



NEW ZEALAND AOTEAROA (Maori)

Area: 103,483 sq. mi. (75th Colorado); Population: 5million (120th)
Official languages: English, Māori and New Zealand Sign Language
Religion: 49% No Religion, 37% Christian, 14% Other
GDP (PPP) \$ 193b GDP Per capita (PPP) \$41,000 (29th)
Human Development Index: .921 (14th very high)
Life expectancy: 80.2 Male 84 Female
Government: Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarch
Monarch: Elizabeth II; Governor General: Patsy Reddy
Prime Minister: Jacinda Ardern (since 2017; re-elected 2020)
Ethnic Groups: European: 70.2%; Māori: 16.5%; Other: 25.9%
Organizations: UN, OECD, ANZUZ, Commonwealth, ASEAN+6, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Pacific Community, Pacific Island Forum, ICC.



The Polynesian Maori reached New Zealand sometime between A.D. 1250 and 1300. It was the last large land mass to be settled by humans. In 1840, Māori Rangatira (hereditary chiefs) signed the Treaty of Waitangi with the Crown. Between 1840s - 1870s the New Zealand Wars over land were fought as many Māori were less willing to sell their land to European colonists and died defending it. Most of those killed were Māori, and the land of many survivors was subsequently confiscated. In 1907, the British colony of New Zealand became an independent dominion. NZ supported the UK militarily in both world wars. The country gained full independence in 1947. In recent years, the NZ government has sought to address Treaty violations and many have been settled by land and monetary compensation.

New Zealand is comprised of two main islands (North and South Island) and around 600 smaller islands. South Island is divided along its length by the Southern Alps. Being 45 degrees south of the equator it enjoys a temperate climate. Its flag includes the Southern Cross. Being near the International Date Line, New Zealanders are the first to see the sunrise – every day. They are often referred to as “Kiwis” after their National Symbol and Icon – a flightless bird native to their country. The kiwi bird itself is a taonga (treasure) to Maori, who have strong cultural, spiritual and historic associations with kiwi.

New Zealand is ranked 4th in the strength of its democratic institutions and first in government transparency and lack of corruption. In 2020, 81.54% of enrolled voters turned out. New Zealand has Parliament with 72 members directly elected in 65 single-seat constituencies and 7 Maori constituencies by simple majority vote and 48 directly elected by closed party-list proportional representation vote. New Zealanders cast two votes: one for their member and one for their party.

US-New Zealand relations weakened following protests over the Vietnam War and other issues. Despite the US suspension of the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, US) obligations, the treaty remains in effect between New Zealand and Australia.

New Zealand’s export partners include: China 28.8%, Australia 13.6%, US 9.4%, and Japan 6%. Its import partners include: China, Australia and the U.S.

Fun Facts:

In 2017 New Zealand won the Americas Sailing Cup

New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary was first man confirmed up Mt. Everest Summit.

There are 5.6 sheep for every person in New Zealand.

New Zealand was the backdrop for The Lord of the Rings Trilogy.

Operatic diva, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa is of Maori and European descent.