

Proud of our past. Courageous for our future.
United in action.



Response to Targeted Growth in Sint Eustatius
May, 2025



Table of content

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Introduction and process	5
3. Statia's voice in this document	7
3.1 Education	7
3.2 Economy	9
3.3 Healthcare.....	11
3.4 Spatial Development.....	13
3.5 Connectivity.....	15
3.6 Governance	17
4. Deep connection to targeted growth policy directions.....	19
4.1 Response to policy questions from BZK	19
4.2 Alignment with key themes	21
4.3 Expanded Priorities: Connectivity and Digitalization	22
4.4 Toward a shared vision for 2050	23
5. Possible vision statement 2050 of Sint Eustatius.....	24
6. The roadmap for Statia would consist of four sequential phases:.....	25
Appendix: Thematic Matrix for Statia's 2050 strategy	26
Appendix: Examples from other Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	27



1. Executive Summary

This document presents Sint Eustatius' comprehensive and integral response to the "Gerichte Groei" (Targeted Growth) report, building on extensive community engagement and firmly rooted in the Sustainable Investment Decision Framework (Financial, Social, Environmental, and Governance – F/S/E/G).

By 2050, Sint Eustatius envisions itself as a boutique **Wellness and Knowledge Hub** in the Caribbean — a resilient, connected, and proud island where sustainable development, community empowerment, and cultural heritage are seamlessly intertwined.

The Executive Council (ExCo) of Sint Eustatius has navigated the journey from initial report analysis to the strategic adoption of the Integrated Value Decision Framework, leading to deep-rooted community workshops and reflective discussions within the Island Council. This document captures the collective voice across diverse sectors — education, economy, healthcare, spatial development, connectivity, and governance — ensuring genuine ownership of the proposed direction.

Connectivity and digitalization emerge as **foundational enablers** underpinning all sectors, recognizing that reliable physical and digital links are critical for economic resilience, social inclusion, healthcare access, education quality, and governance transparency.

The community's aspirations, combined with international best practices from other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as Barbados, Seychelles, and Bermuda, inform a robust strategic pathway. This pathway is articulated in a **phased roadmap** leading to 2050:

- **Foundation Phase (2025–2030):** Building infrastructure, strengthening governance, activating community participation.
- **Expansion Phase (2030–2040):** Diversifying the economy, reinforcing regional partnerships, scaling human capital.
- **Consolidation Phase (2040–2045):** Solidifying global positioning as a wellness, education, and sustainability hub.
- **Maturity Phase (2045–2050):** Achieving self-reliance, resilience, and exemplary sustainable living.

This draft response details:

- The full process from initial report analysis, strategic framework adoption, community workshops, to drafting.
- An extensive elaboration of "Statia's Voice," sector by sector, reflecting participant contributions and real-world examples.
- A strong alignment and expansion upon the "Targeted Growth" policy directions, including Statia-specific priorities.



- The formulation of a Vision 2050 statement and a phased roadmap toward sustainable self-reliance.
- A comprehensive set of detailed recommendations and outstanding strategic questions for policy refinement.
- An expanded appendix, structured along the Financial, Social, Environmental, and Governance (F/S/E/G) pillars, supplemented with lessons from comparable Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

In conclusion, Sint Eustatius fully supports a "Targeted Growth" strategy tailored to its unique socio-economic, cultural, and ecological context. Realizing this vision requires robust investments in connectivity, education, healthcare, economic diversification, and governance capacity, combined with enhanced local autonomy and active citizen participation.

Proud of our past. Courageous for our future. United in action





2. Introduction and process

2.1 The initial report: "Targeted Growth"

In July 2024, the State Commission on Demographic Developments published the "Targeted Growth" report outlining the demographic challenges and strategic development pathways for the BES islands — Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba. For Statia, the report highlighted issues of population stagnation, an aging demographic profile, economic vulnerability due to limited diversification, pressure on small-scale public facilities, and challenges in effective governance and autonomy.

The report posited several action scenarios to counteract negative trends, recommending targeted growth strategies emphasizing migration stimulation, public service adaptation to small scale realities, economic base strengthening, and governance capacity enhancement.

2.2 Adoption of the sustainable investment decision framework

In recognition of the complexity and interconnectedness of Statia's challenges and ambitions in general, the Executive Council of Statia, in early 2025, adopted the sustainable investment decision framework based on an integrated value approach. This framework moves beyond traditional financial-centric evaluations, compelling decision-makers to weigh financial, social, environmental, and governance impacts holistically (F/S/E/G).

This strategic adoption ensures that all future policy decisions, projects, and investments are rigorously assessed for their integral value contributions, aligning both immediate needs and long-term sustainability objectives.

2.3 Community engagement workshops

With the Targeted Growth insights and the new decision framework as guiding beacons, a structured community engagement process was launched. Two major workshops were conducted:

- April 17th, 2025 — General community workshop: Focused on collecting broad-based ideas, concerns, and dreams across sectors.
- April 22nd, 2025 — Island Council and Executive Council workshop: Aimed at deepening political leadership's engagement and gathering institutional feedback.

