



## Appendix A – Summary Advisory Report Postcodes CN

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## Colophon

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Postcodes for the Caribbean Netherlands is an issue that has had political attention since 2010. Despite this, postcodes are unavailable to this day. The State Secretary of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has included postcodes as a topic for the Task Force Caribbean Netherlands in the 2022 administrative agreement with the Public Entity of Saba. The topic has come under the direction of the "Registrations & Facilities Digital Government Caribbean Netherlands Project" within the "Strengthening Digital Society in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom" programme. All this under track 5 of the Values-Driven Digitalisation Work Agenda.

Stakeholder interviews suggest that postcodes have value not only for postal deliveries. This is supported by the analyses of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). The main arguments are:

- The allocation of postcodes in the Caribbean Netherlands contributes positively to a sense of greater equality of residents and businesses between the Caribbean and European Netherlands. A quote from the interviews reads:
  - "We do not feel equal to the European Netherlands in this regard. The quality of our lives, and the aspirations and future of our youth, business community and people in general, are of no less importance than European Dutch citizens"
- Postcodes contribute positively to the improvement of the postal service chain. Postcodes help in better sorting of letters for the different islands. Postcodes minimise ambiguity in the destinations of postal packages. Moreover, postcodes contribute to sustainability by reducing the return of letters that were delivered to the wrong destination or island. A quote from the interviews clearly illustrates this:
  - "I have a number of letters here that were meant for Saba and St. Eustatius, which were returned here to Bonaire".
- The allocation of postcodes promotes participation in the international market. Postcodes play an important role for businesses (and residents) to participate in the international market or e-commerce.
- Postcodes can be used for statistics and comparisons for all kinds of market segmentation.
- Postcodes play an important role in the international recognition of the BES islands. Putting the BES islands on the international map strengthens the sense of unity. This point is in line with what UPU stresses regarding how postcodes can strengthen a "country's unity".

Ultimately, the question is not as to whether there should be postcodes but rather what a postcode system for the Caribbean Netherlands will look like and what the best implementation strategy is. The main preconditions that emerge from the research and interviews for this are:

- Consider the local context
- Involve knowledge and expertise from the local Caribbean Netherlands and European Netherlands and UPU.
- Postcodes are inextricably linked to addresses where good address quality is a prerequisite.

Previous research confirmed the need for a central address registration and proposed a growth model to eventually work towards a central address and building registration for the Caribbean Netherlands (BAG CN). Meanwhile, a project has been

launched to arrive at a central address registration including a geographical map reference. It is recommended that the development of the postcode system is structured further from this context.

Three variants of postcode systems were examined in more detail. Two variants that fall within the European Dutch postcode system and one variant that falls outside it. Together with PostNL, an initial exploration was carried out. Within the framework of the comply-or-explain policy, there are many advantages to using the same postcode structure for the Caribbean Netherlands as in the European Netherlands. It is recommended to opt for the "0 variant". This variant uses the range 0000XX-0999XX or part thereof. This will have to be fleshed out in consultation with local stakeholders and input from PostNL. This variant offers full scope to differentiate between the Caribbean Netherlands, the individual islands and boroughs / neighbourhoods / districts / streets.

The roadmap is divided into two phases. On the one hand, exploration and, on the other, an action plan to achieve implementation. During the exploration, the project organisation (working group) needs to be set up and it is important to sharpen the governance of the process. Who decides what and when? The UPU argues that the introduction of postcodes is more of a policy challenge than a technical challenge. It is important that both Caribbean and European stakeholders realise the necessary decision-making on their own side to carry out the work. The UPU argues that with a good infrastructure, a postcode system can be established within one year from initial decision to full implementation (including database, organisation, communication, and postcode distribution). The project will also have to consider the impact on legislation and regulations.

The advisory report includes related recommendations on the timeliness of information at the UPU and ISO country coding, among other things. The final conclusion is, above all, not to make the postcode project too big and to phase it properly. The advice not to link postcodes directly to the basic personal data records is an example of this. First start by properly establishing the postcode system (development and realisation) linked to an address register for the Caribbean Netherlands. Gradually implement the use of postcodes in other registers.