

New Zealand

Type of Government: Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy

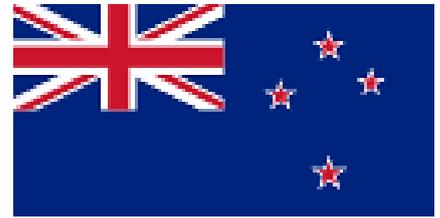
Prime Minister: John Key (since 2008)

Capital City: Wellington

Ideology: Capitalist, democratic

Region: Asia-Pacific

Neighbours: Australia



DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Population:** 4.5 million.
- **Religion:** Predominantly Christian (44.3%) but it is one of the most secular societies in the world.
- **Age:** Life expectancy is 80.93 years with a 0.83% population growth rate
- **Ethnicities:** 74.0% European, 14.9% Maori, 11.8% Asian, 7.4% Pacific peoples, 2.9% Other
- **Language:** English and Maori.

ECONOMY

- New Zealand is heavily dependent on international trade, particularly in agricultural products. Exports account for a high 24 percent of its output, making New Zealand vulnerable to international commodity prices and global economic slowdowns.
- The service sector is the largest sector in the economy, followed by manufacturing and construction and then farming and raw material extraction.

Exports

- Its principal export industries are agriculture, horticulture, fishing, forestry and mining, which make up about half of the country's exports.
- Its major export partners are Australia, United States, Japan, China, and the United Kingdom.

Imports

- Include: machinery and equipment, vehicles, aircraft, petroleum, electronics, textiles, and plastics.
- **Major Import Partners:** China 16.4%, Australia 15.2%, US 9.3%, Japan 6.5%, Singapore 4.8%, Germany 4.4%

MILITARY

Size: The New Zealand Defence Force has three branches: the Royal New Zealand Navy, the New Zealand Army and the Royal New Zealand Air Force. New Zealand's national defence needs are modest because of the unlikelihood of direct attack, although it does have a global presence.

Deployment: In addition to Vietnam and the two world wars, New Zealand fought in the Korean War, the Second Boer War, the Malayan Emergency, the Gulf War and the Afghanistan War. It has contributed forces to several regional and global peacekeeping missions, such as those in Cyprus, Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Sinai, Angola, Cambodia, the Iran–Iraq border, Bougainville, East Timor, and the Solomon Islands.

POLITICS

Domestic Politics

- New Zealand is identified as one of the world's most stable and well-governed nations. As of 2011, the country was ranked fifth in the strength of its democratic institutions and first in government transparency and lack of corruption. New Zealand has a high level of civic participation, with 79% voter turnout during the most recent elections, compared to an OECD average of 72%. Furthermore, 67% of New Zealanders say they trust their political institutions, far higher than the OECD average of 56%.

Foreign Policy Concerns

- The foreign relations of New Zealand are oriented chiefly toward developed democratic nations and emerging Pacific economies. The country's major political parties have generally agreed on the broad outlines of foreign policy, and the current coalition government has been active in promoting free trade, nuclear disarmament, and arms control.
- New Zealand was a founding member of the United Nations in 1945. New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser felt that in order for New Zealand to be secure in the South Pacific, it need to align itself with major world powers like the United States through some kind of organisation that could guarantee small powers a say in world affairs.
- In the past, New Zealand's geographic isolation and its agricultural economy's general prosperity minimised public interest in international affairs. However, growing global trade and other international economic events have made New Zealanders increasingly aware of their country's dependence on unstable overseas markets. New Zealand is a strong advocate of free trade, especially in agricultural products.



More Information

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand

CIA: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nz.html>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15357770>

Latest news from the New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/asia/index.html>

the Economist <http://www.economist.com/news/world-week/21643226-politics-week>

the Guardian <http://www.theguardian.com/world/asia>