

# Policy Compass Form for internet consultation

## Title:

(Enter the publication title of the internet consultation here)

Choice specific postcode series in the Caribbean Netherlands

## ∞ Who are stakeholders and why?

[Explanatory notes](#)

### Auxiliary questions

- Who are direct and indirect stakeholders in the relevant problem?

Residents of the Caribbean Netherlands (experience the problem)  
Public Entities in the Caribbean Netherlands (manage address administration)  
Implementing organisations (must include postcode in their administration)  
Businesses (must include postcode in their administration)  
Holder post concession Caribbean Netherlands (responsible for adequate postal deliveries)  
Official organisations that cannot properly perform their duties due to quality of postal deliveries

- Who dispose of relevant knowledge about and experience with the problem?

- State Secretary for BZK: responsible for 'Strengthening of digital society in CN', which includes this policy proposal.  
- PostNL: manager of postcode file in the European Netherlands.  
- Holder of post concession Caribbean Netherlands.  
- Public Entities Saba, St. Eustatius, Bonaire: source holders address registration(s) CN

- How have stakeholders thus far been involved in the various phases of the policy process?

This proposal was realised through close cooperation between stakeholders and on the basis of the attached advisory report 'Postcodes Caribbean Netherlands', as prepared by BZK.

# 1. What is the problem?

[Explanatory notes](#)

## Auxiliary questions

a) What is the problem?

The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has drawn up the "Values-Driven Digitalisation Work Agenda"<sup>1</sup>. This work agenda includes, under the heading "track 5.1", the topic: "Achieving digital maturity in the Caribbean Netherlands". One of the goals within this is "Public services at the same or equivalent level to the European Netherlands". This goal is in line with the Cabinet policy where, with regard to the Caribbean Netherlands<sup>2</sup>, the focus is on 'comply or explain'. This means that policy in the European Netherlands is carried through to the Caribbean Netherlands unless there is a good reason not to. Equal where possible, and at least equivalent if not equal.

One of the topics that has been the subject of regular parliamentary questions<sup>3</sup> since 2010 is the lack of postcodes in the Caribbean Netherlands. These questions are legitimate in the context of the equivalence of the Caribbean Netherlands to the European Netherlands. In the 2022 administrative agreement with the Public Entity of Saba, it was stated that the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations would take a leading role in elaborating on a number of topics, including postcodes<sup>4</sup>.

A broad survey was commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations in which the need, importance, and impact regarding postcodes for CN were examined. This resulted in the attached 'Advisory Report Postcodes Caribbean Netherlands'. This report showed that using the number series (1000-9999) of the European Netherlands or a completely new system of postcodes for CN are not the solutions that would achieve the desired result.

b) What are the causes of the problem?

The analysis of the variants in the advisory report showed that whilst there is sufficient space within the range of postcodes as in use in the European Netherlands, there are far-reaching and costly consequences for the IT systems of PostNL. There is also little flexibility in the number range to separately identify CN, individual islands, and districts / neighbourhoods. The scenario where a completely new system is devised for CN encounters several objections such as a large implementation effort, poor interoperability with the European Netherlands, major drawbacks in relation to reuse (IT) systems in the European Netherlands, complex data exchange, and incompatibility with existing e-commerce applications. In addition, a different system contributes less to the feeling of equivalence with the European Netherlands.

c) What is the scope of the problem?

The scope of the problem concerns all approximately 30,000 residents<sup>5</sup> and approximately 5,000 businesses<sup>6</sup> in the Caribbean Netherlands that currently do not have access to a postcode.

d) What is the current policy and what did the evaluation yield?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2022/11/04/bijlage-1-werkagenda-waardengedreven-digitaliseren> [1]

<sup>2</sup> The Caribbean Netherlands includes the islands of Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba

<sup>3</sup> <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/ah-tk-20102011-1806.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/convenanten/2022/07/01/saba-package-20>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2024/22/bevolking-caribisch-nederland-in-2023-met-bijna-duizend-toegenomen>

<sup>6</sup> <https://bonairechamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/RESULTATEN-FINAL.pdf>

There is currently no policy and this policy has consequently not been evaluated.

- e) What happens if the government does not do anything (nil option)? What justifies government intervention?

If the government does nothing then the current situation will remain in place, residents of the Caribbean Netherlands will continue to face a multitude of problems due to not having a postcode. Not having a 'real' address in the Netherlands does not contribute to being an integral part of the Netherlands. Furthermore, residents of the Caribbean Netherlands are thus still not treated on an equal level with European Dutch nationals.

