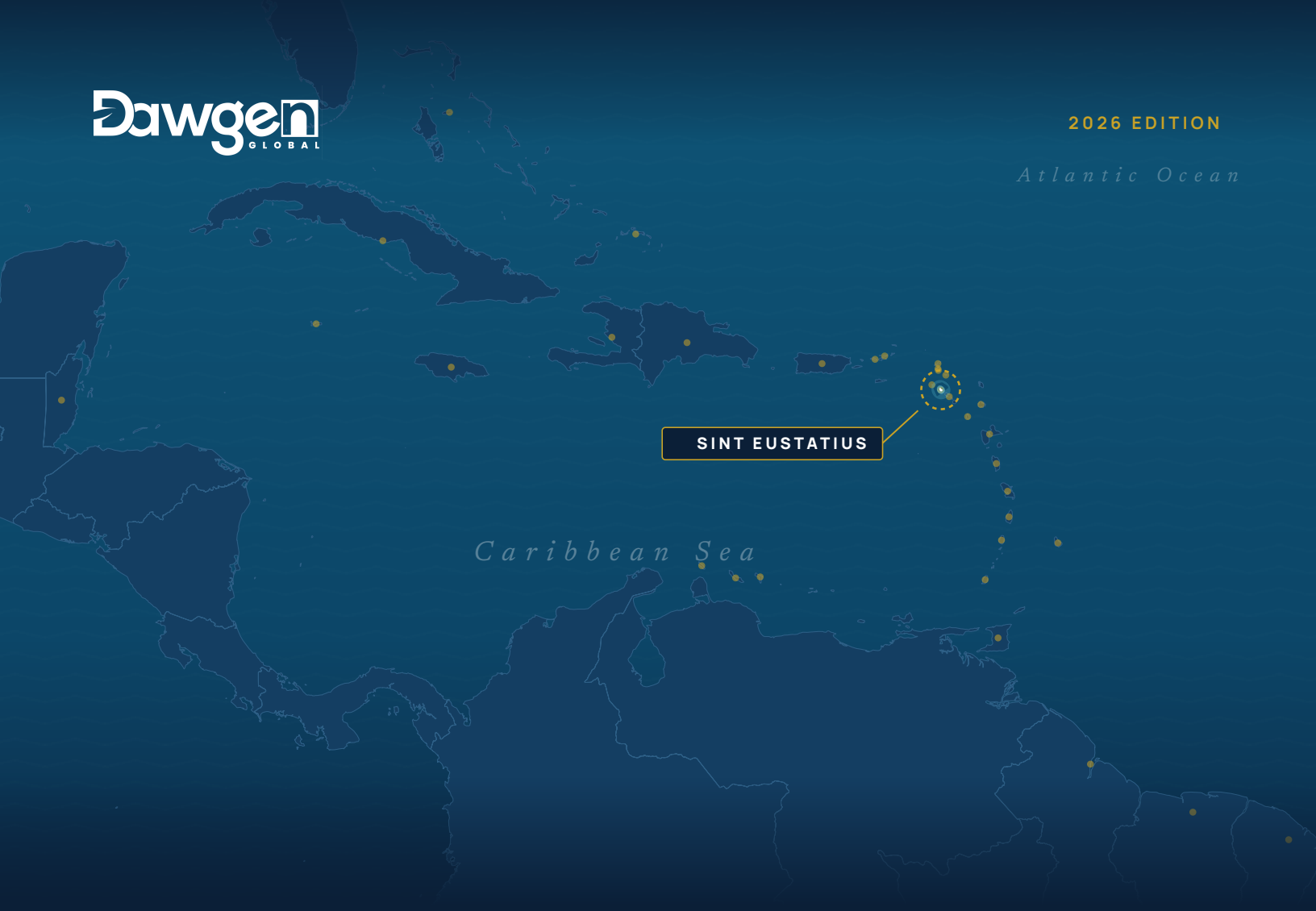
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CARIBBEAN SERVICE DESK · CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

Doing Business in Sint Eustatius

A practical guide to establishing, operating and growing a business in Sint Eustatius

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FOREWORD

Sint Eustatius, known as Statia, is a small island with Dutch institutions, a US dollar economy, a simple tax system and one of the largest oil storage terminals in the region.