More than 35 participants, ranging from residents and educators to entrepreneurs, civil servants, and healthcare professionals, actively contributed their insights. The workshops fostered rich dialogues, surfacing real-world examples, challenges, and ambitions, which have been systematically captured and reflected in this document.



2.4 Drafting the response

Following these inputs, the drafting process was initiated. Each sectoral strategy has been expanded deeply with practical examples, policy linkages, international best practices, and scenario-based analysis to ensure that Statia's response is comprehensive, future-oriented, and formally aligned with both local needs and national/international frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



3. Statia's voice in this document

3.1 Education

Community input

The participants in both the general community workshop and the Island Council sessions consistently emphasized the transformative power of education in shaping Statia's future. Discussions revealed a strong preference for hybrid education models that combine digital and physical learning, tailored to Statian realities. The urgent need for inclusive education was noted, given the rising number of children diagnosed with ADHD, autism, and other special needs.

Furthermore, it was emphasized that education must be holistic, fostering emotional intelligence, resilience, and social skills alongside academic competencies. Multilingualism (Dutch and English) was recognized as essential from a young age, with proposals to establish a "language discovery center" that uses gamification, virtual reality (VR), and immersion-based learning. Music, arts, sports, and digital technologies were all highlighted as crucial pillars of a future-ready educational system.

A critical point was the need to decide clearly between the American and Dutch education systems, as the current mix leads to confusion, fragmentation, and missed opportunities. Some participants advocated for a "Statian choice model," blending best practices from both systems into a unique local framework.

Tailored education also demands structural enablers: financial investments, curriculum reform, capacity building among teachers, and community collaboration.

Workshop examples

- Language discovery center: A vibrant educational hub where children learn Dutch and English through games, VR experiences, and active learning environments.
- Statia hybrid academy: An innovative education model offering both in-person and supervised online curricula, combining local mentorship with access to international courses.
- Emotional intelligence programs: Inspired by Scandinavian and Japanese models, focusing on empathy, collaboration, and citizenship from kindergarten onward.

Challenges identified

- Lack of specialized support for special needs students.
- Insufficient digital infrastructure for hybrid education.
- Brain drain due to young talents leaving for education abroad and not returning.
- Nutritional and prenatal education gaps impacting student readiness.



Strategic relevance

Education directly engages both the Social (S) and Governance (G) dimensions of the Sustainable Investment Framework. It builds human capital, promotes social cohesion, and determines future economic resilience.

Recommendations

- Universal laptop program: Provide every child with a laptop and access to broadband internet.
- Hybrid learning pilot: Launch a pilot program integrating supervised online learning platforms with localized mentoring.
- Special needs expansion: Invest in "education hubs" with specialized facilities and trained staff.
- Teacher upskilling: Fund continuous professional development focused on hybrid learning methodologies, emotional intelligence, and multilingual education.
- Parent support networks: Develop programs that support parents early, including prenatal and early childhood nutritional education, emotional coaching, and special needs guidance.
- Clear educational pathway: Decide, design, and implement a consistent educational pathway aligned with either the American, Dutch, or a blended Statian system.



3.2 Economy

Community input

Workshop participants voiced strong concerns about the current economic fragility of Sint Eustatius. They stressed the island's over-reliance on a small number of sectors and the urgent need to diversify economic activities. There was a broad consensus that economic development must be resilient, inclusive, and aligned with Statia's values of self-sufficiency, environmental stewardship, and community pride.

Major barriers were identified, such as the limited market size, bureaucratic hurdles, high import costs, and slow governmental processing times, particularly regarding permits, licenses, and business start-ups. Several participants highlighted the importance of attracting investors through tax incentives and building a more flexible and responsive local regulatory environment.

Reviving agriculture and enhancing regional cooperation for trade and logistics were heavily emphasized. The concept of Statia as a "Logistics Hub" — leveraging its strategic location between St. Kitts, Saba, and St. Maarten — was well-received.

Another recurring theme was the need to rethink migration strategies to allow for easier entry of needed labor and entrepreneurs, reducing IND waiting times and streamlining documentation requirements.

Workshop examples

- Local production networks: Initiatives to promote local food production through partnerships with institutions like Wageningen University and create farmer cooperatives.
- Regional procurement alliance: A cross-island platform where Statian businesses collaboratively purchase goods to lower costs and increase bargaining power.
- Development of a yacht harbor: A professional harbor to attract luxury tourism and increase maritime connectivity, thereby stimulating local businesses.
- Tax incentive zones: Designated areas offering reduced taxation and accelerated business permit processing for priority sectors (agriculture, hospitality, green energy).



Challenges identified

- Small internal market causing scaling difficulties for local businesses.
- High operational costs linked to imports and logistics.
- Rigid, externally dictated labor and immigration policies.
- Limited access to financial services, including loans and insurance.
- Insufficient local government capacity to rapidly support entrepreneurial initiatives.

Strategic relevance

Economic resilience addresses primarily the Financial (F) and Governance (G) pillars of the F/S/E/G framework. A robust economy also underpins social well-being (S) and can drive environmental innovations (E) through green sector development.

