Per Capita, 2019 (Pre-covid)	Average real GDP growth	Unemployment	Labor participation
The Netherlands	\$57.700	2,4%	3,80%	75%
Bonaire	\$23.700	2,6%	4,60%	73%
Sint Eustatius	\$28.200	-2,5%	2,30%	73%
Saba	\$22.800	-1,2%	3,10%	76%
Curaçao	\$19.000	-0,9%	19,00%	56%
Aruba	\$31.600	1,6%	8,60%	67%
Sint Maarten	\$29.700	0,3%	17,00%	71%
Caribbean Region	\$9.900	0,7%	15,00%	62%

Source: “A dignified existence”

The report "Making ends meet", by the Children's Ombudsman and the National Ombudsman,<sup>10</sup> also indicates that poverty in the Caribbean Netherlands is persistent and is passed on from generation to generation. Children who grow up in poverty have a greater chance of dropping out of school, because parents are often forced to work long hours and combine jobs. This report recommends for

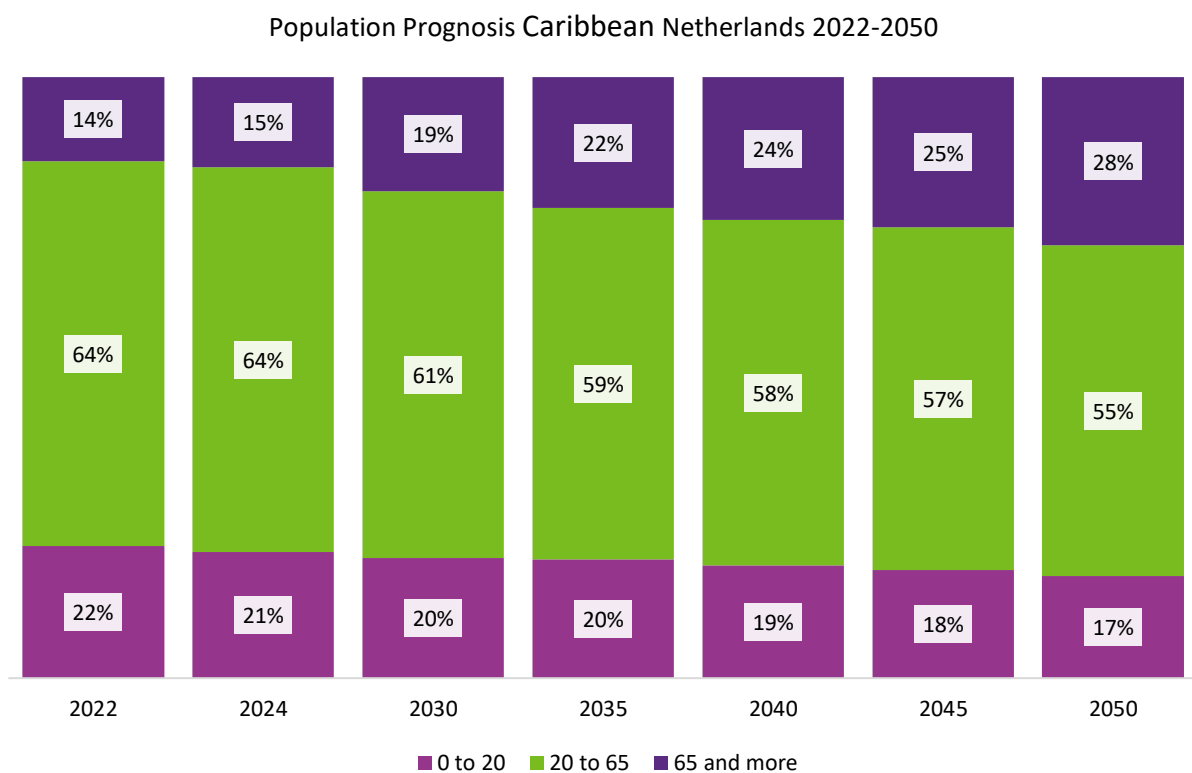
<sup>9</sup> Social Minimum Commission Caribbean Netherlands, 2023. A dignified existence: A social minimum that provides an increasing perspective on self-reliance.

<sup>10</sup> Making ends meet. A reflection on poverty-related issues in the Caribbean Netherlands, Children's Ombudsman, National Ombudsman. Report number: NO/ KOM 2023/179. Date November 23, 2023.

the government to provide structural, sustainable and comprehensive solutions to break the poverty circle.

## 4.2 Demographics

The size and composition of the population on the BES islands will change rapidly in the coming years. There is both an ageing and a dejuvenation (reduction of the population in younger age groups), with a large number of people leaving the region upon reaching retirement age, and stagnation in the number of people at work due to a decrease in the quantity of young people entering the labour market.