Since 10 October 2010 Sint Eustatius has been a special municipality of the Netherlands, with Dutch law, Dutch courts and national government services delivered on the island. After a period of direct oversight from 2018, the island's own administration was fully restored in 2024. Investors find no profit tax for locally established businesses, low general expenditure tax and a protected natural and historic environment, along with rules that differ from both the European Netherlands and the rest of the Caribbean.

This guide sets out in plain language how to choose a structure, how set-up works, what taxes apply, how to employ people and which reliefs may be available. It is written for investors, entrepreneurs and regional and international groups considering Sint Eustatius.

We serve clients in Sint Eustatius through Dawgen Global's Caribbean Service Desk, managed from our headquarters in Kingston, and we are ready to help you turn a plan into a well-run, compliant business.

Dr. Dawkins Brown, Ph.D., MCMI, ACFE

Executive Chairman, Dawgen Global

How to use this guide

This guide gives a practical overview of establishing and running a business in Sint Eustatius. It is general information, current to October 2026, and is not a substitute for advice on your circumstances. Rates and rules change; speak to us before you act.

OVERVIEW

01 Sint Eustatius at a glance

A special municipality of the Netherlands in the north-eastern Caribbean, with an economy built on oil storage, public services, construction and small-scale tourism.

CAPITAL
Oranjestad
Main town, harbour and seat of the Public Entity Sint Eustatius

POPULATION
About 3,350
3,348 residents on 1 January 2026

LANGUAGES
English and Dutch
English is the everyday language of business

CURRENCY
US dollar (USD)
Official currency since 1 January 2011

LEGAL SYSTEM
Dutch civil law
BES legislation; final appeal to the Supreme Court of the Netherlands

TIME ZONE
UTC−4
Atlantic Standard Time all year; no daylight saving

PROFIT TAX
None
7.5% revenue tax on distributed profits instead

GENERAL EXPENDITURE TAX
6% / 4%
ABB on goods and on services respectively

STATUS
Part of the Netherlands
Outside the EU; an EU overseas country and territory

Leading sectors

Oil storage and transhipment · Public services · Construction and infrastructure · Dive and nature tourism · Heritage tourism · Retail and distribution · Renewable energy · Agriculture

Gateways

F.D. Roosevelt Airport has regular flights to Sint Maarten, the main regional hub. The harbour at Gallows Bay handles cargo, and the oil terminal has its own deep-water berths offshore.

Public holidays

Public holidays follow the Dutch calendar with local days, including King's Day (27 April), Emancipation Day (1 July) and Statia Day (16 November), which marks the First Salute of 1776.

INVESTMENT CLIMATE

02 Why Sint Eustatius

Dutch institutions, a US dollar economy and a simple tax system make Statia a distinctive base for a focused business.

Location and access

Statia lies in the northern Leeward Islands, close to St Kitts and about 60 km south of Sint Maarten, through which most travel and freight is routed. The island is within the hurricane belt, so building standards and insurance matter.

Dutch legal certainty

Statia is part of the Netherlands. Company, contract and property law follow the BES Civil Code, civil-law notaries handle formations and land transfers, and national bodies supervise tax, finance and immigration.

A simple tax system

Statia shares the BES tax system with Bonaire and Saba, built on wage and income tax, property tax, a tax on distributed profits and a general expenditure tax. Locally established businesses pay no tax on retained profits.

Restored self-government

In February 2018 the Netherlands placed Statia's administration under a government commissioner. Powers returned in stages from 2020, an Island Governor took office on 10 April 2024 and the restoration act lapsed on 1 September 2024. The island is again run by its Island Council and Executive Council, while the Dutch government continues to invest in infrastructure, housing and public services.

Where the opportunities are

Sector	Examples of opportunity
Energy and marine	Services and supplies to the GTI Statia oil storage terminal, marine and logistics support
Construction	Housing, public infrastructure and commercial premises
Tourism	Small hotels, dive operations and heritage and nature tourism
Services and food	Professional, IT and business services; local agriculture to reduce import dependence

Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland

The Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (RCN) delivers Dutch national government services on the island, including work permits and labour affairs. The Public Entity Sint Eustatius is responsible for local matters such as land, planning and business licences.