Recommendations

- Statia business development fund: Establish a fund providing grants, micro-loans, and technical assistance to local entrepreneurs, particularly in priority sectors.
- Tax modernization: Collaborate with the Dutch government to redesign the tax and customs systems to better suit micro-economies, including flexible VAT and import duty regimes.
- Regulatory simplification: Digitize and streamline permit and licensing procedures, including a "one-stop shop" for business services.
- Strategic investment attraction: Develop a targeted marketing campaign promoting Statia's unique investment opportunities, focusing on green technologies, sustainable tourism, and logistics.
- Cross-island economic collaboration: Formalize trade and procurement partnerships with neighboring islands.
- Local production enhancement: Incentivize agricultural and aquaculture initiatives, including hydroponic farming and reef-friendly fishery developments.
- Professionalization of event tourism: Create and promote major cultural, sports, and eco-tourism events to attract visitors, create jobs, and build Statia's brand.



3.3 Healthcare

Community input

Healthcare was a theme discussed during the workshops, reflecting concerns among Statian residents about accessibility, quality, and sustainability of health services. Participants highlighted the dual challenge of an increasingly aging population combined with rising rates of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.

The current healthcare model, heavily reliant on referrals to Sint Maarten, was criticized for limiting patient choice and causing delays. Participants advocated for a "Statia health autonomy" model, which envisions building more robust local services, particularly in primary care and preventative medicine.

There was also strong consensus on the necessity of a preventive health approach, shifting away from reactive sick care towards proactive community well-being. Residents emphasized lifestyle change programs, nutritional education starting from school age, the promotion of exercise, mental health destigmatization, and strategic health partnerships across the region.

Participants stressed that investing in healthcare infrastructure, digitization, and regional partnerships could not only improve quality of life but also position Statia as a potential "Preventive healthcare hub" within the Caribbean.

Workshop examples

- Preventive care campaigns: Community-driven initiatives promoting healthy diets, physical activity, and wellness programs in collaboration with local farmers and sports associations.
- Regional healthcare collaborations: Shared specialist services with Saba and St. Maarten to reduce dependency and improve cost-efficiency.
- Public health infrastructure: Building sidewalks, bicycle paths, and public gyms to facilitate healthy lifestyles.
- Digital health records: Implementing an island-wide digital health system to improve patient management and enable remote consultations.
- Healthcare tourism: Developing niche services (e.g., preventive health retreats) to attract regional and international visitors.

Challenges identified

- Limited local healthcare capacity, forcing reliance on referrals abroad.
- Lack of access to specialists and diverse medical expertise.
- Growing burden of chronic lifestyle diseases.
- Stigmatization of mental health issues, leading to underreporting and undertreatment.
- Inefficient coordination between healthcare providers and insurance frameworks.
- Inadequate public spaces and infrastructure for active living.



Strategic relevance

Healthcare improvement directly strengthens the Social (S) and Environmental (E) pillars of the F/S/E/G framework. It also enhances Financial (F) stability by reducing long-term healthcare costs and Governance (G) through better coordination and autonomy.

Recommendations

- Preventive health strategy 2030: Develop a comprehensive, island-wide preventive health policy anchored in community participation, leveraging the 2025 Health Deal.
- Local specialist services: Recruit and retain essential specialists (e.g., internal medicine, geriatrics, pediatrics) on a rotational basis.
- Healthcare workforce development: Create incentives for Statians to study healthcare professions and return to practice locally.
- Digital healthcare transformation: Invest in electronic health records, telemedicine capabilities, and remote monitoring systems.
- Public health infrastructure expansion: Construct sidewalks, cycling routes, outdoor gyms, and safe recreational areas.
- Nutritional education and intervention: Launch school-based nutrition programs, introduce healthy food subsidies, and impose taxes on sugary drinks and junk food.
- Mental health programs: Establish culturally sensitive mental health services with community outreach initiatives to reduce stigma.
- Healthcare tourism development: Strategically position Statia as a center for wellness tourism, leveraging its natural beauty and emerging healthcare capabilities.
- Regional health integration: Formalize healthcare collaboration agreements with neighboring islands to pool resources and expertise.



3.4 Spatial Development

Community input

Spatial development emerged as a foundational theme in both workshops, reflecting the community's recognition that space is one of Statia's most precious and limited resources. Participants noted that the spatial development strategy must harmonize economic growth, environmental protection, housing needs, agricultural revitalization, and cultural preservation.

There was a clear consensus that the current zoning plans are outdated and must be comprehensively revised to reflect future demographic trends, climate change resilience needs, and Statia's strategic ambitions. Participants emphasized the need for integrated, multi-use spatial planning — envisioning residential areas that also accommodate green spaces, healthcare facilities, educational centers, and commercial hubs.

Digitization of spatial planning processes was another key demand. Residents called for accessible, user-friendly digital platforms to submit permit requests, track land use plans, and participate in decision-making processes, thereby fostering transparency and trust.

