Saint Kitts and Nevis

In 2011, Saint Kitts and Nevis made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. While Saint Kitts and Nevis does not appear to have a widespread child labor problem, children who work as domestic servants may be vulnerable to worst forms of abuses. In addition, children ages 16 and 17 appear to lack legal protection from employment in hazardous conditions. Despite these minimal problems, the Government established the National Advisory Board for the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labor to oversee efforts to provide greater protections to the children of Saint Kitts and Nevis. Children in Saint Kitts and Nevis continue to engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in domestic service.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	Unavailable
Primary Completion Rate		88.7

Sources:
Primary completion rate: *Data from 2010, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012.(1)*

All other data: *Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis.(2)*

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

While there is no evidence to suggest it is a widespread problem, children in Saint Kitts and Nevis may be engaged in the worst forms of child labor, particularly in domestic service.(3) Child domestic labor may involve long hours of work and may expose children to risks of physical and sexual exploitation from their employers.(4)

Limited evidence suggests that there have been isolated occurrences of child prostitution.(3)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act and the Employment of Children (Restriction) Ordinance set the minimum age for employment at 16, including employment that is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the employed child. Carrying heavy loads or working on ships or in industrial undertakings fall into this category.(5) Work that constitutes industrial undertakings is defined in the Employment of Children (Restriction) Ordinance and includes mining, construction and manufacturing. However, these prohibitions do not apply to family businesses, and children ages 16 and 17 appear to lack legal protection from employment in hazardous conditions.(5)

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	16
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	16
	Compulsory Education Age	16
	Free Public Education	Yes

The Constitution explicitly prohibits forced or slave labor.(6) Trafficking is also prohibited and criminalized by the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Bill.(7, 8)

A person who procures children for prostitution may be prosecuted under the Probation and Child Welfare Board Act. The Act also prohibits the infliction of non-accidental injury on a child by a caretaker, including sexual abuse or activities of a sexual nature.(9)

In November, the Government moved a draft amendment to the Labor Ordinance regarding the worst forms of child labor to the consultative phase with stakeholders from civil society. The amendment would prohibit the sale and trafficking of children, as well as the use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution, the production of pornography, pornographic performances and illicit activities.(10, 11) Until this amendment is adopted, the legal framework does not protect children against certain types of commercial sexual exploitation, such as the use of children in pornography and sale of children for prostitution. The Government also planned to move a list of hazardous occupations to the consultative phase, but research did not indicate whether it did so.(10, 11)

The Government's military force is jointly patrolled with the police under the Police Act of 2003. The minimum age for recruitment to the Government's security force is 18 and there is no compulsory service.(10, 12)

The Education Act of 2005 makes schooling free and compulsory until age 16, and attendance is strictly enforced by school truancy officers.(5, 11)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

In 2011, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis created the National Advisory Board for the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labor (NABEHCL). The Labor Commissioner is the designated chair of the NABEHCL, which comprises members from other government agencies and representatives from workers' groups, employers' groups and other civil society stakeholders.(3) The NABEHCL is charged with ensuring that children under age 16 are not employed and that children ages 16 to 18 are not engaged in hazardous occupations. The NABEHCL is responsible for creating a National Consensus Policy on child labor, updating current legislation and relevant penalties, creating and promoting awareness of a list of hazardous occupations by mid-2013, and giving special power to the Labor Commissioner to enforce the law.(13) Research did not identify whether the NABEHCL is fully funded or operational.

The Ministry of Labor (MOL) is the lead agency responsible for the enforcement of laws regarding the worst forms of child labor.(3) In 2011, the MOL employed eight labor inspectors responsible for investigating all labor violations, including those related to children. There were no reported complaints, inspections, prosecutions or violations related to the worst forms of child labor in 2011.(3)

The police force takes the lead in any trafficking investigation and refers suspected cases of child trafficking to the Ministry of Social Development, which oversees child abuse cases.(3)

The Government is drafting a child protection protocol on the standard procedure for the protection of victims of the worst forms of child labor. The Government scheduled consultations with stakeholders for input on the draft protocol in 2011.(10) Research did not identify whether the protocol was finalized and implemented during the reporting period.

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Government's White Paper on Education Development and Policy 2009-2019 outlines the Ministry of Education's developments and policies, including improving both access and quality of education for all children.(14) The Government holds monthly assessment meetings to monitor the impact of the plan; however, according to a Ministry of Education official, neither working children nor dropout rates are major concerns in Saint Kitts and Nevis.(15)

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Ministry of Education offers vocational educational opportunities to children who are failing in the public schools.(13) The Government also has programs that provide for food vouchers, school fees, textbooks, uniforms, supplies, a school meal program, and Project Viola, a program that provides monetary assistance to teenage mothers to pursue higher education.(10, 13) The question of whether these programs have an impact on child labor in domestic service does not appear to have been addressed.

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in Saint Kitts and Nevis:

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Amend current laws to increase the minimum age for hazardous employment to age 18.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Extend labor provisions to cover children working in family businesses.	2011
	Adopt a list that would define work that is hazardous for children.	2009, 2010, 2011
	Finalize and adopt the draft legislation to prohibit the sale and trafficking of children, the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, production of pornography or for pornographic performances and for illicit activities.	2011
Coordination and Enforcement	Finalize and implement the child protection protocol.	2011
Policies and Social Programs	Assess the impact that existing policies and programs may have on addressing children in domestic service.	2010, 2011

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1. UNESCO Institute for Statistics. *Gross intake ration to the last grade of primary. Total.*; accessed May 7, 2012; http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx?SPSLanguage=EN. Data provided is the gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary school. This measure is a proxy measure for primary completion. For more information, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report.
2. UCW. *Analysis of Child Economic Activity and School Attendance Statistics from National Household or Child Labor Surveys*. February 2, 2012. Reliable statistical data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics on children's work in general are reported in this chart, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on sources used, the definition of working children and other indicators used in this report, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report.
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4. International Labour Office. *Children in Hazardous Work: What We Know, What We Need to Do*. Geneva, International Labour Organization; 2011. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_155428.pdf. While country-specific information on the dangers children face in domestic work is not available, research studies and other reports have documented the dangerous nature of tasks in domestic work and their accompanying occupational exposures, injuries and potential health consequences to children working in the sector.
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14. Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis. *White Paper on Education and Development, 2009-2019: Raising the Standard, Maximising Resources, Aligning with Best Practices - Promoting Success for All*; March 2009. http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Saint%20Christopher%20and%20Nevis/St_Kitts_Nevis_White_Paper_Ed_Development_and_Policy_2009-2019.pdf.
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