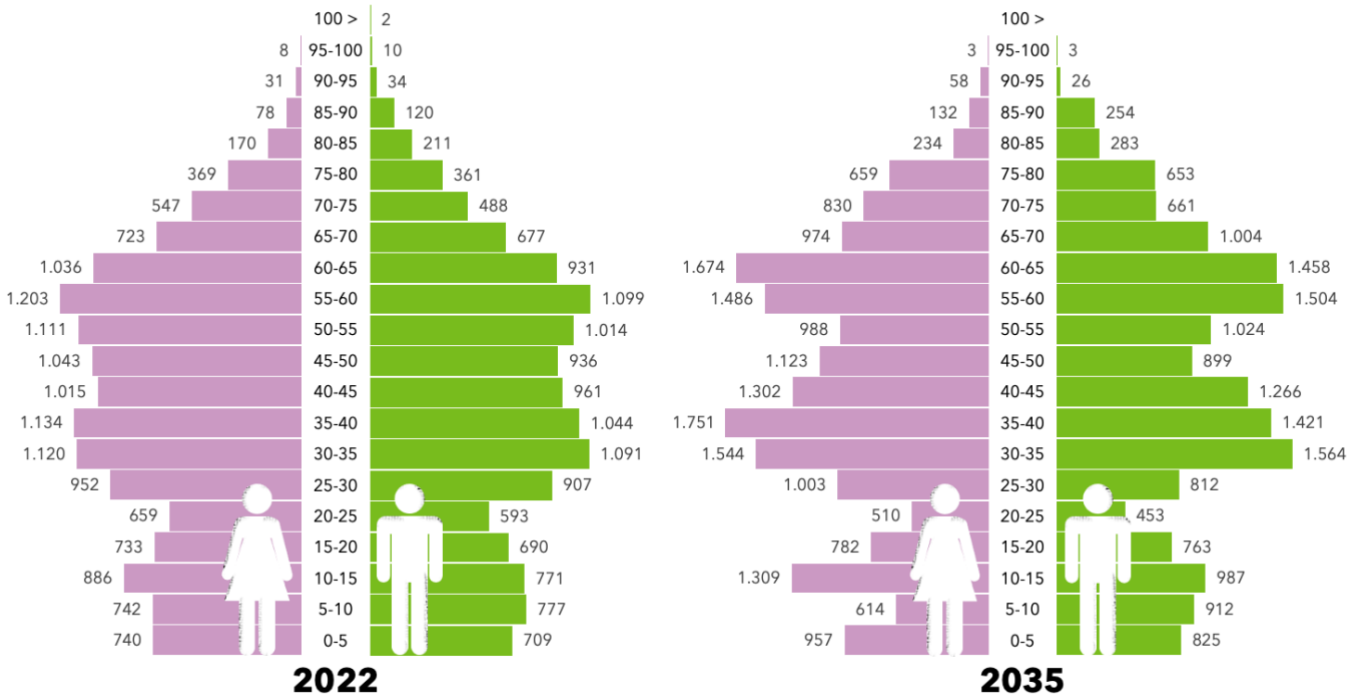


Source: CBS 2023

According to the State Commission on Demographic Developments 2050,<sup>11</sup> shaping a targeted growth in the region is essential to ensure that the Caribbean Netherlands continues to function. The State Commission expects cultural diversity to increase and the ageing population to peak in the coming years. The ageing population leads to a structural shortage on the labour market, with increasing shortages in healthcare and education. In addition, suitable housing is needed for shrinking households in a permanently ageing society.

<sup>11</sup> State Commission on Demographic Developments in the Caribbean Netherlands 2050. Targeted growth. From Zwol et al, 2024.

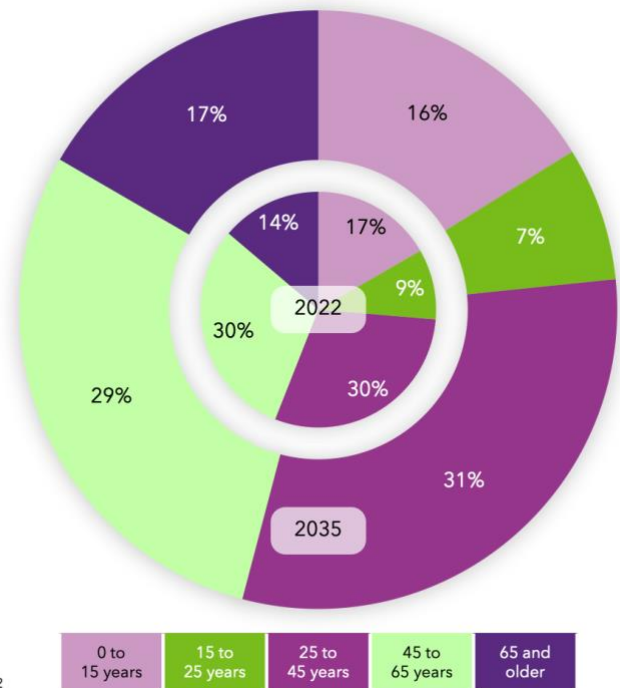
Population Pyramids Caribbean Netherlands - Year 2022 Vs. Year 2035



Source: CBS 2022

The strength of the Social Bond is also changing in the Caribbean Netherlands due to generational differences, migration background and educational level. The population pyramids of 2022 and 2035 show that the percentage of people aged 65 and over is increasing and the percentage of young people under 20 is decreasing. This means that the Caribbean Netherlands is heading for a serious problem, which must be adequately addressed. The first graph shows the absolute numbers and the second the percentages per age bracket.

Population per Age Group Caribbean Netherlands - Year 2022 Vs. Year 2035



Source: CBS 2022

4.3 Development in the various sectors

4.3.1 Bouw en techniek

In 2023, the Woondeal<sup>12</sup> was signed by the Executive Council of Bonaire and the Minister of Housing and Spatial Planning. The aim is to build 2,124 affordable homes, including its associated infrastructure, by 2030. Former Minister De Jonge has made 10 million euros available for this

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.volkshuisvestingnederland.nl/actueel/nieuws/2023/06/29/woondeal-zorgt-voor-meer-betaalbare-woningen-op-bonaire>

purpose. Social housing projects will also be executed on Sint Eustatius and Saba in the coming 5 years

In addition, the government has made 30 million euros available for investments in the Caribbean Netherlands. The construction of the port on Saba is part of these investments. There are also a number of major construction projects on the islands. On Sint Eustatius, construction has started on the secondary school, a new hospital and a government office. On Saba, work is also being done on the construction of a technology department for the school, a gymnasium, a multifunctional auditorium, an extension of the hospital and the pension fund has invested in the renovation of a hotel (Scout's Place).

The Caribbean Netherlands also has a target for sustainable energy, through wind and solar parks. The public bodies aim to generate an average of 80% of their energy with wind and solar energy by 2025.<sup>13</sup> The government has made 33.6 million euros available for this accelerated transition. The technical staff who carry out the maintenance for these projects often come from abroad.

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management has started the Galileo Sensor Station<sup>14</sup> on Bonaire. Galileo is a global satellite navigation system of the European Union, which is used for time reference and positioning. The establishment of Galileo on Bonaire offers various opportunities for entrepreneurs in the technological sector<sup>15</sup>. Due to strict European regulations, special expertise is required for the construction, maintenance and operational services of the station. It has been agreed that the EUSPA (European Union Agency for the Space Programme) will transfer knowledge to the people who will be working at the Galileo Sensor Station.

#### 4.3.2 Hospitality & Tourism

The hotels and restaurants are continuously looking for qualified chefs, domestic staff and hosts/hostesses. The image of this sector needs to be improved to make it more attractive to local personnel. Transition from pre-vocational secondary education to a host/hostess training at intermediate vocational education requires a mindset change. This training has not been offered for a number of years due to a lack of interest among students. The salaries and secondary employment conditions, in addition to the evening and weekend hours, contribute to make this sector less appealing local workers. The larger resorts are expanding and hiring recruiters to meet the continuous demand for staff. People under 18 years<sup>16</sup> of age is legally only allowed to work until 7 p.m., which makes it difficult to schedule a part-time job or a BBL training in the hospitality industry. The labour market would benefit from extending these working-hours, via a change in the law.

The expectation is that tourism will remain a major source of income and employment, as diversification is a difficult task in the region. It is also a labour-intensive sector that requires relatively many low-skilled personnel. It is necessary that all employees in the tourist sector are retrained, in order to be able to contribute to the experience of the tourist.

Although tourism is highly sensitive to political, financial and health crises, recent studies show that destinations that focus on a niche market recover relatively quickly from setbacks. All three islands within the Caribbean Netherlands have their own vision of tourism. The strategic plans show that the

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2022/09/28/ruim-33-miljoen-euro-voor-duurzame-elektriciteit-caribisch-nederland>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/actueel/nieuws/2021/augustus/4/bouw-galileo-sensor-station-bonaire-ondergebracht-bij-rijksvastgoedbedrijf>

<sup>15</sup> <https://bonaire.nu/2022/12/03/voorbereidingen-bouw-galileo-sensor-station-van-start-op-bonaire/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0028202/2022-01-01#Hoofdstuk5>

islands want sustainable, high-quality tourism, with more diversification in the offer, so that tourists can experience the authenticity of these islands. The intention is to increase the number of overnight stays and to focus more on the high-end tourist, which will result in more money being spent on the islands.