Concerns were raised about land ownership regulations, the prevention of speculative land acquisitions by non-residents, and ensuring affordable housing for local families. Workshop participants also proposed utilizing vertical construction (three to four stories) to optimize land use, particularly in urbanized cores, while preserving Statia's historical and environmental heritage.

Furthermore, community members stressed the urgent need to solve persistent infrastructure deficits: unsafe roads, unreliable utilities, insufficient waste management, and poor sewage systems.

Workshop examples

- Digitized permit systems: Implement a fully digital application and tracking system for building permits, environmental impact assessments, and land zoning requests.
- Multi-functional centers: Redevelop areas like Oranjestad into vibrant mixed-use districts with housing, markets, clinics, and educational spaces.
- Sustainable green zones: Protect and expand natural reserves, like The Quill, while creating eco-corridors linking urban and rural landscapes.
- Smart land valuation: Reform land valuation mechanisms to prevent speculation and ensure fair pricing for residential and agricultural use.
- Resilient infrastructure projects: Develop climate-resilient roads, water systems, and sewage networks with support from Dutch and EU climate adaptation funds.



Challenges identified

- Existing spatial plans are a good foundation given the current reality but might need more alignment with future demographic and economic realities.
- Bureaucratic permit processes deter private and public investments.
- Land ownership disputes and speculation hinder equitable development.
- Urban sprawl threatens cultural and environmental heritage.
- Infrastructure networks are fragile and increasingly strained.
- Public spaces for recreation and community gatherings are insufficient.

Strategic relevance

Spatial development deeply intersects all F/S/E/G dimensions. It influences financial resilience (through real estate markets and infrastructure investment), social inclusion (through housing and public spaces), environmental stewardship (through nature protection and resource management), and governance transparency (through participatory planning).

Recommendations

- Comprehensive spatial plan 2050: Launch a participatory planning process to revise the spatial development framework, aligned with demographic projections and climate adaptation needs.
- Digital planning tools: Develop open-access digital platforms for land management, building permits, and community consultations.
- Affordable housing initiatives: Implement policies to stimulate construction of affordable housing units, including social housing and first-time buyer incentives.
- Smart growth: Prioritize vertical and compact development models to preserve green spaces and reduce infrastructure costs.
- Land ownership reform: Introduce regulations to limit speculative land purchases and ensure land availability for local needs.
- Sustainable infrastructure investment: Expand renewable energy grids, modernize waste management systems, and upgrade water and sewage infrastructures.
- Eco-zoning policies: Integrate green belts, buffer zones, and agricultural lands into spatial planning to ensure environmental resilience.
- Public space revitalization: Create safe, accessible parks, sports fields, and cultural centers (i.e heart of town) to enhance community well-being and social cohesion.



3.5 Connectivity

Community input

Connectivity was unanimously recognized as a critical enabler for Statia's sustainable development across all sectors discussed during the workshops. Participants viewed physical and digital connectivity not simply as infrastructural needs but as transformational levers influencing education, healthcare access, economic growth, governance efficiency, and social cohesion.

Concerns centered around the inadequacy of current transport options (both air and sea), inconsistent ferry services, the limited capacity and modernization of port and airport infrastructure, and insufficient broadband internet coverage and speed across the island.

A holistic view emerged: investments in connectivity would generate a multiplier effect, strengthening Statia's competitiveness, fostering regional integration, improving healthcare referral systems, enabling hybrid education models, and attracting both tourists and residents.

Participants proposed developing an "Inter- Island mobility strategy" including reliable ferry and cargo connections to Saba, St. Maarten, St. Kitts, and beyond. They also urged for a major upgrade of the pier and port facilities, the development of a yacht harbor, and the establishment of a regional airstrip consortium to optimize short-haul aviation.

Digital connectivity was another high priority. Workshop groups advocated for full broadband internet coverage across all homes, businesses, and public institutions — emphasizing that digitalization would revolutionize education, healthcare, governance, and economic sectors alike.

Workshop examples

- Ferry connectivity: Expand regular and affordable ferry services linking Statia with Saba, St. Maarten, and St. Kitts and beyond.
- Expanded port infrastructure: Redevelop the existing cargo pier to accommodate larger ships, streamline customs procedures, and boost tourism-related maritime traffic.
- Statia marina: Establish a professional yacht harbor capable of attracting international sailing circuits.
- Island-wide broadband access: Implement a public-private partnership to deploy fiber-optic internet to every home, business, and school.
- Digital public services platform: Develop an integrated e-governance portal allowing residents to access permits, healthcare records, educational services, and tax administration online.

Challenges identified

- Irregular and costly air and sea transport options limit mobility and economic opportunities.
- Inadequate cargo handling infrastructure constrains trade and supply chains.



- Slow internet connectivity hampers education, business growth, and public service delivery.
- Fragmented planning and funding streams delay critical connectivity projects.
- High dependency on external providers for transport and communications services.

Strategic relevance

Connectivity directly impacts all F/S/E/G pillars:

- Financial (F): Lower transaction and logistics costs, boosting economic activity.
- Social (S): Enhanced access to education, healthcare, and family connections.
- Environmental (E): Potential to shift toward more sustainable travel and logistics solutions.
- Governance (G): Digital public services promote transparency, efficiency, and citizen participation.

