

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Geography

Location: Caribbean, islands in the Caribbean Sea, about one-third of the way from Puerto Rico to Trinidad and Tobago

Area:

total area: 269 sq km

land area: 269 sq km

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 135 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 24 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: subtropical tempered by constant sea breezes; little seasonal temperature variation; rainy season (May to November)

Terrain: volcanic with mountainous interiors

Natural resources: negligible

Land use:

arable land: 22%

permanent crops: 17%

meadows and pastures: 3%

forest and woodland: 17%

other: 41%

Environment:

natural hazards: hurricanes (July to October)

People

Population: 40,992 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 35% (female 7,072; male 7,430)

15-64 years: 57% (female 11,784; male 11,756)

65 years and over: 8% (female 1,729; male 1,221) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.85% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 23.49 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 9.56 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -5.39 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 19.4 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 66.51 years

male: 63.51 years

female: 69.69 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.56 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Kittsian(s), Nevisian(s)

adjective: Kittsian, Nevisian

Ethnic divisions: black African

Religions: Anglican, other Protestant sects, Roman Catholic

Languages: English

Literacy:

total population: 97%

male: 97%

female: 98%

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis

conventional short form: Saint Kitts and Nevis

former: Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis

Type: constitutional monarchy

Capital: Basseterre

Independence: 19 September 1983 (from UK)

National holiday: Independence Day, 19 September (1983)

Constitution: 19 September 1983

Legal system: based on English common law

Flag: divided diagonally from the lower hoist side by a broad black band bearing two white five-pointed stars; the black band is edged in yellow; the upper triangle is green, the lower triangle is red

Economy

Overview: The economy has traditionally depended on the growing and processing of sugarcane. Tourism and export-oriented manufacturing have begun to assume larger roles. Most food is imported.

Industries: sugar processing, tourism, cotton, salt, copra, clothing, footwear, beverages

Agriculture: accounts for 17% of GDP; cash crop - sugarcane; subsistence crops - rice, yams, vegetables, bananas; fishing potential not fully exploited

Illicit drugs: transshipment point for South American drugs destined for the US

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 58 km on Saint Kitts for sugarcane

Highways:

total: 300 km

Ports: Basseterre, Charlestown

Airports:
total: 2

Defence Forces

Branches: Royal Saint Kitts and Nevis Police Force, Coast Guard