## 2. What is the proposed objective?

[Explanatory notes](#)

### Auxiliary questions

- a) What are the policy objectives?

The objective is the establishment of a number series with which a finely-meshed postcode system can be realised for the Caribbean Netherlands that also offers sufficient room to grow with development of the islands in the future. Furthermore, the objective is to minimise the impact on existing (IT) systems and to keep the costs of the introduction of a postcode system as low as possible for all parties involved.

- b) To what [sustainable development goals \(SDG\)](#) and [broad societal outcome](#) do the objectives contribute?

- Reducing inequality (residents of CN cannot purchase certain services in the European Netherlands due to the lack of a postcode)
- Sustainable cities and communities (a postcode system can help create statistics that will help achieve this development goal)

### 3. What are options to realise the objective?

[Explanatory notes](#)

#### Auxiliary questions

- a) What are promising leads to achieve the objective?

The aim of the realisation of a postcode system for the Caribbean Netherlands that is in line with the system in the European Netherlands contributes to the equality of residents in the Caribbean Netherlands as established in the "Public services on an equal or equivalent level to the European Netherlands" programme. The starting point is the desire to have a postcode at one's disposal in the Caribbean Netherlands in order to reach an equivalent level with the European Netherlands.

- b) What are, given the leads, promising policy options?

The attached advisory report Postcodes CN weighed three variants:

Variant 1 assesses the feasibility of the use of the postcode series 9191AA to 9199ZZ within the European Dutch postcode system.

Variant 2 assesses the feasibility of the use of the postcode series 0000AA to 0999ZZ. This variant follows the European Dutch postcode system but uses a series that is not in use in the European Netherlands.

Variant 3 assesses the feasibility of the use of a completely new postcode system for the Caribbean Netherlands.

For the further elaboration of the advantages and disadvantages of each variant, please refer to the report "Postcodes for the Caribbean Netherlands" in the appendix.

- c) What is the [policy theory \(objectives tree\)](#) per promising policy option?

The advisory report recommends that Variant 2, in which the number range 0000AA-0999ZZ will be used for postcodes in CN, is elaborated further with the concerned stakeholders. The other scenarios are not considered optimal. With this, the only feasible policy option is to use postcode series 0000AA-0999ZZ for postcodes in the Caribbean Netherlands.

### 4. What are the consequences of the options?

[Explanatory notes](#)

#### Auxiliary questions

- a) What are the expected consequences per policy option?

As a result, residents of the Caribbean Netherlands will have access to a postcode, which will, among other things, put them on an equal level, improve the quality of postal deliveries, and achieve other secondary positive effects. Examples include being able to compile statistics on districts / neighbourhoods based on postcodes that contribute to problems such as housing and spatial planning issues, but also being able to purchase services from, for example, banks in the European Netherlands, which require a valid postcode for registration, and being able to use E-commerce services.

- b) What [mandatory fields](#) are applicable and what is the relevant outcome (where known)?

Doability test: as part of the advisory report, discussions were held with implementers and (representatives of) residents and businesses about the expected effects on the doability of people. The outcome is that when the preferred variant is actually rolled out, proper information is needed. People are currently used to fictitious postcodes. It will take some time before they start working with postcodes that belong to the address in question. Cross-verification and an automatic link between postcode + house number and street name can contribute to this.

## 5. What is the preferred option?

[Explanatory notes](#)

### Auxiliary questions

a) What is the proposal?

The proposal is to create a postcode system for the Caribbean Netherlands based on the system in use in the European Netherlands. Specifically, the proposal is to use the number series 0000AA-0999ZZ for this purpose.

b) How does the proposal take the following into consideration:

- [effectiveness](#) and [efficiency](#);
- feasibility for all relevant parties;
- Broad social impact?

It is expected that there will be little impact on the ability to do so because the concept of postcode is well established despite not having a postcode itself. However, it does require a switch from the current use of fictitious postcodes by residents to using their real postcode.

The regulatory burden will be limited as the use of postcode data is not mandatory for residents, businesses, and public authorities.

The broad social impact is positive because being able to access a postcode will be an improvement on the current situation for all residents.

c) What are the risks and uncertainties of this proposal?

The proposal was developed in close cooperation between the stakeholders, which means the chosen solution has stakeholder support. PostNL has agreed to the proposal of the use of this number range for CN. Hence, no risks and uncertainties can be identified at present.

d) How about the proposed [monitoring and evaluation](#)?

The monitoring of the implementation will be done by the project team in charge. The evaluation on whether this number range meets all needs will be undertaken in a follow-up project.