In the coming years, digitalisation and innovation will be crucial for the sustainable development of the sector. Climate change will also affect tourism and how people travel, where people (want to) stay and the spatial planning of the islands.

On the Windward Islands, the hospitality program of the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI), in cooperation with the National Institute for Professional Advancement (NIPA) on Sint Maarten, has been made available, free of charge, by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. On Bonaire, Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) offers scholarships for local people who want to pursue an education in tourism.

#### 4.3.3 Government

Due to their small scale and language requirements, the public bodies and the National Service all have a considerable number of vacancies that are difficult to fill. The ageing population will already lead to a major exodus from government organisations in the coming years. Forty percent of the employees of the Public Body of Sint Eustatius will retire in the coming ten years. Attracting specific knowledge and skills is often difficult, especially on the Windward Islands. The public bodies and the National Service fish in the same pond and compete with each other when it comes to attracting qualified personnel. For this reason, they have started working together to attract and recruit personnel, and the starting step taken has been harmonising the job structures. Further cooperation between the islands is necessary to be able to guarantee basic service provision.

#### 4.3.4 Education

In education, the alarm bell has already been sounded because of the severe shortage of teachers in primary and secondary education. An additional challenge here is the number of newcomers (non-native speakers, especially Spanish speakers) in education. In some schools in the Caribbean Netherlands, this is 10%, which means that extra attention, knowledge, skills and capacity are required.

The manpower report that has been drafted and started, but has not yet been finalised, already shows that the shortage of teachers on Bonaire will continue to increase in the coming years. With the help of a Dutch subsidy, a training course for new primary school teachers has been started on the Windward Islands. This training course was set up by the University of Sint Maarten in cooperation with the University of the American Virgin Islands. Six students from Sint Eustatius and 7 from Saba are following this programme. Bonaire is also looking at how local residents can be retrained as teachers. In 2019, the ministers of Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten and the Netherlands signed a cooperation protocol to strengthen the training of teachers in the Caribbean. This partnership is called “Kibrahacha”.<sup>17</sup> Kibrahacha is a collaboration between teacher training colleges and (primary) schools to train the teacher of the 21st century together.

On Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, the training to upgrade teaching assistants in primary education to teachers has already begun. The advantage of this initiative is that it ties in with the Caribbean

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<sup>17</sup> <https://kibrahacha.org>

context and that there a lot of attention is paid to multilingualism. This allows for local recruitment and the teachers also already master Papiamentu, which is important because it connects with the identity and culture of the child<sup>18</sup>. The Scholengemeenschap Bonaire also works in collaboration with the University of Curaçao to train local teachers, by offering them the opportunity to obtain their pedagogical certificate, which then makes them qualified.

#### 4.3.5 Care & welfare

Due to the growing number of residents and the aging population on Bonaire, the demand for care is increasing. You can also see that the residents of the Caribbean Netherlands need relatively more care as a result of distressing situations related to low income, nutritional problems and poor housing. Mental Health Caribbean (MHC) sees an increasing number of clients with mental health problems and addictions. In the coming years, attracting new staff, and qualifying the current staff,



will be a major challenge. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has published a report on the problems of HBO/WO students who want to pursue an education in this sector<sup>19</sup>. The trend shows that there is a downward trend in the admission of Caribbean students. An important point in the report is the lack of sufficient reliable data. The report advocates for the creation of a pathway that enable students from the Caribbean to pursue medical specialization in the European Netherlands or CAS-BES.

There is also a growing demand for staff in healthcare at mbo level and in the field of mental care such as psychologists, social workers and psychiatric support workers. On the welfare side, is evident that the ministries and public bodies want to do more in terms of prevention by deploying nutrition and lifestyle coaches, and encouraging physical exercise among the population. There is also a growing demand for staff on the prevention side.

Qualifying current staff is often complicated because there are few training courses on the islands to further (re)train staff. However, additional training is essential to ensure that staff meet the (new) legal requirements. The BEST(4)kids project has stimulated childcare workers in the Caribbean Netherlands to obtain their diploma. Because the salary of these employees is close to the minimum wage, there is a high turnover in the sector, and there is a need continuous and consistent investment in training programmes.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/actueel/nieuws/2024/juli/4/erkenning-papiaments-onder-handvest-in-europees-nederland>

<sup>19</sup> Exploring the issues of healthcare education for higher professional education/university Caribbean students, ResearchNed, Nijmegen, 2023.

Last but not least, an important development in healthcare is digitalisation and data integration (including the introduction of digital patient records), which in turn changes the skills needed by healthcare employees when introducing e-health applications.

#### 4.3.6 Digitalisation

Digitalisation also brings with it many new professions, such as data engineer and security specialist. These are relatively new fields of expertise in the Caribbean Netherlands. The expert labour for digitalisation projects therefore often comes from the European Netherlands. The digitalisation of the government is extensive, which also demands a lot from the local staff. The personnel must be further trained and have 21st century skills, with communication and information skills becoming increasingly important.

A rising trend is remote working. The new generation Z is no longer tied to location and employer, but wants to work independently of time and place. The Caribbean Netherlands is very attractive for people who want to work remotely, because they are able to do their jobs remotely and also enjoy the outdoors.



## 5. Connecting education to the current and future labour market

This chapter examines the connection of education to the current and future labour market. Insight is provided into what it means to be a small island and how the connection of education to the labour market can be optimised

