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Miranda Gielen, Faculty of Law

After graduating at the Faculty of Law at the University of Aruba, Miranda Gielen joined the UA as lecturer. Miranda is now Assistant Professor of Private Law and the Faculty of Law's thesis coordinator, and internship coordinator.

Miranda has expertise in Dutch Civil Law. The main focus of her research, however, is Aruban and Dutch Family Law. On the occasion of the revision of the Aruban Civil Code in 2021, Miranda compiled a law book in which she compared the Aruban family law legislation (book 1 Civil Code) with the same legislation of Curaçao, St. Maarten, the Netherlands and the islands of Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius (BES islands).

Miranda Gielen, R.P.J Ritsema (2024). *Recht doen aan het verleden: de erfenis van 'slavennamen' rechtzetten*

As of July 1, 2024, the Netherlands has amended the *Besluit geslachtsnaamswijziging* (Decree on Surname Change) by introducing an additional ground for surname changes. Through this new provision, descendants of enslaved individuals can change their surname easily and (temporarily) free of charge. For the BES islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba), this amendment is expected to take effect on January 1, 2025. Aruba, Curaçao, and Sint Maarten do not (as yet) recognize this additional ground for surname changes.

In this contribution, the authors argue that this provision should also apply to the other Caribbean countries, as the history of slavery is a shared past that connects all the countries of the Kingdom.



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