

To Ministry of OCW (VO, MBO and HBO),  
DUO,  
Chairman and members Committee OCW and KR of the Lower House.

Cc Board GvP-school, Sint Eustatius,  
RCN/department of OCW (on both Bonaire and St. Eustatius),  
Education Inspectorate,  
National Ombudsman,  
Government commissioner on Sint Eustatius.

St. Eustatius, March 31, 2021.

This letter is also in follow-up to my previous letters of March 16 and March 29. It is, frankly, not my habit to write in such a fragmented way. However, sometimes even my view becomes broader in a fragmented way and I therefore gain a more complete view of the issue, which creates the need to write additionally from that broader view.

Mainly I consider the problems from the point of view of the pupils on St. Eustatius who have the intention to do a continuation study on MBO or HBO level in the European Netherlands. These problems are mainly of an administrative nature and are aimed at a working and living environment (in the European Netherlands) that is unknown to most pupils on Sint Eustatius.

And it strikes me that instead of arranging things really well, usually a 'workaround' solution is found. An example: because it is not self-evident that St. Eustatius citizens have a BSN, a special application form is made for the Dutch Caribbean when it comes to enrolling at a training institute in the European Netherlands or applying for a student grant. Instead of making it possible for them to have a BSN....

*In addition to the perspective "viewpoint St. Eustatius pupils", I try to imagine - reason for this supplementary letter - the problems experienced by educational institutions in European Netherlands (whether or not in connection with the Ministry of OCW).*

And then the financing of educational institutions comes into play. If I am correct, this funding is related to the number of students enrolled. And a student is only a counting student (for the budget) when the papers are in order at a certain benchmark moment. In this context, I believe that by October 15 of any year, the diplomas and lists of grades for students registered for that academic year must be available at the educational institutions. I believe that DUO also plays a role in this (which is why I have included DUO in the address).

If I have made the pain point concrete here, it helps to have two points clearly in mind:

- 1. the introduction of the CXC in the English-speaking part of the Dutch Caribbean was decided by the central government, for this: the Minister of OCW; here therefore lies the responsibility for the proper organization of the process;**

- 2. the availability of diplomas and lists of marks is structurally no earlier than September or October (or, as in the previous academic year: only after Christmas); this is not a problem of last or this year (whether or not in relation to corona), *but it recurs every year*. It helps to face this point in order to come up with a structural solution.**

At the same time, I think I can say that the problem is also very manageable. There are only two schools for secondary education based on the CXC in the Dutch Caribbean and it is not expected that dozens of students per year will start a study in the European Netherlands.

Is there really no student-friendly approach or solution available here? A solution that is aimed at structurally enabling English speaking students from the Dutch Caribbean to start a study in the European Netherlands in a welcome manner. Perhaps I am thinking too easily now but I do not think I am making a very big mistake when I propose that the Statian student simply be counted in the funding of the educational institutions and that they be obliged to hand over diplomas and mark lists as soon as these are available. In sporadic cases, a budgetary correction will have to be made (namely, in the event that the student unexpectedly did not meet the specified examination requirements).

It would also help when - I refer to my letter of March 16 - the possibility is offered to the Statian student to apply for a BSN from St. Eustatius as well as a DigiD and to open a NL bank account. If subsequently the ZVK does not so much take care of the coverage of the NL student from the Dutch Caribbean (which they then place with an insurance company intended for expats) but simply reimburses the premium of the health insurance to be taken out by the student himself, then we are already a few steps closer to a solution for the Statian student.

But centrally in this letter I want to convey the message that the Ministry of OCW made a decision over six years ago to introduce CXC on the English-speaking islands of the Dutch Caribbean and never (partially) reorganized the process so that students (and schools, deans, teachers) are duped. My request: pick up the problem (finally) and come up with solutions instead of just leaving it at that. An advice to students aimed at not coming to European Netherlands, or coming later, is of course something to be ashamed of.

I would like to hear from you, or see the improvements "automatically" implemented. The latter may of course also without the first ;-))

Kind regards,

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