

Observatory on Strategies and Mechanisms for Effective Public Management

Saint Kitts & Nevis

September 2015



General Information

General Information

By Country: Indicators on Public Management

1. The Commonwealth:

[Local Government Forum](#): The Forum presents the key facts on local government organization and legislation in Saint Kitts and Nevis.

2. The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

[General Information](#): Presents general information about Saint Kitts and Nevis

3. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

[Governance Indicators Database](#): Presents indicators and statistics about Saint Kitts and Nevis

4. The World Bank (WB)

[World Development Indicators](#): Presents indicators and statistics about Saint Kitts and Nevis

[Doing Business](#): The World Bank and International Finance Corporation compile statistics and indicators on the "Ease of Doing Business" in Saint Kitts and Nevis. Saint Kitts and Nevis is ranked 121 out of 185 economies per indicator, there is a list of the economy's distance to frontier (DTF) measure, and there are additional tables summarizing key indicators for each topic and benchmarked against regional and high-income economy (OECD) averages.

5. The United Nations (UN)

[World Statistics Pocketbook](#): Contains a series of economic, social, trade profile and environmental statistics and indicators.

By Country: Studies and Investigations

1. Organization of American States (OAS)

[Public Management Guiding Institutions in the Americas](#) (2014) Organization of American States.

Public Budget

General Information

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Consolidated Fund is the primary source in which all revenues or other monies raised or received by the State should flow into ([Section 69 of the Constitution](#)).

It is noteworthy that the [SKN Constitution](#) dedicates its [Chapter VI](#) to the Finance topic, including the core principles related to the withdrawals from Consolidated Fund; the authorization of expenditure by appropriation law or in advance of it; among others.

Likewise, the main legal instruments regulating the Public Budget is the Finance Administration Act of 2007, which provide for the management and control of public money, the operation and control of the Consolidated Fund and for the authorization of expenditures, among others.

In that regard, the entity responsible for the drafting and implementation of the Public Budget, as well as for its supervision is the [Ministry of Finance](#), whose main objectives are:

- Maintaining a sustainable fiscal environment
- Ensuring responsible fiscal policies across government
- Enabling a fair and competitive tax environment

Professionalized Civil Service

Introduction

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, Public Service holds the fundamental roles to provide and administer the public services for which the Government is responsible with integrity, honesty and impartiality; and to assist the formulation of the policies of the Government by the provision of objective, honest, comprehensive, accurate and timely advice (Section 5 of the [Public Service Conduct and Ethics of Officers Code n. 9 of 2014](#)).

Public Service in Saint Kitts and Nevis is regulated by the following acts:

- 1) The [Constitution of 1983](#), whose Chapter VII is dedicated to the creation and composition of the Public Service Commission;
- 2) The [Public Service Act n. 19 of July 20th, 2011](#) that provides for the structure, organization and management of the Public Service;
- 3) The [Public Service Recruitment and Appointment of Officers Code n. 8 of 2014](#);
- 4) The [Public Service Standing Orders n. 11 of 2014](#), which regulates salaries, leaves and other specific matters on the topic; and
- 5) The [Public Service Conduct and Ethics of Officers Code n. 9 of 2014](#).

The main entities responsible for the management and supervision of the legal framework and the civil service are: 1) The Public Service Commission, created by the [1983 Constitution](#); 2) The Head of the Public Service; and 3) The Committee of Permanent Secretaries.

Institutional Framework

The [1983 Constitution of Saint Kitts and Nevis](#) dedicates its Chapter VII to the Public Service and establishes the creation of a Public Service Commission, composed by the chairperson and not less than two nor more than four other members ([Section 77](#)). The main function of the Public Service Commission is to make recommendations to the Governor-General on matters like appointment of officers.

Likewise, the [2011 Public Service Act](#) provides for the creation of the Head of the Public Service, appointed by the Governor-General. The Head of the Public Service acts on the recommendation of the Commission and is responsible for the management and organization of the Public Service. His/Her main functions and powers are ([Section 4](#)):

- To request for any information from a Department of Government concerning the activities of that Department;
- To conduct such inspections or investigations and make or receive such reports as he or she may consider necessary or as the Governor-General may direct.

Finally, the Public Service Act created also the Committee of Permanent Secretaries, composed by the Head of the Civil Service and all Permanent Secretaries of the Government and whose main functions are (Section 5):

- advise the Minister on such areas of the management of the Public Service as the Minister may require, and on the policies necessary to administer and develop the Public Service;
- consider and make recommendations on any specific matter referred to it by the Minister;
- co-ordinate the functions of the Public Service that relate to the management of the Public Service to ensure that there exists the capacity of Government to provide a modern and efficient Public Service;
- expedite the decision making process particularly in matters that require the involvement of several departments of Government;
- submit to the Minister, not later than three months after the end of each financial year, a report outlining the activities of the Committee; and
- generally create a working environment that is conducive to increased productivity and greater job satisfaction in the public Service.

