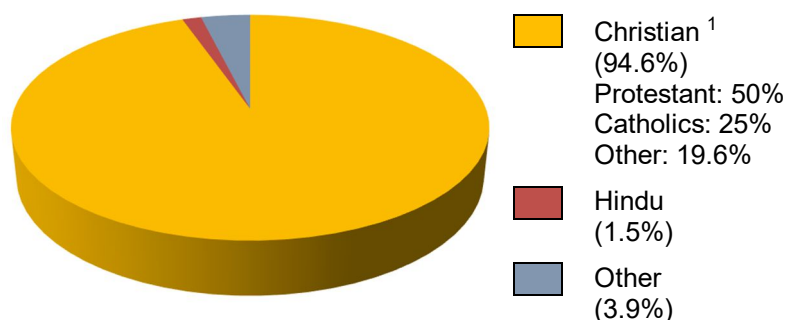
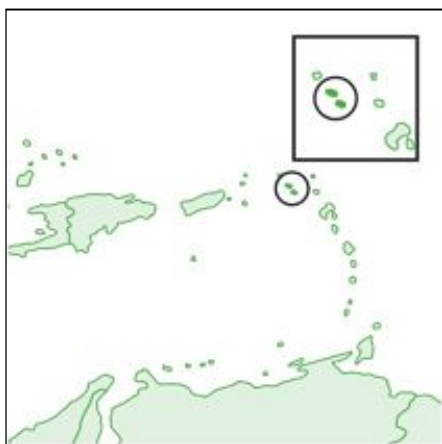


# SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS



<b>Area:</b> 269 km <sup>2</sup>	<b>Population<sup>2</sup>:</b> 52,000	<b>Political system:</b> Monarchy	<b>Major Language(s):</b> English
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## Legal framework on freedom of religion and actual application

The preamble of the constitution states that the nation has been established on the belief in Almighty God.

It states that everyone has fundamental rights and freedoms, irrespective of race, place of origin, birth, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, such as, inter alia, freedom of conscience, expression and association. The right to conscientious objection to military service is recognised.

No-one can be denied the right to enjoy freedom of conscience, which includes freedom of thought and religion, freedom to change one's religion or belief and to manifest one's belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance, either individually or collectively, in public or in private.

Every religious community is entitled, at its own expense, to establish and manage their own places of education.

No one shall be compelled to take an oath that is contrary to their religion or belief or in a manner that is contrary to their religion or belief.<sup>3</sup>

## Incidents

According to an October 2014 religious freedom report by the United Nations Agency for Refugees, the Rastafarian community experienced discrimination in access to school enrolment. The report also says that Rastafarians are concerned about a government ban on the use of marijuana for religious rituals, and extra scrutiny from police and immigration officials. They are also concerned by the fact that they are sometimes required to remove their head wraps for identification photos. They also complained about daily societal discrimination, including when they apply for jobs.<sup>4</sup>

## Prospects for freedom of religion

There have been no cases of intolerance, discrimination or persecution, even though a report in late 2014 refers to complaints by Rastafarians about the discrimination they face in society. This corresponds to the findings of the previous religious freedom report. Since no incidents have been reported in the past few years, one might conclude that prospects for freedom of religion have improved.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.thearda.com/internationalData/countries/Country\\_189\\_1.asp](http://www.thearda.com/internationalData/countries/Country_189_1.asp) accessed on 16 March 2016.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-20032548> accessed on 9 May 2016.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sknvibes.com/politics/constitution.cfm> accessed on 30 April 2016.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.refworld.org/country,,,KNA,,5621055a4,0.html> accessed on 16 March 2016.