### 5.1 Small size, big challenges

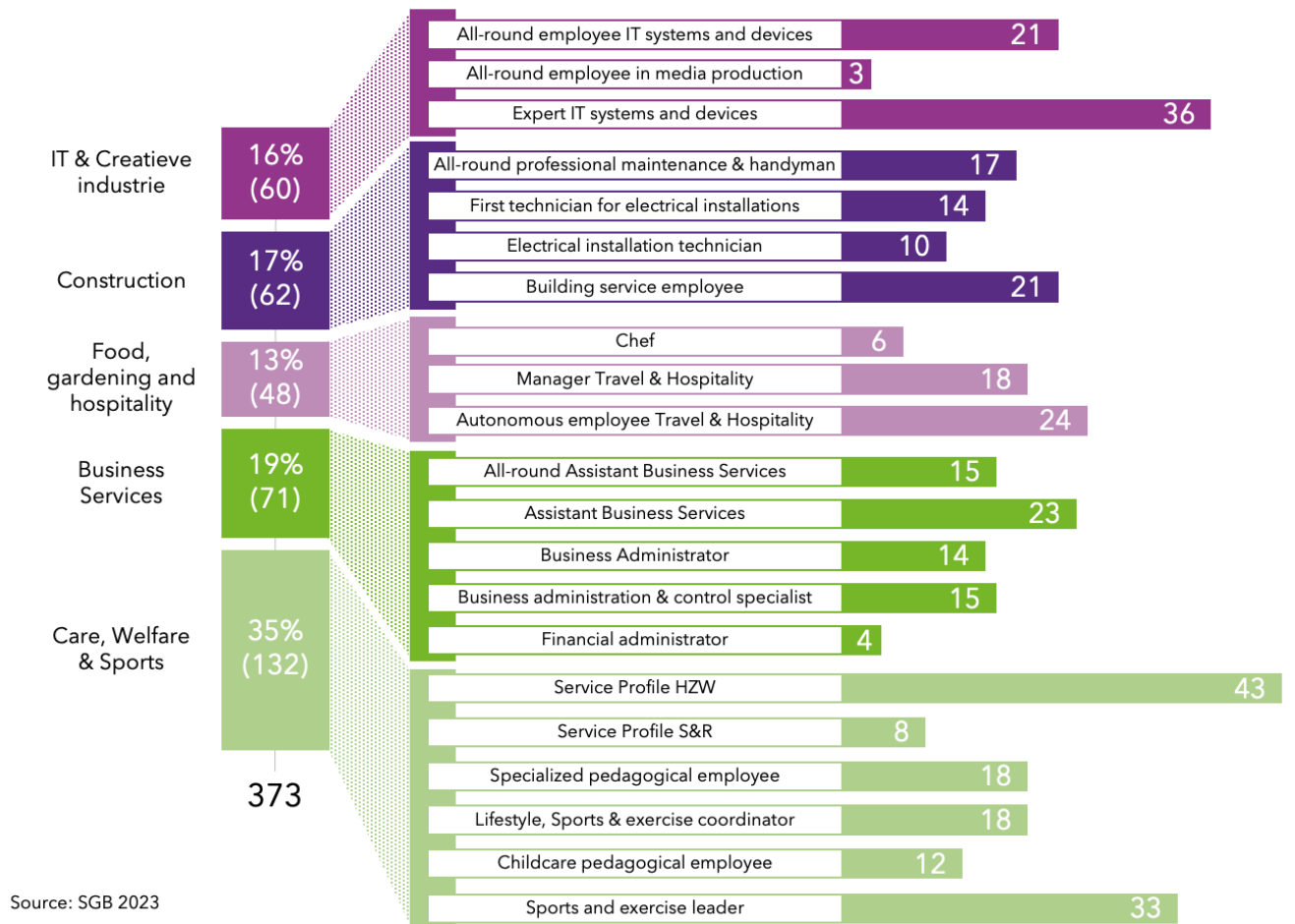
The Caribbean Netherlands consists of three small-scale islands with a relatively small number of inhabitants and a limited budget, but with all the tasks and challenges that of a larger society.

Due to the small scale of the islands, it is not efficient to offer a large number of vocational training courses. Only some of the young people can be trained locally and others have to leave the region to study, which increases the odds for these students to stay abroad instead of returning. This inevitably leads to labour migration.

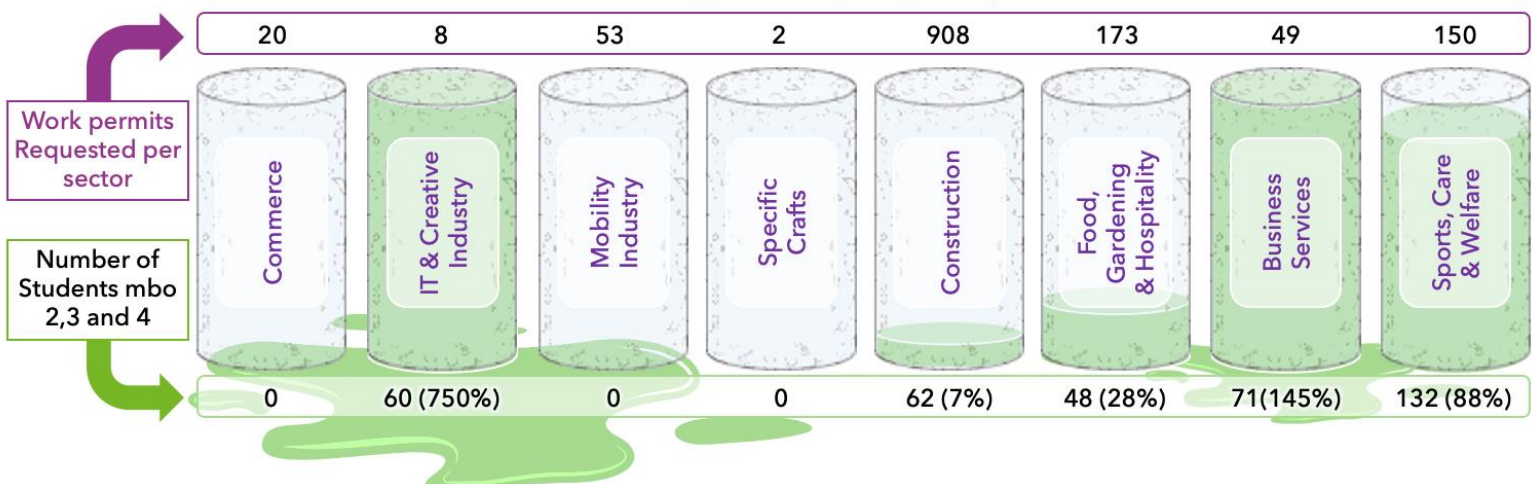
### 5.2 Training

ROA CN has drawn advisory reports about the labour market relevance and the effectiveness of all vocational training courses available in the Caribbean Netherlands. MBO Bonaire, Fundashon Forma and Fundashon Mariadal, together, have more than 40 different courses that are (or can be) given on Bonaire (see Appendix I). Although the urgency of certain courses (such as those in automotive engineering) has been proven and many students in pre-vocational secondary education choose that profile, these courses are not yet offered because it is organizationally complicated to fill the classes with enough students to make the educational programs effective. The distribution of the students can be seen in the graph about the number of exam candidates. The graph below shows the difference in supply and demand. This is an indication based on a comparison between the exam candidates and the work permits in a certain sector and therefore contains only part of the demand. Appendix II contains an overview of the work permits of the past 5 years and the supply of exam candidates for the courses per island. The mismatch gives an indication of the need for personnel in the construction and hospitality & tourism sectors. These are figures in retrospect, which means that future shortages in, for example, healthcare are not yet visible.

## MBO Bonaire Exam Candidates 2023 - 2024 by Sector and Qualification



## Differences Between Labor Market and mbo 2,3 and 4 (SGB, SZW)



In consultation with the schools and ROA CN, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has relaxed the efficiency requirement for an education in the Windward Islands. Due to the small scale,

educational programs rarely meet the efficiency requirement. Usually, the number of students is small, and often after only one cohort the labour market is already saturated.

The healthcare sector has a different type of problem. Medical assistants, pharmacy assistants and also nurses on individual healthcare (IG) must be qualified to practice their profession. When training people who is already working in this sector, the educational institution will enter into discussions with the stakeholders in the sector to ensure that business continuity is not compromised during the training of employees. In August 2024, the hybrid training courses for medical assistants and pharmacy assistants will start on the ABC islands. The Summa College for secondary vocational education is in charge and has set up a digitalized training environment. The mbo schools on Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao each also provide part of the curriculum. This is a good example of knowledge being bundled and the courses being developed by working together in the region, and using the existing knowledge and expertise of the Summa college in Eindhoven. This was possible because OCW recognized the importance of this arrangement and invested in a project leader to set up the course.