Strategies and Mechanisms

Entrance in the Civil Service

The [Public Service Recruitment and Appointment of Officers Code n. 8 of 2014](#) regulates the entrance to the Public Service of Saint Kitts and Nevis, which is based on the principles of merit; impartiality; and the consideration of the highest standards of integrity, seniority, and experience (Section 7).

Vacancies must be advertized or published first within the Public Service for a period of two (2) weeks. Then, they have to be published within the Federation for another period of two (2) weeks; and thereafter may be advertized outside of the country.

The advertisings must include the following information (Section 8):

- The qualifications required;

- The duties, functions and responsibilities;
- The terms and conditions of service;
- The descriptions of the skills, competencies, experiences and personal qualities required;
- The nature of the procedure of the selection process.

Disengagement from the Public Service

According to [Section 39 of the Public Service Act of 2011](#), where a public officer holds a permanent appointment, such officer's appointment can only be terminated on any one of the following reasons:

- a) Retirement on medical grounds;
- b) On voluntary retirement;
- c) On compulsory retirement;
- d) Abandonment;
- e) On dismissal in consequence of disciplinary proceedings;
- f) On resignation without benefits payable under any enactment providing for the grant of pensions, gratuities or compensation;
- g) On abolition of the office.

Likewise, where a public officer holds a temporary appointment, the appointment can only be terminated on any one of the following reasons:

- a) On the expiry or other termination of an appointment for a specific period;
- b) When the public office being held is of a temporary nature and is no longer necessary;
- c) On the termination of the appointment in the case of a public officer on probation;
- d) On the termination of the appointment in the case of a public officer holding a non-pensionable office with no service in a pensionable office;
- e) On the termination of the appointment in the public interest;
- f) On dismissal in consequence of disciplinary proceedings;
- g) For ill health in that the public officer is incapable, by reason of infirmity of mind or body, of discharging the duties of his or her office, and such infirmity is likely to be permanent;
- h) On abandonment of office.

Decentralization

General Information

St Kitts and Nevis is a constitutional monarchy and sovereign democratic federal state, with Queen Elizabeth II at its head, who is represented by a governor-general. The governor-general acts on the advice of the prime minister, who is the leader of the majority in the National Assembly and, together with a cabinet, conducts the affairs of state.

The country is divided into the two (2) islands, each one having its own legislature, premier and administration. The National Assembly is unicameral and has 14 members; while the Nevis Island Assembly has five members elected by universal suffrage.

With regards to local structure, St Kitts and Nevis is divided into around 15 parishes, the majority of which are located in St Kitts. The parishes of St Kitts and Nevis could not be considered as regional or local governments; but more as administrative structures of the federal government. The exception is the parishes of Nevis which combine to form a single island authority, which acts as a local government within the federation.

Information and Communications Technology

General Information

In the framework of the government's efforts to build ICT capacities throughout the island, a [strategic plan for ICT](#) was formulated. The main objectives established in 2006 were "greater efficiency and transparency in the public sector; enhanced access to public information by citizens; greater access to technology, training and communications for all members of the community with special emphasis being paid to the disadvantaged; and economic diversification"¹. The Plan foresaw the creation of the Information and Communications Technology Unit (ICTU) under the direction of the Ministry of Finance, Sustainable Development, Information and Technology, currently [Ministry of Finance, Sustainable Development, National Security, People Empowerment and Constituency Empowerment](#).

The Government of Saint Kitts & Nevis identified five main branches to develop its ICT policy:

- **Building the information infrastructure:** This strategy seeks to establish the needed conditions to deliver e-government, e-health, e-commerce and e-learning services to citizens. In order to do that, the government identified some areas in which Saint Kitts & Nevis needs to work. The aforementioned areas are on the one hand, the improvement of the fixed and mobile lines penetration. On the other hand, the improvement of the Internet access, which is relatively below compared to the region. In addition, the country has already taken some steps towards affordable and universal access to telecommunications by the issue of the Telecommunications Act;
- **Enabling the policy and legal environment:** The strategic plan recognizes the regulatory and legal gap that the country has in relation to ICT legislation. In this sense, it established the necessity to issue and enforce laws regarding cybercrime, online transactions and digital signature. Likewise, it is necessary to update laws related to intellectual property rights (IPR), consumer protection, child protection, and privacy laws;
- **Developing ICT human resources and building capacity (information society):** This strategy seeks to enlarge and enhance SKN citizens' capacities to use and develop the ICT sector. Therefore, the Government planned the implementation of "Community Access Points (CAPs) [that] are community or public buildings where computers, color printers and scanners are installed for persons in the community to use either free of charge or for relatively low costs"². Additionally, the organization of cultural activities regarding ICT, the formulation of guides, the provision of information, and the inclusion of the ICT in schools.