Recommendations

- Comprehensive connectivity master plan: Develop an integrated infrastructure and mobility plan encompassing air, sea, and digital connectivity.
- Port modernization project: Expand and professionalize port facilities to improve cargo, cruise, and yacht operations.
- Regional aviation strategy: Explore joint investment in small aircraft fleets and airstrip upgrades connecting the northern Caribbean.
- Broadband for all initiative: Establish universal fiber-optic internet access through public-private partnerships, leveraging Dutch and EU funds.
- E-Government platform rollout: Launch an integrated, secure online platform for public services.
- Digital literacy campaigns: Promote digital skills training for all age groups to maximize the benefits of improved internet access.
- Smart mobility infrastructure: Integrate renewable energy solutions (e.g., solar-powered ferry terminals and smart grid-supported airports).
- Resilient and Sustainable Connectivity Solutions: Prioritize climate-resilient infrastructure standards for all new investments.



3.6 Governance

Community input

Governance surfaced as a foundational pillar necessary to support sustainable growth across all other sectors discussed. Participants highlighted the need for enhanced local autonomy, faster and more transparent administrative processes, stronger alignment of public policies with Statia's unique context, and ongoing community engagement mechanisms to build trust and legitimacy.

Participants expressed concerns over the slow implementation of reforms, dependency on external decision-making (especially in critical areas such as education, health, and spatial planning), and the need for Statia's government to better manage migration, land use, and investment attraction.

The community also identified the need for capacity building within local government institutions — improving the skills, resources, and technology available to civil servants, while also ensuring that public service delivery is citizen-centric, efficient, and accountable.

Transparency and participation were major themes. Residents demanded easier access to public information, more inclusive consultation processes, and mechanisms for citizens to co-create policies and monitor their implementation.

Workshop examples

- Statia civic engagement platform: A digital and physical space where residents can submit policy ideas, comment on draft regulations, and participate in public hearings.
- Performance dashboards: Publicly accessible dashboards showing key performance indicators for government departments, budgets, and project timelines.
- Youth governance academies: Programs to train and engage young people in governance processes, fostering a culture of civic responsibility.
- Participatory budgeting: Pilot projects where citizens directly decide on the allocation of part of the public investment budget.

Challenges identified

- Limited local authority over critical policy areas leads to delays and misalignment with local needs.
- Bureaucratic inertia and complex procedures discourage investment and community initiatives.
- Gaps in digital infrastructure and administrative capacities.
- Weak public engagement frameworks limit trust and accountability.
- Migration management policies are not sufficiently tailored to Statia's demographic and economic realities.



Strategic relevance

Governance quality determines the success of initiatives across Financial (F), Social (S), Environmental (E), and Governance (G) dimensions. Effective governance ensures efficient service delivery, enhances citizen trust, supports economic growth, protects the environment, and fosters social cohesion.

Recommendations

- Governance capacity building plan: Invest in training, technology, and institutional strengthening for the island's public administration.
- Local autonomy charter: Negotiate a clear, binding agreement defining expanded local responsibilities, especially in spatial planning, migration, education, and healthcare.
- Transparency framework: Implement public performance dashboards, open data platforms, and regular public reporting.
- Civic engagement mechanisms: Institutionalize citizen panels, participatory budgeting, and digital feedback tools for all major policy areas.
- Statia youth governance academy: Establish leadership programs for youth to nurture future generations of civic leaders.
- Migration management reform: Advocate for Statia-specific migration rules that support targeted labor market needs and safeguard social cohesion.
- Administrative digitization: Roll out e-governance tools that simplify applications, improve service delivery, and enhance internal government efficiency.
- Ethical governance standards: Embed strong codes of conduct, conflict of interest rules, and anti-corruption measures across public institutions.



4. Deep connection to targeted growth policy directions

The findings from the workshops and the strategic aspirations expressed by the community strongly resonate with the "Targeted Growth" report's central themes. However, Sint Eustatius' response goes beyond merely affirming the challenges outlined; it offers expanded perspectives, enriched contextual insights, and proposes ambitious yet practical action pathways.

