

New Zealand

Geography

Location: Oceania, islands in the South Pacific Ocean, southeast of Australia

Area:

total area: 268,680 sq km

land area: 268,670 sq km

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 15,134 km

Maritime claims:

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: temperate with sharp regional contrasts

Terrain: predominately mountainous with some large coastal plains

Natural resources: natural gas, iron ore, sand, coal, timber, hydropower, gold, limestone

Land use:

arable land: 2%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 53%

forest and woodland: 38%

other: 7%

Irrigated land: 2,800 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: deforestation; soil erosion; native flora and fauna

hard-hit by species introduced from outside

natural hazards: earthquakes are common, though usually not severe

Note: about 80% of the population lives in cities

People

Population: 3,407,277 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 23% (female 381,027; male 401,285)

15-64 years: 65% (female 1,109,402; male 1,111,079)

65 years and over: 12% (female 234,339; male 170,145) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.52% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 15.14 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 8.03 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -1.87 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 8.6 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 76.65 years
male: 73.08 years
female: 80.42 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.99 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: New Zealander(s)

adjective: New Zealand

Ethnic divisions: European 88%, Maori 8.9%, Pacific Islander 2.9%,
other 0.2%

Religions: Anglican 24%, Presbyterian 18%, Roman Catholic 15%,
Methodist 5%, Baptist 2%, other Protestant 3%, unspecified or
none 33% (1986)

Languages: English (official), Maori

Literacy:

total population: 99%

Government

Names:

conventional short form: New Zealand

Type: parliamentary democracy

Capital: Wellington

Independence: 26 September 1907 (from UK)

National holiday: Waitangi Day, 6 February (1840) (Treaty of Waitangi established British sovereignty)

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: blue with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant with four red five-pointed stars edged in white centered in the outer half of the flag; the stars represent the Southern Cross constellation

Economy

Industries: food processing, wood and paper products, textiles, machinery, transportation equipment, banking and insurance, tourism, mining

Agriculture: accounts for about 9% of GDP and about 11% of the work force; livestock predominates - wool, meat, dairy products all export earners; crops - wheat, barley, potatoes, pulses, fruits, vegetables; surplus producer of farm products; fish catch reached a record 503,000 metric tons in 1988

Transportation

Railroads:
total: 4,716 km

Highways:

total: 92,648 km

Inland waterways: 1,609 km; of little importance to transportation

Pipelines: petroleum products 160 km; natural gas 1,000 km;
condensate (liquified petroleum gas - LPG) 150 km

Ports: Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Tauranga, Wellington

Airports:

total: 102

Defence Forces

Branches: New Zealand Army, Royal New Zealand Navy, Royal
New Zealand Air Force