LEGAL VEHICLES

03 Choosing a business structure

Most investors use a private limited company (BV) or a public limited company (NV) under the BES Civil Code. The right choice depends on liability, tax status, financing and exit plans.

Vehicle	Key features	Typical use	Main obligations
Private limited company (BV)	Separate legal entity; shareholders' liability limited to their shares; formed by notarial deed; shares registered	Most operating businesses and subsidiaries of foreign groups	Trade register entry; business licence; annual accounts to the tax office; revenue tax on distributions
Public limited company (NV)	Separate legal entity formed by notarial deed; suits larger or more widely held businesses	Larger businesses and joint ventures	As for a BV; stricter governance and reporting
Branch of a foreign company	Registered in the trade register with a place of business on Statia; not a separate legal entity	Projects, contracts and market entry	Registration; business licence; tax on the Statia establishment
General or limited partnership (VOF, CV)	Partnership of two or more persons; general partners personally liable	Professional practices and family businesses	Registration; partners taxed on their share of profits
Sole trader (eenmanszaak)	Individual trading in their own name; unlimited liability	Small owner-managed businesses	Registration; business licence; personal income tax
Foundation (stichting)	No members or shareholders; formed by notarial deed	Charities, nature and community bodies	Registration; no business licence needed

Tax status of the company

A company actually established on Statia asks the tax office for a decision on its place of establishment. Companies that do not qualify, such as passive holding or financing entities without local substance, may fall under Dutch corporate income tax and dividend tax instead.

Ownership and identification

Foreign investors may own 100% of a Statia company. Notaries, banks and other service providers must identify the ultimate beneficial owners under BES anti-money laundering law, and regulated activities need a licence first.

GETTING STARTED

04 Setting up: step by step

Companies are formed by a civil-law notary and registered with the Chamber of Commerce. Every business except a foundation also needs a business establishment licence from the Public Entity.

1 **Plan the structure and name** — WEEK 1

Choose the vehicle, shareholding and directors, and check the proposed name in the trade register.

2 **Execute the deed of incorporation** — WEEK 1–3

A civil-law notary prepares and executes the deed and articles, after identifying the founders and beneficial owners.

3 **Register with the Chamber of Commerce** — WEEK 2–3

Register the company, its directors and business address in the trade register kept by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sint Eustatius and Saba.

4 **Obtain a business establishment licence** — WEEK 2–6

Apply to the Licensing, Supervision and Enforcement Unit of the Public Entity under the BES Business Establishment Act. A new licence is also needed to expand or change the business.

5 **Open a bank account** — WEEK 2–6

Banks apply full know-your-customer checks on the company, directors and beneficial owners. Allow extra time where owners are overseas.

6 **Register with the tax office** — WEEK 2–4

Register with the Belastingdienst Caribisch Nederland for ABB and as an employer, and request a decision on the company's place of establishment.

7 **Permits and compliance** — BEFORE TRADING

Obtain building and other permits, sector licences and work permits as needed, and set up bookkeeping, payroll and a filing calendar.

Documents you will usually need

Valid passport and proof of address for each director, shareholder and beneficial owner; details of the business activity and source of funds; a business address on Statia; and, for a branch, certified constitutional documents and a recent extract from the home registry.

TAXATION

05 Tax at a glance

Statia applies the BES tax system, separate from that of the European Netherlands. Most rates match Bonaire's, but ABB is lower and there is no island surcharge on property tax.