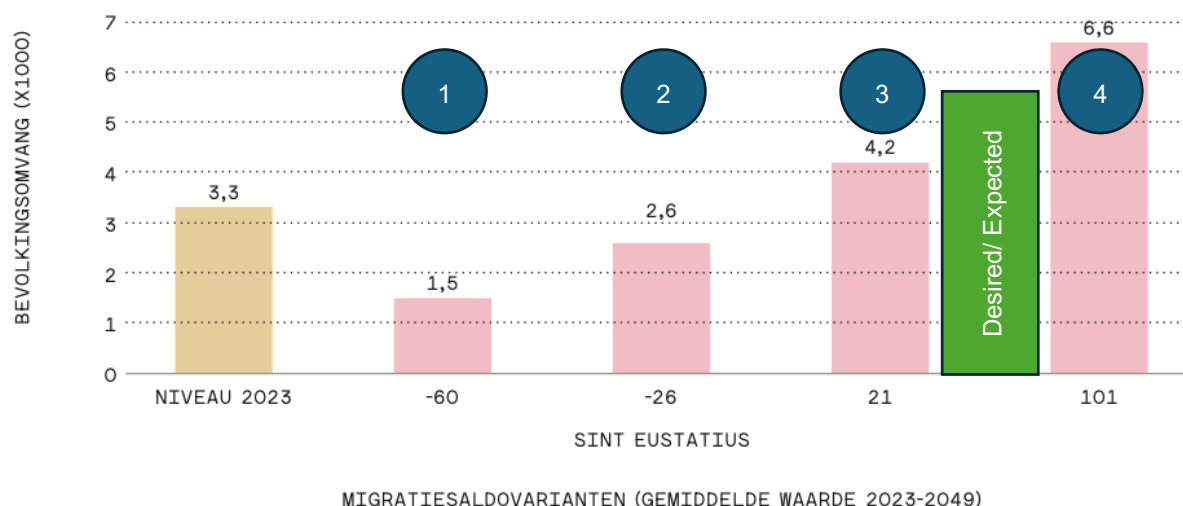
4.1 Response to policy questions from BZK

Scenario Alignment

Four demographic scenarios were presented in the Targeted Growth report for Statia, based on varying assumptions around migration, birth rate, and life expectancy:

1. **Extra Low:** Oil terminal closes; population declines to 1,500.
2. **Low**
3. **Medium:** Continuation of 2011–2022 trend; moderate growth to 4,200.
4. **High:** Strong economic development attracts migration; growth to 6,600.

Statia aligns most with a sustainable growth scenario between the Medium and High pathways, while also recognizing the real risk of the Extra Low scenario. The potential closure of the oil terminal makes economic diversification and workforce migration even more essential. This underlines the importance of robust policies in connectivity, education, spatial planning, and governance.





Current measures in place

Several concrete measures already align with the envisioned scenario:

- The **Sustainable Investment Framework (F/S/E/G)** has been adopted.
- A revised **Spatial Development Plan** (5-year horizon) is in implementation.
- A **major project portfolio** is underway, including:
 - Construction of a new hospital (healthcare).
 - Ferry subsidy agreements together with Saba (connectivity).
 - Proactive housing planning in anticipation of demographic growth.
 - Investing in more centralized governmental buildings to promote more efficient public service delivery

These initiatives are now being brought into alignment with broader strategic frameworks, but coordination across sectors is still in development.

Additional steps needed

To fully realize Statia's growth vision:

- Connectivity (physical and digital) must be strengthened as a foundational enabler.
- Financial tools and backing are needed to scale key initiatives.
- Policy alignment and prioritization must be embedded in all sectors.

Connectivity is not a standalone issue but a multiplier of all other development themes. Improved mobility and broadband access enable healthcare, education, regional trade, and tourism, which are all central to Statia's positioning as a Wellness and Knowledge Hub in the Caribbean.

Demographic integration into policy

Demographic developments are increasingly integrated into local planning instruments. The spatial development plan explicitly accounts for population growth and preemptive housing strategies. However, this integration is still emerging and requires:

- A demographic baseline integrated into all new and revised local policies.
- Planning tools that adapt dynamically to migration and aging trends.



4.2 Alignment with key themes

Ageing

The "Targeted Growth" report accurately identified population ageing as a critical dynamic. Statia's community not only confirmed this concern but emphasized the need to fundamentally shift to a preventive healthcare model, expand local elderly care services, and integrate aging-related planning into spatial and social policy domains. Rather than viewing ageing solely as a burden, Statia envisions becoming a model island for "Active Aging," blending dignity, independence, and community participation.

Actions linked to ageing:

- Expanded local healthcare capacities for elderly needs.
- Elderly-friendly housing designs embedded into zoning revisions.
- Social inclusion programs for elderly citizens, including volunteerism and knowledge transfer schemes.

Migration

Migration management was recognized as a pivotal policy lever in "Targeted Growth." Statia supports a managed, targeted migration policy that attracts skilled labor, entrepreneurs, and families contributing to sustainable growth. However, Statia also demands flexibility from the central government to customize migration frameworks to local realities — simplifying administrative processes and allowing for strategic labor force reinforcement.

Actions linked to migration:

- Tailored migration frameworks for Statia.
- Acceleration of visa and residency processes for priority sectors.
- Return migration programs to attract Statian students and professionals back home.



Public Facilities and Small Scale

The "Targeted Growth" report stressed the importance of public facilities adapted to Statia's small scale. Statia's workshops strongly expanded this view by emphasizing the necessity of hybrid models that integrate digital platforms with physical facilities. This includes digital public services, telemedicine, hybrid education, and virtual civic engagement tools.

Actions linked to small-scale services:

- E-healthcare services.
- E-learning platforms for all age groups.
- E-governance services including digital permitting and citizen feedback systems.

