



## New Zealand

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*(This country profile is available online at [www.unisa.edu.au/genderbudgets](http://www.unisa.edu.au/genderbudgets))*

# 1 Background

<b>Socio-economic indicators</b>	
Population in 2008	4.3 million
Projected population change 2008–50	28%
GDP per capita (PPP \$US) 2005	\$24,996
Proportion (percent) of population below the poverty line (\$1 PPP a day) 2005	Not available
<b>Gender equality indicators</b>	
Seats in parliament held by women (% of total) 2007	32.2%
Maternal Mortality Ratio (per 100,000 live births) 2005	9
Adult literacy rate, female (aged 15 and older) 2005	Not available
Adult literacy rate, male (aged 15 and older) 2005	Not available
Gross secondary enrolment: Ratio of female rate to male rate 2005	1.07
Gross secondary enrolment: Female ratio (% of the female secondary school age population) 2005	127%
Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (% of total employment in the sector) 2005	47.1%
<b>Budgetary indicators</b>	
General Government public expenditure on education (% of GDP) 2002–05	6.5%
General Government public expenditure on education (% of total expenditure) 2002-05	20.9%
General Government public expenditure on health (% of GDP) 2004	6.5%
General Government public expenditure on health (% of total government expenditure) 2005	18%
Central Government military expenditure (% of GDP), 2005	1%
Central Government public expenditure on defence (% of total outlays), 2007	3.23%
Open Budget Index - Overall Score	86%. (Government provides the public with extensive information on the central government's budget and financial activities during the course of the budget year.)

Sources: UNDP (2007) *Human Development Report 2007/08*; Population Reference Bureau, (2008) *World Population Data Sheet*. World Economic Forum (2007) *The Global Gender Gap Report*; UN Statistics Division (2008) *Millennium Development Goal Indicators*; United Nations Population Division (2008) *World Population Prospects*; UNESCAP (2008) *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific*; IMF (2007) *Government Finance Statistics*; Open Budget Initiative (2008) (See Explanatory Notes for details).

New Zealand comprises two main islands, commonly called the North Island and the South Island, and numerous smaller islands, notably Stewart Island/Rakiura and the Chatham Islands. Australia lies to the southeast across the Tasman Sea, and New Zealand's closest neighbours to the north are New Caledonia, Fiji and Tonga.

New Zealand has a population of 4.3 million. The large population groups include Europeans (approximately 70%), Māori (8%), Asians (6%) and Pacific Islanders (5%) (The Guardian UK).

The island was settled by Polynesians in about the 13th century. Maori chieftains signed the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 ceding sovereignty to Queen Victoria but retaining territorial ownership. The country became an independent dominion in 1907 and achieved full independence in 1947. New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy. Although it has no codified constitution, the Constitution Act 1986 is the principal formal statement of New Zealand's constitutional structure. New Zealand has a single-chamber

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parliament, the House of Representatives, which is elected for a three-year term. Coalition governments have been the norm since proportional representation replaced the 'first past the post' electoral system in 1993. From October 2005 until November 2008, the Labour party governed in coalition with the Progressive Party. Labour was defeated by the National Party in the general elections of November 8, 2008. Following the victory, National Party leader John Key formed a government in coalition with the ACT party, the United Future party and the Māori Party.

The 2007-2008 Human Development Report ranked New Zealand (with an HDI score of 0.943) 19th among 177 countries. According to the UNDP this places it among countries considered to have achieved a high level of human development. This is reflected in New Zealand's Gross Domestic Product per capita (PPP \$US) which stood at US\$24,996 in 2005.

New Zealand's Gender Development Index (GDI) rank is 18th among 144 countries, and its Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) ranking of 11th shows continued high levels of female representation in government. Women occupied 32.2% of the seats in the Parliament's lower house in 2007. Women's share of wage employment in the non-agricultural sector stood at 47.1% in 2005 (Human Development Report 2007/2008) and a gross secondary enrolment rate for females (as a percentage of the female secondary school age population) standing at 127%.

## 2 Gender-responsive budgeting in New Zealand

While New Zealand has been focused on ensuring that gender analysis is incorporated into policy processes, this has not been allied to a specific analysis of the impact of the budget allocations on men, boys, women and girls (email communication with government 03/03/09; Budlender 2007). The emphasis on gender analysis mainly was progressed under Labor governments since the mid 1980s, with Helen Clarke serving as Prime Minister of the Labor government for the decade 1999-2008. The institutional arrangements and policies for gender mainstreaming began to be wound back under the conservative national government elected in late 2008.