There are also professions that are in demand on the labour market, but for which there are no (high-quality) local training companies able to supervise the students during their internship. This may be because there are no companies on the island that perform the work, or that the companies that are present do not meet the quality requirements. In addition, there are many autodidacts working in the technical professions, who do not (fully) adhere to the standards of the professional group, which sometimes makes them less suitable as a training company. A wider range of internship opportunities in the region and within the Kingdom can contribute to the quality of vocational training. The Kingdom Scholarship<sup>20</sup> is a step in the right direction to improve the connection with the labour market.

The influx of newcomers is increasing, especially on Bonaire. This has major consequences for education. The chef training courses, one of the few courses that are given in Papiamentu on Bonaire, are experiencing an explosive growth in registrations of mainly Spanish-speaking students for the 2024-2025 school year. This is a BBL training, where the student must be employed by the training company. Despite the great popularity of the training and the structural shortage of chefs, it is still complicated to find a proportional number of good quality training places (internships) for students, with language being an additional hurdle.

Vocational education on the Windward Islands, based on Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ), is part of secondary education and the schools are legally allowed to provide levels 1 and 2. The students who follow these learning paths are 14 and 15 years, old and are still very young to pursue further education alone abroad. It can also be an added value for certain educational programs to do a (shorter) internship on another island. This allows the student to gain depth and learn a wider range of tasks in practice. The lack of housing makes it an extra challenge, a campus or host families could be a solution.

There is no higher professional education or university in the Caribbean Netherlands. The University of Curaçao has a branch on Bonaire, where you can obtain your teaching certificate, among other things. The Hague University of Applied Sciences and the University of Utrecht recently signed an agreement with various educational institutions in the Caribbean to start a part-time public administration course on the islands<sup>21</sup>. Bonaire, in collaboration with the Hague University of Applied Sciences, has started with two modules: Advising and Introduction to Public Administration.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap/koninkrijksbeurs>

<sup>21</sup> <https://bonaire.nu/2024/04/22/caribische-en-nederlandse-onderwijsinstellingen-gaan-samenwerking-intensiveren/>

The aim is to issue micro credentials at higher professional education level<sup>22</sup>, which can then be used towards a full higher professional education diploma. The first step is to start with civil servants from the Public Entity of Bonaire. The intention is to use as many local teachers as possible in order to also guarantee the continuity of education. For a group of 12 civil servants who cannot yet enter the higher professional education training, the MBO Bonaire will provide a BBL course at level 4, so that they can progress to the higher professional education modules.

This means that the MBO is in line with developments in education and the labour market. The Hague University of Applied Sciences has had a connection with the Caribbean part of the Kingdom for a number of years. The University of Applied Sciences offers, among other things, a minor degree in Kingdom Affairs for civil servants and students, with internships possible on the islands.<sup>23</sup>

There are also ideas for a digital Caribbean Academy, where students can stay on the islands and follow courses from Dutch colleges and universities, and from the United States. This would greatly increase the reach of education in the region.

### 5.3 Lack of knowledge and skills

In industry meetings and labour market platforms in the Caribbean Netherlands, employers indicate that students and recent graduates lack basic knowledge in their field. Employers are most negative about the attitude and behaviour of students and the younger generation. Soft skills, such as a good work ethics, and the ability to work as part of a team, are increasingly valued by employers. By involving the business community even more in education, this connection can be further optimized. There is ample space for improvement when it comes to solve the lack of hybrid education and business training in the Caribbean Netherlands.

### 5.4 Mentorship

The ministries in The Hague provide support and temporarily send people to the Caribbean Netherlands. As a rule, the agreements are that the employees who are sent to the region should transfer their knowledge and give support to the local employees, so they can take over the policy and management functions, which in turn would reduce the need for future support. Due to the large amount of work that needs to be done, and the lack of organizational structure that goes with it, this form of training-on-the-job is not yet sufficiently effective.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://dossierkoninkrijksrelaties.nl/2024/06/06/bonaire-krijgt-hbo-opleiding/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://bonaire.nu/2023/02/01/haagse-hogeschool-studenten-bezoeken-bonaire/>

## 6 Future skills and knowledge for the labour market

This chapter examines the need for knowledge and skills that the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands will need in the future, so that the islands are agile and remain resilient. This means skills needed by the employees of the future how can they develop them along with the needs of the labour market.

### 6.1 Staff development

**“You have become a makamba!**

**What currently bothers the young people the most is that, upon their return, they are no longer seen as the same person that left for the Netherlands to study.**

**“They think I have changed,” says Morishaw. “They say: b’a kambia or that I have become a makamba. On my island I am the ‘other’, but in the Netherlands, I belong”**

Source: Caribbean Network,  
October 17, 2023

In addition to the urgent need for qualified staff, employers agree that much more attention should be paid to the soft skills of employees. The way of managing and leading has also changed over time. The more hierarchical management style is still quite common in the Caribbean Netherlands, which means that the return of island children with their different views is often not appreciated<sup>24</sup>.

Speaking many languages is highly desirable in a number of professions in the Caribbean Netherlands. For Bonaire, this is mainly Papiamentu, Dutch, Spanish and English. For the Windward Islands is mostly English and Dutch, but also Spanish.

### 6.2 21<sup>st</sup> century skills

Society is becoming more and more interconnected. As a result, digitalisation is also increasing in the Caribbean Netherlands and people are working in a different way. Digitalisation is making the human factor more important and 21st century skills are increasingly relevant. These skills require the ability to reflect, think critically and learn from mistakes. These skills are often undervalued in Caribbean culture and society, because pupils and students are expected to accept what parents and teachers say and not to question it. In addition, digital literacy in this society is not high, at least when compared to the European part of the Netherlands. The digital infrastructure is not yet in order, BSN numbers have still to be introduced, and most forms are still paper-based. On top of that, many commercial companies cannot keep up with the developments due to limited resources.

### 6.3 Lifelong development

Lifelong learning and development are not yet commonplace in the Caribbean Netherlands. Obtaining a diploma is often a major



slo / onafhankelijk curriculum dat doen we samen

Kennisnet

<sup>24</sup> List of appointments for the inter-palace Kingdom consultation, June 2024, NR.53.

challenge, employers pay little attention (and money) for further training, and doing a specialisation or additional training locally is usually not possible. While an increasing number of quality, safety and environmental requirements are being imposed (for example in healthcare, childcare and construction). Digitization, technological developments and changing consumer behaviour also require further training of the current workforce/employees for service, administrative and promotional activities in all sectors. In government, education and healthcare, the subject of training is included in the collective labour agreements, but in other sectors people can often be happy if the basic agreements are laid down in a collective labour agreement. This causes the development of employees and of the islands to stagnate. Organisations that would like to further train their employees will find this impractical. This can also be observed also see this in the more demanding professions, such as the fire brigade, where following a second career and retraining employees is not easy to accomplish.