Governance

Statia's response is most emphatic regarding governance. The community voiced that without enhanced local governance autonomy, better resourced and trained civil services, and stronger participatory mechanisms, any targeted growth strategy risks failure. Statia echoes the "Targeted Growth" call for improved governance but extends it into a call for a profound restructuring of power relations, investment in administrative modernization, and robust public accountability systems.

Actions linked to governance:

- Negotiating a local autonomy charter.
- Rolling out public dashboards and transparency mechanisms.
- Implementing civic participation frameworks.

4.3 Expanded Priorities: Connectivity and Digitalization

While "Targeted Growth" mentions connectivity as an enabling factor, Statia's workshops elevated it to a cross-cutting strategic foundation. Air, sea, and digital connectivity are not ancillary; they are essential structural conditions for success across all domains. Furthermore, digitization is seen as a game changer for education, healthcare, governance, and the economy.

Expanded actions:

- Comprehensive broadband coverage.
- Inter-island ferry and airstrip connectivity network.
- Digital transformation strategies across sectors.



4.4 Toward a shared vision for 2050

Finally, Statia's elaboration goes beyond diagnosis: it is about co-creating a vibrant, resilient, self-sufficient island in 2050. Participants articulated a shared ambition: Statia as a "Wellness and Knowledge Hub" in the Caribbean, known for its natural beauty, digital readiness, strong community bonds, sustainable economy, and inclusive society.

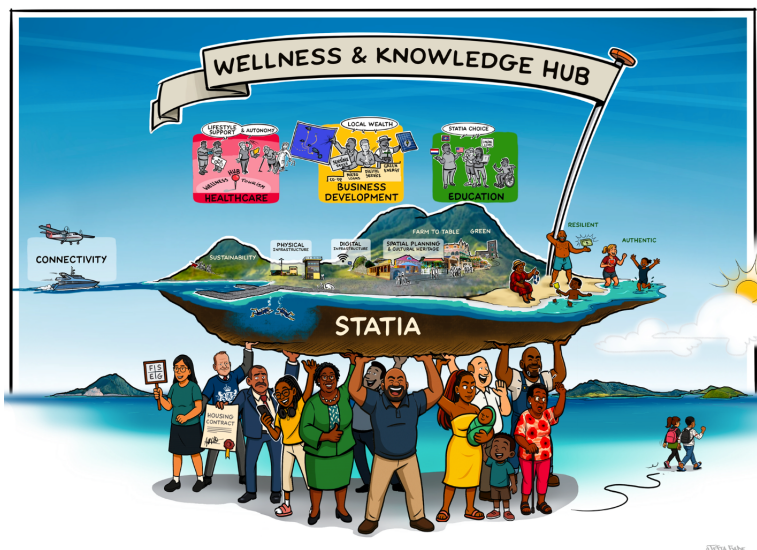
Proposed next step: Launch a visioning process culminating in the "Statia 2050 Roadmap," aligning all investments, policies, and partnerships with this bold aspiration.



5. Possible vision statement 2050 of Sint Eustatius

"Statia 2050: Resilient, Connected, Proud"

Proud of our past. Courageous for our future. United in action.



By 2050, Sint Eustatius will be internationally recognized as a boutique "Wellness and Knowledge Hub" in the Caribbean. Rooted in its rich heritage and vibrant natural environment, Statia will offer:

- A high-quality hybrid education system, preparing lifelong learners and innovators.
- A resilient preventive healthcare model, promoting active aging and holistic wellness.
- A dynamic economy centered around eco-tourism, digital entrepreneurship, and green logistics.
- A sustainable island model, showcasing climate-resilient infrastructure, renewable energy, and eco-preservation.
- A fully connected community, with seamless inter-island mobility and universal broadband access.
- An empowered and transparent governance framework, driven by active citizen participation.

Statia will be known for its strong sense of community, its pioneering spirit in small-island sustainability, and its strategic collaboration with regional and international partners.

The island's story will be one of a community that embraced its scale, turned its challenges into strengths, and built a future where every citizen, visitor, and partner experiences dignity, opportunity, and belonging.



6. The roadmap for Statia would consist of four sequential phases:

1. Foundation phase (2025–2030)

- Invest in core infrastructure: Broadband internet across the island, reliable ferry and air connections, modernized port and basic healthcare upgrades.
- Governance reforms: Achieve enhanced local autonomy (Local Autonomy Charter), implement e-governance tools, and build civil service capacity.
- Community activation: Initiate widespread citizen engagement programs in planning, budgeting, and project monitoring.
- Launch anchor initiatives: Pilot the Statia hybrid academy, establish the preventive health strategy, and kick-start the business development fund.

2. Expansion phase (2030–2040)

- Sectoral diversification: Build the island's niche sectors — eco-tourism, digital services, wellness/healthcare retreats, green logistics.
- Strengthen regional partnerships: Deepen ties with Saba, St. Maarten, and St. Kitts across healthcare, education, and trade.
- Climate adaptation infrastructure: Deploy large-scale resilient infrastructure projects, such as improved roads, water security systems, and sustainable energy grids.
- Human capital development: Grow a new generation of Statian professionals through scholarship programs, youth governance academies, and return migration incentives.