Business taxes	
Profit tax	None for companies with a place-of-establishment decision; non-qualifying entities may face Dutch corporate income tax
Revenue tax	7.5% on profits distributed by BES entities, withheld by the entity (5% until 2024)
ABB	6% on goods and imports; 4% on services; 5% on insurance; 25% on passenger cars; 0% on fully electric cars and exports
Property tax	17.5% of a deemed 4% yield, or 0.7% of value a year; no island surcharge; owner-occupied homes exempt
Transfer tax	5% of the value of real property, paid by the buyer through the notary
Customs	No general import duty; ABB on imports and excise on fuel, alcohol and tobacco

Individuals (2026)	
Tax-free sum	USD 21,956 a year
Income tax rates	29.4% up to the Belastingdienst threshold; 38.4% above, with AOV and AWW premiums

Withholding on payments	Rate
Dividends	7.5%
Interest	Generally nil
Royalties and fees	Generally nil

Statia is generally outside the Netherlands' bilateral tax treaties. The BES tax rules and arrangements within the Kingdom deal with double taxation with the European Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. Take advice before cross-border payments.

Recent changes

The revenue tax rose to 7.5% from 2025. From 1 January 2026 the first income tax rate fell to 29.4% and the top rate rose to 38.4%. Bills before Parliament for 2027 would cut petrol duty on Statia by 4.19 US cents a litre, raise the hotel property tax rate, allow ABB fiscal unity for wholly owned groups and exempt farming inputs from ABB.

PEOPLE

06 Employing people

Employment law follows the BES Civil Code and related BES laws. Employers withhold wage tax and premiums, pay employer premiums and need permission to dismiss.

Minimum standards

- **Minimum wage:** USD 10.61 an hour on Statia from 1 January 2026, for workers aged 21 and over; lower youth rates apply
- **Hours:** set by the BES Working Hours Act 2000, with rules on rest and overtime
- **Vacation:** at least three times the weekly contracted hours each year, on full pay
- **Sickness:** wages continue during illness; employers can reclaim part from the RCN
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** 6 weeks before and 10 weeks after birth, on full pay
- **Dismissal:** needs a permit from the RCN labour affairs unit, except summary dismissal
- **Severance:** cessantia payment is due when an employee is dismissed through no fault of their own

Statutory payroll contributions

Contribution	Employee	Employer
Wage tax with AOV and AWW	29.4% / 38.4%	—
Health insurance	Included	9.3%
Sickness insurance	—	0.7%
Accident insurance	—	0.2%
Cessantia	—	0.1%

Employer premiums total 10.3% of wages, with no ceiling. Returns are usually quarterly, or monthly for larger employers, with payment by the 15th day after the period.

Bringing in foreign staff

Work permits

Employers need a work permit (tewerkstellingsvergunning) before employing a foreign national. Applications go through the IND office and are assessed by the RCN social affairs unit.

Local recruitment first

Report the vacancy at least five weeks before applying and advertise in at least two media. A permit is granted only if local recruitment fails.

Residence

A work permit needs a valid or pending residence permit from the IND. Dutch nationals do not need a work permit, and some occupations are exempt.

HR essentials from day one

Give every employee written terms of employment, keep accurate time, pay and leave records, register each employee with the tax office, and adopt a staff handbook covering conduct, grievances, data protection and safety. On a small island the labour pool is limited, so plan recruitment early.

MONEY AND ASSETS

07 Banking, currency and property

Banking and finance

Statia is served by a very small number of banks, linked to groups in Curaçao and Sint Maarten, supervised by De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB) and the Netherlands Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM) under the BES financial markets law.

- **US dollar economy:** the US dollar has been the official currency since 1 January 2011
- **No exchange controls:** funds, profits and capital can move freely, subject to bank checks
- **Limited choice:** with few banks on the island, start account opening early
- **Compliance:** expect thorough anti-money laundering and know-your-customer checks under BES law

Financial reporting

All entities established in the Caribbean Netherlands file a balance sheet, profit and loss account and notes with the tax office within nine months of the year-end.

Land and property

Foreign nationals and foreign-owned companies may own property. Some land is held by the Public Entity Sint Eustatius and may be granted on long lease (erfpacht). Transfers pass through a notary and are recorded in the public registers.

Typical costs on a property purchase	
Transfer tax	5% of the value, paid by the buyer
Notary and registry fees	Charged by the notary and the land registry
Property tax	0.7% of value a year; first USD 70,000 exempt for second homes
Ground rent	Annual, on long-lease land

Before you build

Development needs planning and building permits from the Public Entity. The marine park, the Quill and Boven nature areas and the historic core of Oranjestad are protected.