¹ Ministry of Finance, Sustainable Development, Information and Technology. 2006. "National Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Plan" [online]. Available at: <http://www.caribbeanelections.com/eDocs/strategy/kn_strategy/kn_National ICT Strategic Plan S KN 2006.pdf>.

² Ibid.

- **Modernizing government and delivering citizen services electronically:** It deals with the necessity to use ICT to help the State to deliver services to citizens. In that sense, a uniformed policy on Government's information publication and disclosure is needed. Therefore, it plans the formulation of a government policy, which mission would be:
 - a) "Improved efficiency and effectiveness of Government organizations in Saint Kitts and Nevis thereby making each Government organization's budget go farther;
 - b) Ease and accessibility of Government information and services for citizens, thus creating a citizen-friendly Government;
 - c) Creating a business-friendly environment by improving the interface between Government and business;
 - d) Promoting transparency, inclusion and general good governance;
 - e) Developing ICT competence among Government employees to improve productivity and customer service"³

- **Leveraging ICT for economic and social development through public-private partnerships**

Gender Perspective

General Information

The Government of Saint Kitts is making important efforts to ensure the transversalization of gender perspective in the planning and implementation of public policies.

At the international level, the country is State Party to several international conventions on women's right, including: 1. [The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Convention of Belém Do Pará"](#), signed on March 17, 1995 and its Inter-American Mechanism (MESECVI); and 2. [The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#), signed on April 25, 1985.

The entity responsible for the development of public policies related to gender equality is the Department of Gender Affairs Division of the Ministry of Social Development, Community and Gender Affairs.

Quality of public services

General Information

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is making great efforts in order to guarantee the highest quality standards of public services to all citizens.

In that regard, the government institution responsible for ensuring the highest quality of the country's products and services is the [Saint Kitts and Nevis Bureau of Standards \(SKNBS\)](#), that has the responsibility of protecting the environment, health and safety of consumers and whose activities focus on preparing, promoting and generally adopting standards on a national, regional or international basis relating to structures, commodities, materials, articles and other things

³³ Ibid.

offered to the public commercially. Likewise, the SKNBS is the institution representing the country to the [CARICOM Regional Organization for Standard and Quality \(CROSO\)](#), which is the CARICOM entity responsible for promoting efficiency and competitive production in goods and services.

To that end, as part of the [Caribbean Community \(CARICOM\)](#), Saint Kitts and Nevis signed and ratified the [Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas Establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy](#) of July 5th 2001, an international legal instrument whose main objectives are ([Art. 6](#)):

- a) Improved standards of living and work;
- b) Full employment of labour and other factors of production;
- c) Accelerated, co-ordinated and sustained economic development and convergence;
- d) Expansion of trade and economic relations with third States;
- e) Enhanced levels of international competitiveness;
- f) Organization for increased production and productivity;
- g) The achievement of a greater measure of economic leverage and effectiveness of Member States in dealing with third States, groups of States and entities of any description;
- h) Enhanced co-ordination of Member States' foreign and foreign economic policies; and
- i) enhanced functional co-operation, including: 1. more efficient operation of common services and activities for the benefit of its peoples; 2. accelerated promotion of greater understanding among its peoples and the advancement of their social, cultural and technological development; 3. intensified activities in areas such as health, education, transportation, telecommunications.

Citizen Participation in Public Management

General Information

Saint Kitts and Nevis has committed to increasingly engage civil society in governance, and in the discussion of developmental issues and policies. As a CARICOM member, the country is a signatory state to the [Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community](#).

This legal instrument contains the dispositions regarding the protection of rights and the empowerment of communities to participate in public management among the Caribbean States. In terms of the state's obligations regarding governance and citizen empowerment, the article XVII provides that "the States shall adopt and implement all appropriate measures to ensure good governance which is just, open and accountable"⁴. Then, it includes that states should recognize "that integral to the concept of good governance are the complementary roles of government, the social partners and the citizenry"⁵.

In addition, on the civil society side, the article XXIV recognizes that "the people have an important role to play in the pursuit and maintenance of good governance. Accordingly, the

⁴ CARICOM. "Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community" [online]. Available at: [http://www.caricom.org/jsp/secretariat/legal_instruments/chartercivilsocietyresolution.jsp?menu=secretariat#Good Governance](http://www.caricom.org/jsp/secretariat/legal_instruments/chartercivilsocietyresolution.jsp?menu=secretariat#Good%20Governance)

⁵ Ibid.



States shall build awareness, engender support and establish programs to foster sound values and positive attitudes and shall enhance individual and institutional capacities to secure objectives”⁶.

⁶ Ibid.