3. Consolidation phase (2040–2045)

- Global branding: Market Statia internationally as a "Wellness and Knowledge Hub" — a destination for education, eco-health tourism, and digital entrepreneurship.
- Strengthen financial resilience: Diversify government revenues through green bonds, regional service exports, and possibly niche sectors inspired by Bermuda.
- Continued civic innovation: Expand participatory governance models and real-time performance accountability.

4. Maturity Phase (2045–2050)

- Self-sufficient and resilient: Statia would function with a high degree of self-reliance in education, healthcare, economic sustenance, and governance.
- Exemplar of sustainable island living: Known regionally and globally for successfully integrating small-scale sustainability with modern quality of life.



Appendix: Thematic Matrix for Statia's 2050 strategy

Theme	Financial (F)	Social (S)	Environmental (E)	Governance (G)
Education	Universal laptop program; Hybrid academy investment.	Inclusive hybrid education; Emotional intelligence focus.	Eco-friendly school infrastructure.	Clear education pathway; Governance of blended systems.
Economy	Business development fund; Tax modernization.	Local production networks; Inclusive entrepreneurship.	Green sector development; Sustainable tourism promotion.	Streamlined regulation; One-stop-shop for businesses.
Healthcare	Cost-reduction via preventive healthcare model.	Health autonomy; Mental health destigmatization.	Infrastructure for active living (parks, sidewalks).	Health policy reforms; Regional health collaborations.
Spatial Planning	Smart land valuation; Affordable housing schemes.	Mixed-use community hubs; Preservation of heritage sites.	Eco-corridors; Sustainable infrastructure projects.	Participatory spatial planning; Digital permit systems.
Connectivity	Port modernization; Broadband-for-all initiative.	Improved access to education and healthcare.	Solar-powered terminals; Smart mobility initiatives.	E-government platform rollout; Integrated mobility plan.
Governance	Efficiency gains via digitalization.	Civic engagement platforms; Participatory budgeting.	Transparency in environmental decisions.	Local Autonomy Charter; Performance dashboards.
Migration	Labor market strengthening; Return migration incentives.	Demographic revitalization; Cultural diversity programs.	Sustainable housing planning for newcomers.	Tailored migration management frameworks.
Aging	Cost-effective elderly care models.	Active Aging programs; Social inclusion initiatives.	Elder-friendly urban design; Climate-resilient housing.	Policy integration of aging into governance planning.
Public Facilities	E-health platforms; Digital public service systems.	Access to quality public services regardless of scale.	Hybrid public spaces (physical + virtual).	Co-creation of public services with communities.
Climate Adaptation	Green bonds financing climate projects.	Community-led climate resilience programs.	Climate-resilient infrastructure; Renewable energy grids.	Climate policy integration into governance frameworks.
Regional Cooperation	Regional procurement alliances; Shared services.	Education, healthcare, and logistics partnerships.	Joint conservation efforts with neighboring islands.	Formalized regional agreements and governance councils.



Appendix: Examples from other Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Barbados: Digital governance and economic diversification

Barbados has invested heavily in digital governance tools, creating an e-government platform that allows citizens to access over 80 services online. They have also prioritized renewable energy and offshore financial services as diversification strategies. Learning for Statia: integrating digital services early can simultaneously improve governance and create new economic sectors.

Seychelles: Marine conservation and blue economy

Seychelles pioneered the Blue Economy concept, investing in sustainable fisheries, eco-tourism, and marine conservation zones. They introduced "Debt-for-Nature" swaps to fund conservation while easing fiscal pressures. Learning for Statia: embedding environmental preservation into the core economy while innovatively securing funding.

Samoa: Community-driven health and education

Samoa successfully developed village-based health programs and decentralized school management structures, improving access and outcomes despite limited national resources. Learning for Statia: leveraging community participation can expand service reach and increase ownership.

Saint Lucia: Regional connectivity strategies

Saint Lucia prioritized regional air and ferry connectivity through public-private partnerships, recognizing that strong regional ties are essential for economic resilience and emergency response. Learning for Statia: fostering regional transport links is vital for overcoming isolation.

Maldives: Climate adaptation and resilient infrastructure

The Maldives has led global efforts in climate adaptation through elevated infrastructure, coral restoration, and green urban design, backed by international climate funds. Learning for Statia: proactive adaptation to climate risks secures both people and economic assets for the long term.

Aruba: Tourism innovation and circular economy

Aruba diversified its tourism sector by promoting eco-tourism, digital nomad programs, and renewable energy. They also launched pilot projects on circular economy principles to reduce waste and imports. Learning for Statia: targeted innovation in tourism and sustainability can create economic resilience and environmental benefits simultaneously.



Bermuda: Insurance hub and financial services innovation

Bermuda has strategically positioned itself as a leading global center for insurance, reinsurance, and financial services. Through regulatory innovation, proactive market development, and investment in professional skills, Bermuda has attracted significant international business, providing a steady economic foundation despite its small size. Learning for Statia: targeted sector specialization, backed by strong regulation and human capital development, can create disproportionate economic resilience and global relevance.