

Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en
Koninkrijksrelaties

> Return Address P.O. Box 20011 2500 EA The Hague

To the President of the House of Representatives

P.O. Box 20018
2500 EA THE HAGUE

**Ministry of the Interior and
Kingdom Relations**
DGOBDR
Democracy

Turfmarkt 147
The Hague
PO Box 20011
2500 EA The Hague

Reference
2024-0000001317

Your reference

Annex(es)
0

Date February 15th 2024

Subject Letter to House of Representatives concerning the Slavery
Past subsidy scheme for community initiatives and the policy
reinforcements

This letter will inform the House about the proposal further elaborating the geographical distribution among the Dutch Caribbean (Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Maarten), the European Netherlands and Suriname of the scheme for community initiatives and the policy reinforcements formulated in the government response to the "*Chains of the Past*" report.¹

As indicated earlier, the government considers it important for the deployment of resources to be determined in consultation with the communities of descendants and other stakeholders in the European Netherlands, the Dutch Caribbean and Suriname. To come to concrete terms with them, it is important for the government to establish clear financial frameworks for any such arrangements. As announced in the progress letter of the 23rd of June 2023, the government is therefore proposing a geographical distribution of resources concerning the scheme for community initiatives and the policy reinforcements among the Dutch Caribbean, the Netherlands and Suriname. This scheme is explained below.

Geographical distribution of the scheme for community initiatives:

For the scheme for community initiatives, a total of €100 million is available for which the government proposes a geographical distribution of 1/3 for the Dutch Caribbean, 1/3 for the European Netherlands and 1/3 for Suriname. This amounts to €33 million per area. It is furthermore important that the intended recipients have easy access to this funding in order to ensure inclusiveness in its use, while monitoring the efficiency and legality of such use.

¹ [Slavery Past | House of Representatives](#)

Geographical distribution of the policy reinforcements:

When working out the policy reinforcements, it has become apparent that the financial frameworks relating to the method and pace in the Dutch Caribbean require clarification. The proposal is therefore to set aside a maximum of €33 million for the Dutch Caribbean and that a package of measures be developed on this basis. The €33 million will be used to fund at least the commitments made in the government response of the 19th of December 2022 regarding the Dutch Caribbean as well as those made in the "island letters" of the 19th of December 2022.

Initial ideas on the distribution per island and possible measures using the earmarked €33 million were discussed during the Catshuis sessions on St. Maarten last 1st and 2nd of October and will be further developed in the coming period. Descendants, civil society organisations and the governments of each country and island are in charge of this process and will set the pace. Cooperation among islands and countries will be sought wherever possible and desirable. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Education, Culture and Science will have a supporting and facilitating role in this process.

The starting point for the Netherlands and Suriname is also 1/3 of the available €100 million for the Netherlands and 1/3 for Suriname. The Ministers concerned will work with descendants and other stakeholders to further elaborate plans, which are to be submitted by the 1st of July 2025.

With regard to policy reinforcements, the government maintains that measures must have a direct link to the stated objectives in the government response of the 19th of December 2022 and that the efficiency and legality of the spending must be ensured.

The proposals will be reviewed by the Ministerial Steering Committee on the Slavery Past to ensure that they meet these conditions and then adopted. The measures must furthermore be supported by descendants and other stakeholders, and implementation must also be carried out in close cooperation with these parties.

**Ministry of the Interior
and Kingdom Relations**
DGOBDR
Democracy

The House will be further informed about the impact of the scheme for community initiatives and the policy reinforcements in spring 2024.

Date
February 15th 2024

Reference
2024-0000001317

The State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitalisation,

Alexandra C. van Huffelen

The Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations,

H.M. de Jonge

The Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hanke Bruins Slot