It is therefore becoming increasingly important to continue learning as you work. The increase in the minimum wage can be an incentive, because people need fewer jobs to survive and can invest more time and energy in further training and lifelong learning. It is crucial to help people gain a different perspective and realise that they can continue their education. The salaries of mbo graduates are often close to the current minimum wage, which means there is no financial incentive to continue learning.

The BES Vocational Education Act does not allow MBO Bonaire to offer modular education, nor is this funded. This is possible when the new Vocational Education Act, which is the same for both the European Netherlands and the Caribbean Netherlands, is introduced. Until then, ways must be sought to offer modular education, because there is a great need for qualifications in several sub-areas especially in the technical sector.

## 7 Recommendations

This chapter lists a number of recommendations summed up from the various documents, interviews and meetings. The small scale of the Caribbean Netherlands means that solutions must be considered in a broad sense to maintain the quality and expertise for the islands, and to reduce the turnover of personnel. Through more organized regional cooperation, the connection between education and the labour market can be improved. The recommendations provide a direction for concrete measures to optimise the connection between education and the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands. Several of these recommendations can be implemented with relative ease, while others require further research before proper action can be taken. In addition, a number of measures are linked to each other, which means that a single intervention is sometimes not enough to affect real change. The foundation of the society must be made more sustainable.

### 7.1 Improving the functioning of the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands

- Improve the image of certain sectors by means of more attractive primary and secondary employment conditions.
- Give young residents opportunities by changing new recruitment methods and organisational culture.
- Promote sectoral collective labour agreements.
- Investigate whether a change in the law to broaden the working hours (currently: 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.) can have the desired effect for young people.
- on the low-income workers, and on increasing the inclusion of people with a labour market disadvantage (handicapped, special needs, unexperienced etc.).
- Improve mobility in organisations, in each island and in the region.
- Investigate the realistic requirements of vacancies and whether employers are actually willing to give (local) staff a chance in practice.

### 7.2 Addressing the most important labour market developments

- Organise data sources in a structured manner, in order to have better regulatory instruments.
  - Figures from IND, CBS cross references, early school leavers, flow to labour market or further study and.
- Digitisation and ICT infrastructure properly and safely organised.
  - Enable information exchange about education and labour market connection between different stakeholders.

### 7.3 Improving the connection between education and the current and future labour market

- Strengthening study in the region, so that island children stay or return.
- Strong commitment to job security through starting qualifications.
- Quality, organising expertise in the region by clustering needs.
- Campus for students from the Caribbean Netherlands on Bonaire, the BES house.
- Exploring whether the digital Caribbean academy is feasible.
- Introducing a subsidy for practical training in the Caribbean Netherlands and similar incentives.
- Research into progression in the Caribbean area, the region, the United States and the Netherlands.
- Offering more modular education, which increases participation.
- Stimulating lifelong development.

- Implementing a student monitoring system so that active headhunting can take place.
- • Bring back island children through incentives from the employer or the government:
  - Take over study debt
  - Arrange housing
  - Value the new knowledge that island children have acquired elsewhere
  - Expand the tax authorities' expat scheme for scarce functions
  - Defence model, where the student is employed by the employer before starting
- Embrace cultural differences and provide customization for the Caribbean Netherlands.
- Foster a change in mentality regarding multilingualism and education

#### 7.4 Increasing skills

- Further development of Work ethic, self-regulating behaviour and reflective capacity.
- Language; maintain quality, but lower the threshold for functions with language for local employees, so that they can develop further.
- Recruit more on competencies and level and train internally
- Stimulate employers to offer more BBL courses.
- Increase inclusion in the labour market

It is essential to embed these measures in a sustainable structure, in order to accelerate and optimize the connection between education and the labour. Enduring that the islands develop and are flexible, so that they can adequately respond to the changing environment. It's a long-term vision issue. This requires going deeper in several topics, setting and pursuing relevant goals, and taking specific actions in the short term. The confidence of the people of the Caribbean Netherlands increases when a long-term vision is created with concrete goals, a vision that creates breathing space, allows people to get out of survival mode and give them the chance to believe in a shared future.