GROWTH LEVERS

08 Incentives, trade and customs

Statia offers no tax holidays. Its main advantages lie in the tax system itself, with targeted reliefs for hotels, investment, exports and green energy.

Key reliefs

Relief	What it offers
No profit tax	Retained profits untaxed for qualifying local companies; 7.5% revenue tax only on distributions
Hotel property tax rate	Reduced rate for hotels not owned by individuals, set by the Belastingdienst; a rise to 12% is proposed for 2027
Investment exemption	Property tax exemption for five or ten years on value added by building or improvement
ABB reliefs	Zero rate on exports; exemptions for solar panels, wind turbines and basic foods
Low ABB rates	6% and 4%, below Bonaire's 8% and 6%

Eligibility and conditions apply to each relief. We can assess which reliefs fit your project and prepare the applications.

Market access

- **EU overseas country and territory:** preferential access to the European Union for goods of qualifying origin
- **Regional links:** trade and transport through Sint Maarten and St Kitts
- **US dollar pricing:** no currency risk on trade with the United States
- **No general import duty** on goods brought into Statia

Customs

Douane Caribisch Nederland, part of the Belastingdienst Caribisch Nederland, handles imports and exports. ABB is charged on imports at the goods rate, and excise applies to fuel, alcohol and tobacco.

COMPLIANCE

09 Regulators and compliance calendar

Who regulates what

Body	Role
Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sint Eustatius and Saba	Trade register
Public Entity Sint Eustatius	Business licences, land, planning and building
Belastingdienst Caribisch Nederland	Income and wage tax, ABB, property, transfer and revenue tax, customs
Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland	Work permits, labour affairs, dismissal permits
IND	Residence permits
DNB and AFM	Banking, insurance, investment and conduct supervision
FIU-Nederland	Unusual transaction reports
BES data protection supervisor	Data protection

Key filing dates

When	What
By the 15th day after each period	Payroll tax return and payment, usually quarterly, or monthly for larger employers
Each quarter	ABB return and payment, by the date on the invitation
After each distribution	Revenue tax return and payment for the period
Spring	Individual income tax returns (the 2025 return was due by 18 May 2026)
30 September	Annual accounts to the tax office for a December year-end
Each year	Property tax assessment; keep trade register and licence details up to date

Exact deadlines are printed on the invitations issued by the tax office. Late filing and payment attract penalties and interest.

Anti-money laundering

Financial institutions and designated businesses, including notaries, accountants, real estate agents and dealers in high-value goods, must meet BES anti-money laundering obligations and report unusual transactions to FIU-Nederland.

ACTION PLAN

10 Your first 90 days: checklist

Use this checklist to track the essential steps from decision to first trading day.

Days 1–30: establish

- [ ] Agree business plan, structure and ownership
- [ ] Check the company name in the trade register
- [ ] Gather KYC documents for directors and owners
- [ ] Instruct a civil-law notary
- [ ] Execute the deed of incorporation
- [ ] Register with the Chamber of Commerce
- [ ] Apply to open business bank accounts

Days 31–60: register and license

- [ ] Obtain the business establishment licence
- [ ] Register with the tax office for ABB and payroll
- [ ] Request a place-of-establishment decision
- [ ] Report vacancies and apply for work permits
- [ ] Secure premises, land lease and insurance
- [ ] Assess property tax and ABB reliefs

Days 61–90: operate

- [ ] Set up the accounting system and chart of accounts
- [ ] Set up payroll, wage tax and premiums
- [ ] Issue written employment contracts
- [ ] Build the tax and filing calendar
- [ ] Put AML and data protection policies in place

Ongoing

- [ ] Payroll tax returns and payments
- [ ] Quarterly ABB returns
- [ ] Revenue tax on any distributions
- [ ] Annual accounts to the tax office
- [ ] Renew permits and licences on time

YOUR PARTNER

11 How Dawgen Global helps

One Dawgen Global team supports you through our Caribbean Service Desk, managed from our headquarters in Kingston.

Market entry and structuring

Choice of vehicle, group and tax structuring, and business plans.

Incorporation and corporate secretarial

Notary coordination, trade register filings, licences and statutory records.