Work on integrating gender analysis into the policy making process came to prominence in 1988 with the launch of a gender analysis document: *Checklist: How to analyse policies and programmes to ensure that they meet women's needs*. This was followed by the development of another gender analysis framework in 1996, *Full Picture: A framework for gender analysis* (New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) 1996; Teghtsoonian 2004) which was developed to systematically incorporate gender analysis into government policy process in different agencies (MWA 2006; Teghtsoonian 2004). The Ministry of Women's Affairs has not had a formal link with Treasury with regard to gender mainstreaming (email communication with NZ government 03/03/09), but engagement on the budget occurred at times. For example, during the budget preparation in 1999 the Ministry of Finance had regular meetings with the Ministry of Women's Affairs regarding the implementation of gender analysis and the provision of policy advice to better accommodate for the differential impacts of the budget on men and women. In particular, the aim was to consider the budget impact on specific groups of women (Gender and Youth Affairs Division (GYAD) - Commonwealth Secretariat 2000: 8).

Another important mechanism for progressing gender equality during the period 2002-08 was the *Gender Implication Statements*, which were required to support all submissions to the Social Development Committee. This committee was responsible for assessing the development and implementation of the government's social policy and efforts to progress social equity (Budlender 2007:11-12; MWA 2006:11-12). In 2004, the Labor government launched a strategic co-ordinating framework for sustainable social development underpinned by a series of cross-sectoral social strategies including the 2004-2009 *Action Plan for New Zealand Women* (MWA

2006:11). This Action Plan outlined the government's commitment to tackling inequality in policy outcomes among groups of women as well as those that persist between women and men. Overseen by a Chief Executive's Steering Group (chaired by the MWA and with representation from Treasury), this Action Plan identified three priorities to improve policy outcomes for women namely: economic sustainability; work-life balance; and well-being (Budlender 2007; MWA 2006:12).

The innovative *Gender Implication Statements* were designed to assess different policy impacts on men and women and ensure a gender analysis had been undertaken in developing new policies. The Cabinet Office Circular (March 6, 2002) announcing the requirement of the *Gender Implication Statement* noted that the quality of previous gender analysis had been variable 'mainly because gender analysis had not been applied at the problem definition stage of policy development' (New Zealand Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2002:1). The *Gender Implication Statement* was to report on whether gender analysis had been undertaken and if not, why not. The election of the new national government in late 2008 has led to the demise of the Social Development Committee, and as a result the *Gender Implication Statements* have no longer been required (email communication with government 03.03.09). Katherine Teghtsoonian's analysis (2004: 275) of more than two decades of gender mainstreaming practices in New Zealand concludes that these were 'neither deeply rooted nor widespread' and often located at the later moments of policy-making.

New Zealand's performance budgeting framework is potentially enabling of gender responsive budgeting but there has been no formal inclusion of gender analysis at this stage. A survey undertaken by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1997 identified New Zealand as one of a few countries engaged with 'performance informed decisions in the budget process' and one of a fewer number allocating budgets on the basis of performance information (OECD 1997 cited by McGill 1997:379). The introduction of the *Fiscal Responsibility Act 1994* positioned New Zealand as a pioneer of performance-oriented budgeting aimed at improving budget transparency through the requirement of outlining of fiscal objectives and the reporting process to achieve those (Sharp 2003:72). Its budget process requires parliamentary appropriations to be grounded on quantity, quality and timeliness measures outlined in the *Estimates of Appropriations*. Budlender (2007) however notes that while Treasury expected performance information on rationale, target groups, volume of service and monitoring, this expectation only applied to new expenditure measures targeting a particular social group, and was not a formal requirement for all measures.

Another potentially enabling factor for GRB is the requirement that the *Budget Policy Statement* is aligned with the Human Rights Act and New Zealand Bill of Rights Act and that the Policy Statement is debated in Parliament (Budlender 2007: 19). The government has been using gender-related indicators to assess progress on gender equality. Examples include: firstly, agreement on a goal of 50% representation of women on state sector boards by 2010 and, secondly, the 2006 Government Social Report, which assesses social wellbeing and quality of life and includes six gender-disaggregated indicators among a total of 42 indicators. However, as yet these indicators do not appear to have influenced the budget process itself. Furthermore the conservative National Party government, elected in November 2008, has not introduced any initiative that integrates gender into its budget decision-making processes and documentation.

The engagement of non-governmental women's groups with the budget process, whilst not common, occurs on specific issues, of which the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, including non-government agencies family, is a good example (Budlender 2007: 17).

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## Links to electronic resources for New Zealand

### The Guardian

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/country-profile/new-zealand> Accessed on 10 August 2009

### BBC News Country Profiles

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/asia-pacific/country\\_profiles/1136253.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1136253.stm) Accessed on 10 August 2009