## Appendix I: Trainings

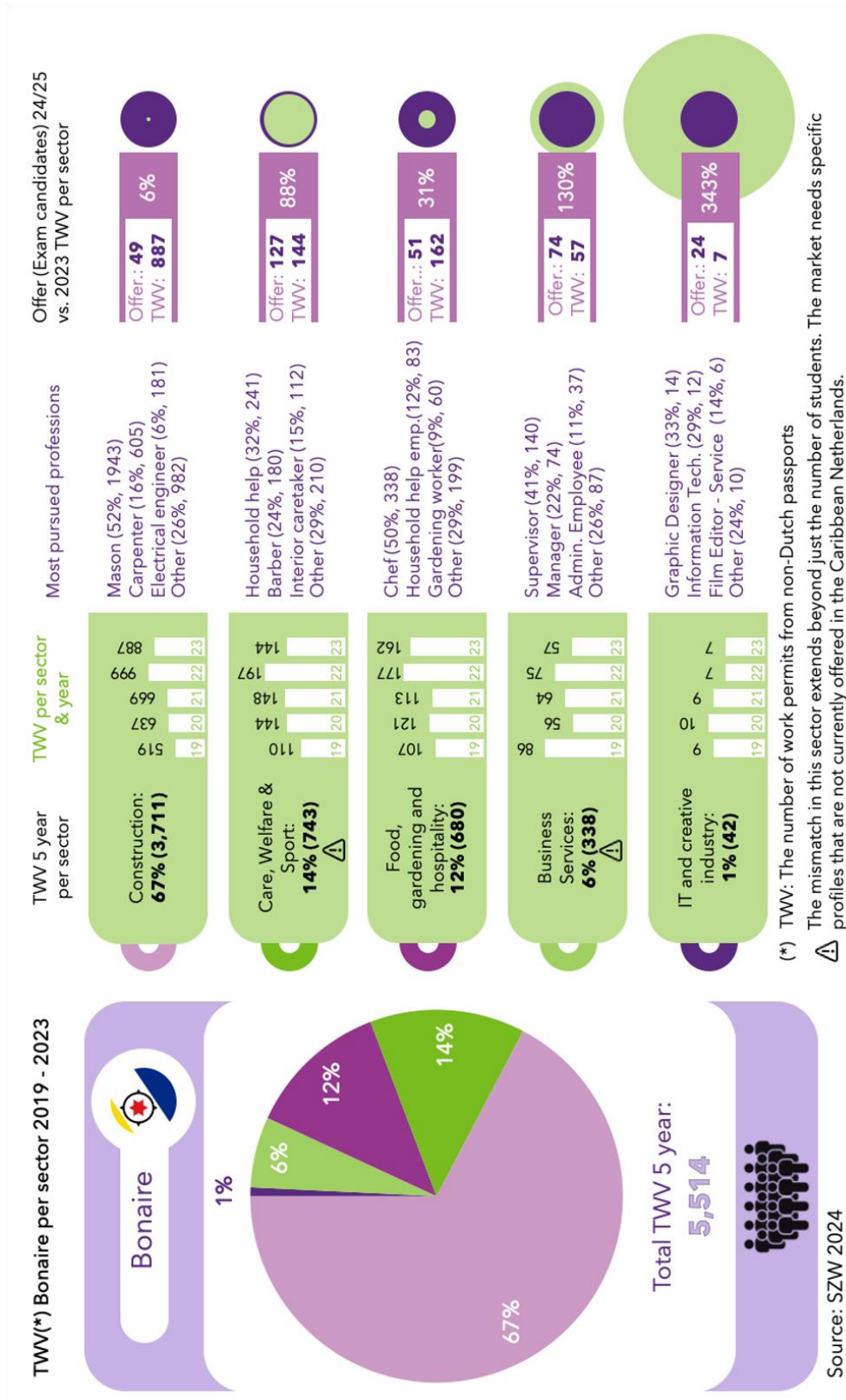
MBO Bonaire		FORMA	
Training	Level	Training	Level
<b>Economics &amp; Administration</b>		Assistant in construction, housing and maintenance	1
Assistant business services	2	Assistant in services & care	1
All-round Assistant business services	3	Assistant in hospitality, food and food industry	1
Financial administrative employee	3	Assistant in sales and retail	1
Business administration & control specialist	4	Assistant in plant or (green) living environment	1
Business administrator	4		
Legal administrative employee	4		
<b>Catering &amp; Tourism</b>		<b>FUNDASHON MARIADAL</b>	
Self-employed employee in Travel & Hospitality	3	<b>Training</b>	<b>Level</b>
Manager Travel & Hospitality	4	Verzorgende - IG (Individuele Gezondheidszorg)	3
Cook	2	Mbo- Verpleegkundige	4
Self-employed Cook	3		
<b>Construction &amp; Technology</b>			
Construction service employee	2		
All-round skilled maintenance and handyman company	3		
Electrical installation service technician	2		
First Electrotechnical installation technician	3		
Electrical installation technician	4		
<b>ICT</b>			
All-round employee IT systems and devices	3		
Expert IT Systems and devices	4	Training courses that have been approved but are currently not being offered	
<b>Security &amp; Sports</b>		<b>Training</b>	<b>Level</b>
Security guard	2	Basic technician vehicles and mobile equipment	2
Sports and exercise instructor	3	All-round technician vehicles and mobile equipment	3
Lifestyle, sports and exercise coordinator	4	Dancer	4
<b>Care and Welfare</b>		Retail employee	2
Services Profile HZW	2	Legal, insurance & HR services specialist	4
Services Profile S&R	2	Marketing & communication specialist	4
Pedagogical employee in childcare	3	Office & management support specialist	4
Specialized pedagogical employee	4	Pharmacy assistant	4
Personal supervisor (specific target groups)	4	Doctor's assistant	4
Education assistant	4	Individual Healthcare - IG (Individuele Gezondheidszorg)	3
<b>Media</b>		Trainer – Coach / Instructor	4
All-round employee Audiovisual Production (*)	4		

(\*)The training “All-Round employee AV Production expires and can no longer be offered in 2024/2025

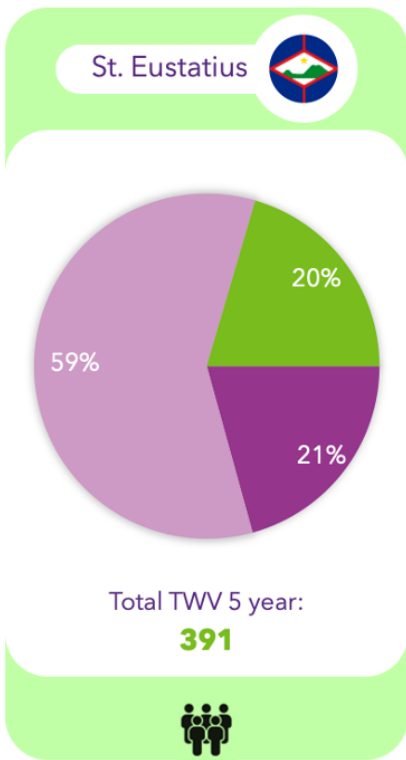
Saba Comprehensive School	
Training	CVQ Level
Community hosting Services	2
Early childhood development	2
General construction	2
Training courses that have been approved but are currently not being offered	
Electrical Installation	2
Motor Vehicle Engine Systems	2
Business administration (secretarial skills)	2
Seamanship operations	2
Cosmetology	2
Food preparation and cookery	1

Gwendolyn van Putten School	
Training	CVQ Level
Early childhood development	2
General Construction	2
Commercial food preparation (cookery)	1
Food preparation and cookery	2
Welding	1
Training courses that have been approved but are currently not being offered	
Crop Production	1
Electrical Installation	2
Motor Vehicle Engine Systems	2
Business administration (secretarial skills)	2
Seamanship operations	2
Furniture Making	2
Youth development Work	2
Welding	2

## Appendix II: TWV per sector versus supply



TWV (\*) St. Eustatius per sector 2019 - 2023



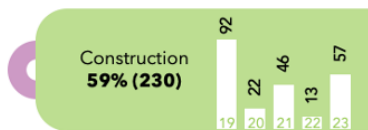
Source: SZW 2024

TWV 5 year per sector

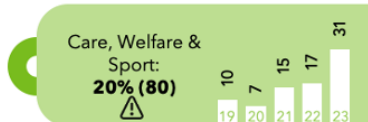
TWV Per sector & year

Most pursued professions

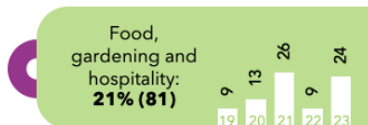
Offer (Exam candidates) 24/25 vs. 2023 TWV per sector



Welder (32%, 73)  
Carpenter (15%, 34)  
Mason (15%, 34)  
Fitter (11%, 25)  
Other (27%, 21)



Teacher / Docent (75%, 60)  
Nurse (9%, 7)  
Household help (5%, 4)  
Other (11%, 9)



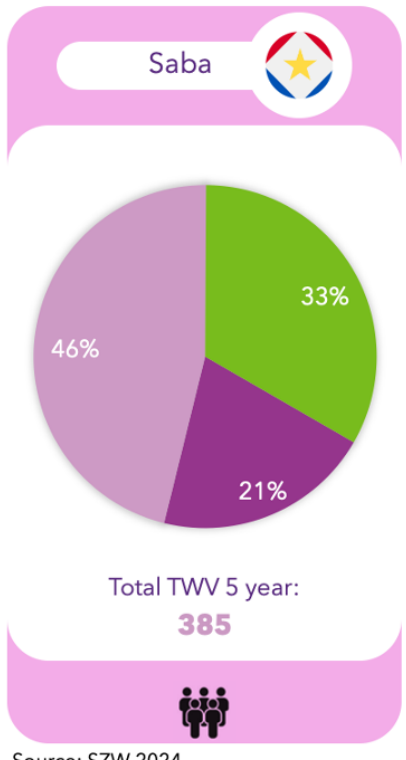
Chef (36%, 29)  
Bartender (27%, 22)  
Baker (11%, 9)  
Other (26%, 21)



(\*) TWV: The number of work permits from non-Dutch passports

⚠ The mismatch in this sector extends beyond just the number of students. The market needs specific profiles that are not currently offered in the Caribbean Netherlands.

