

# Saint Kitts and Nevis

## Government Policies and Programs to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government of St. Kitts and Nevis has an extensive childcare and early childhood program to prevent children from being withdrawn from school to look after younger siblings.<sup>2147</sup> The government to relieve some of the financial burden of attending school has implemented a school meals program and a school fee subsidy.<sup>2148</sup> The government has also worked with UNICEF to promote children's rights and offer workshops and training for government personnel dealing with children.<sup>2149</sup>

## Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

Statistics on the number of working children under the age of 15 in St. Kitts and Nevis are unavailable. In rural areas, children assist with subsistence agriculture activities on family plots, including livestock farming and vegetable production.<sup>2150</sup> Children, particularly girls, perform domestic labor for their families as well as for other households.<sup>2151</sup>

Pursuant to the Education Act of 1976, education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 16.<sup>2152</sup> In 1997, the gross primary enrollment rate was 97.6 percent, and the net primary enrollment rate was 88.6 percent.<sup>2153</sup> Primary school attendance rates are unavailable for St. Kitts & Nevis. While enrollment rates indicate a level of commitment to education, they do not always reflect children's participation in school.<sup>2154</sup>

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<sup>2147</sup> U.S. Department of State, unclassified telegram no. 1791, September 2001 [hereinafter unclassified telegram 1791].

<sup>2148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2149</sup> *Initial Reports of States Parties Due in 1992*, Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Document CRC/C/3/Add.51 (Geneva, May 5, 1997) [hereinafter *Initial Reports of States Parties*], para. 5(e).

<sup>2150</sup> Unclassified telegram 1791.

<sup>2151</sup> Agriculture, domestic service, and illicit activities have been acknowledged by the government as sectors in which children could find work in high-risk jobs. *See* unclassified telegram 1791.

<sup>2152</sup> Leroy Richards, Labor officer, Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, Department of Labor, interview with USDOL official, November 29, 2001 [hereinafter Richards interview]. *See also* *Initial Reports of States Parties* at para. 40.

<sup>2153</sup> UNESCO, *Education for All: Year 2000 Assessment* (Paris, 2000) [CD-ROM].

<sup>2154</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between education statistics and work, *see Introduction* to this report.

## Child Labor Laws and Enforcement

The Employment of Children Restriction Act prohibits full- or part-time employment for children under 16 years of age.<sup>2155</sup> The same law protects children under the age of 14 from hazardous work situations. to their health and development.<sup>2156</sup> The Constitution prohibits forced labor except when fulfilling a court sentence or during a period of public emergency.<sup>2157</sup> Procurement of women or girls for sexual relations and the abduction of girls under 16 years of age for sexual exploitation are prohibited by the Criminal Law Amendment.<sup>2158</sup>

The Department of Labor in St. Kitts and Nevis is responsible for investigating child labor complaints, although no cases of child labor violations have been brought before the Department to date.<sup>2159</sup> The Government of St. Kitts & Nevis has not ratified ILO Convention 138, but it did ratify ILO Convention 182 on October 12, 2000.<sup>2160</sup>

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<sup>2155</sup> Richards interview. See also *Initial Reports of States Parties* at para. 13.

<sup>2156</sup> Unclassified telegram 1791.

<sup>2157</sup> Constitution of St. Kitts and Nevis, Article 2, 1983, at <http://www.georgetown.edu/LatAmerPolitical/Constitutions/Kitts/stkitts-nevis.html> on 10/24/01.

<sup>2158</sup> Criminal Law Amendment Act, Chapter 19, Articles 2-4, 6, as cited in the Protection Project Database at <http://www.protectionproject.org>

<sup>2159</sup> Unclassified telegram 1791.

<sup>2160</sup> ILOLEX database: Saint Kitts and Nevis at <http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/newratframeE.htm> on 10/25/01.

*NOTE: Hard copies of all Web citations are on file.*