Tax advisory and compliance

Registrations, place-of-establishment decisions, ABB, payroll, revenue tax and tax audits, through our Caribbean Tax Service Desk.

Accounting and payroll outsourcing

Bookkeeping, annual accounts, payroll and a Virtual CFO.

Audit and assurance

Audits, reviews and special-purpose reporting for lenders and parent companies.

HR, immigration and legal support

Employment contracts, HR policies, work permit applications and legal process support, with our panel of attorneys.

Risk and compliance

AML programmes, data protection compliance, internal audit and governance.

Technology and cyber

Systems selection, digital transformation, cybersecurity and AI governance.

Relief applications

Property tax, ABB and customs relief assessments and applications.

Start with a conversation

Tell us your plans for Statia, and we will set out the steps, timeline and costs. Some regulated services are performed by affiliated firms; we will advise you of the arrangements when you make a request. Fees are tailored to each client's circumstances and set out in an engagement letter. Email **sinteustatius@dawgen.com** or **info@dawgen.global**, or call (876) 926-5210.

Talk to the Sint Eustatius Caribbean Service Desk

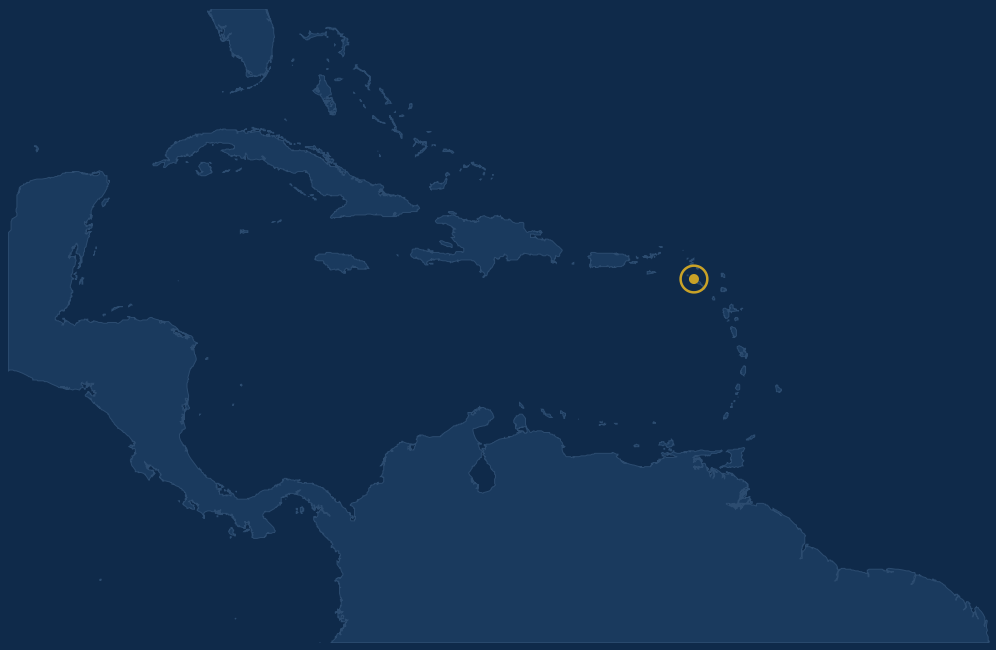
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Key official sources

- Belastingdienst Caribisch Nederland (belastingdienst-cn.nl)
- Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (rijksdienstcn.com)
- Public Entity Sint Eustatius (statiagovernment.com)
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sint Eustatius and Saba (statiasabachamber.com)
- IND Caribisch Nederland (ind.nl)
- De Nederlandsche Bank (dnb.nl)
- Netherlands Authority for the Financial Markets (afm.nl)
- Statistics Netherlands (cbs.nl)



This publication contains general information only, current to October 2026, and is not professional advice. Tax rates, thresholds and procedures change frequently, and several measures for 2027 were still before the Dutch Parliament at the time of writing; confirm the current position with Dawgen Global or the relevant authority before acting. Some regulated services are performed by affiliated firms; we will advise you of the arrangements when you make a request.

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