TWV (\*) Saba per sector 2019 - 2023



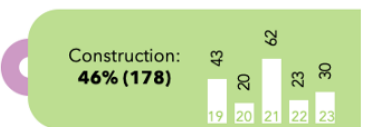
Source: SZW 2024

TWV 5 year per sector

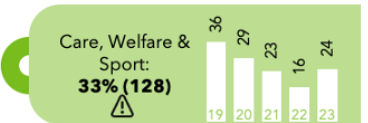
TWV Per sector & year

Most pursued professions

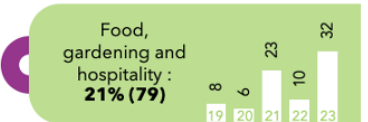
Offer (Exam candidates) 24/25 vs. 2023 TWV per sector



Construction employee (39%, 70)  
Maintenance man (15%, 26)  
Carpenter (11%, 20)  
Electrical Engineer (10%, 17)  
Other (25%, 45)



Interior caretaker (32%, 41)  
Nurse (24%, 31)  
Teacher / Docent (19%, 24)  
Other (25%, 32)



Chef Chef (27%, 21)  
Waitress (24%, 19)  
Chef (19%, 15)  
Other (30%, 24)



(\*) TWV: The number of work permits from non-Dutch passports

⚠ The mismatch in this sector extends beyond just the number of students. The market needs specific profiles that are not currently offered in the Caribbean Netherlands.

## Appendix III: Literature and sources list

⇒ 4 July 2024

Targeted growth, report of the State Commission on demographic developments in the Caribbean Netherlands, 2050.

Advisory report for the government on scenarios, policy options and government action perspectives in relation to the social consequences of demographic developments in the public bodies of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, in particular ageing and migration, until at least 2050 and against the background of the broad prosperity approach.

⇒ 1 July 2024

Capacity of healthcare personnel in the Caribbean Netherlands, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

Letter with request from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport to cooperate in a study by the research agency Regioplan. The study covers the significant challenges and the impending shortages of healthcare professionals in the Caribbean Netherlands.

⇒ 2024

The Caribbean Netherlands, Health system review

An extensive report with an overview of the health system in the Caribbean Netherlands. The challenges that the small islands have in terms of maintaining the health system and the costs of health care in the Caribbean Netherlands. The bottlenecks and challenges are also discussed in the report

⇒ 7 June 2024

Policy response to research report “Exploration of problems in healthcare education for higher professional education/university Caribbean students”, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Minister of Education, Culture and Science.

Solution direction around the complex problems and challenges in relation to shortages of higher professional education and university-trained healthcare professionals in the Caribbean.

⇒ December 2023

Exploration of problems in healthcare education hbo/wo Caribbean students, consortium ResearchNed, KBA Nijmegen and Kohnstamm Institute.

Report shows a downward trend in the inflow of Caribbean students in healthcare education. It is also clearly stated that there is not enough reliable data to show in which specific sectors there will be actual shortages in the future.

⇒ December 2023

The Caribbean Netherlands in Numbers 2023, CBS.

Overview of population, migration, tourism, price developments, numbers of people working in the labour force and more..

⇒ 2021

Tourism recovery plan

The global pandemic changed everything in 2020. Bonaire, like many Caribbean islands, is mainly dependent on tourism revenues. The principles of the strategic tourism master plan are still valid, but because the world has fundamentally changed, a number of assumptions in the master plan no longer apply. Fortunately, nothing has changed in the uniqueness of Bonaire, the island remains a unique product. The objective of the recovery plan is to allow a broader part of the population to benefit from tourism, focus on high-end and low-impact tourism, concentrate on the premium tourist and offer a varied product both in our waters and on land.

⇒ 2020 to 1 July 2024

Advisory reports on the labour market relevance and effectiveness of secondary vocational education in the Caribbean Netherlands, ROA CN.

Advisory reports on the labour market relevance and effectiveness of secondary vocational education in the Caribbean Netherlands, ROA CN.

In the past 5 years, ROA CN has written advisory reports on. The connection of vocational education to the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands. In total, eight recommendations were given on education in the hospitality & tourism sector. ROA CN wrote five recommendations for the safety & sports sector and seven for the healthcare & welfare sector. Nine recommendations belong to the economics & administration sector and one to trade & entrepreneurship. In addition, ROA CN wrote a number of recommendations for the (construction) technical sectors. This includes thirteen recommendations in the technology and process sector, five in the construction and infrastructure sector and three recommendations were written for an education in the maritime sector. Finally, one recommendation was given on an education that falls under the green sector.

⇒ 8 February 2018

Central Planning Bureau, Value of a starting qualification on the labour market.

A European Dutch study that examines whether young people with a starting qualification do better on the labour market. This report shows that young people with a starting qualification are one and a half times more likely to have a job than young people without a starting qualification. This group is also more economically independent, because they work more often and are less likely to fall into the category of low-income worker. The same applies to the educational levels above the starting qualification: the higher the educational level, the better they do on the labour market.

⇒ 14 November 2018

Administrative agreement concluded between the State of the Netherlands and the Public Entity of Bonaire, in Kralendijk Bonaire.

Established agreements between the State and the Public Entity of Bonaire to jointly ensure that the OLB is a sustainable, stable and service-oriented organization that serves the residents of Bonaire. The establishment of the job centre jointly by the OLB and the SZW unit of RCN is one of the priorities of the agreement.

⇒ 2017

2017-2027, Tourism; Synergizing people & nature for a better tomorrow. The Caribbean 1st Blue destination.

Future vision for Bonaire, describing the possibility of becoming a high-end boutique destination with a beautiful fusion of nature and people. This fusion is accomplished by becoming the first Blue destination. The plan is based on keeping the number of tourists low, which creates a nice balance between society and tourists, and the islanders can increase their quality of life.

⇒ June 2016

Tourism and the labour market in St. Eustatius, Characteristics and perceptions, Wageningen University and Research Centre.

Master Thesis on tourism on Sint Eustatius and the challenges that come with the small scale. Also discussed in this thesis the satisfaction of employees in the tourism sector is discussed.

⇒ 6 May 2013

Ecorys, The labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands 2013, including policy recommendations. Commissioned by the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands, Public Entities Bonaire, St. Eustatius, Saba and ROA CN, a report on the labour market in the Caribbean Netherlands was drawn up. The report mentions the most important sectors for the islands, the difficult-to-fill positions and the education on the islands. The lack of data on the labour market and education is also mentioned as a bottleneck.

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