



## Australia-Oceania :: New Caledonia

*(self-governing territory of France)*

### Introduction :: New Caledonia

#### Background:

Settled by both Britain and France during the first half of the 19th century, the island became a French possession in 1853. It served as a penal colony for four decades after 1864. Agitation for independence during the 1980s and early 1990s ended in the 1998 Noumea Accord, which over a period of 15 to 20 years will transfer an increasing amount of governing responsibility from France to New Caledonia. The agreement also commits France to conduct a referendum between 2014 and 2018 to decide whether New Caledonia should assume full sovereignty and independence.

### Geography :: New Caledonia

#### Location:

Oceania, islands in the South Pacific Ocean, east of Australia

#### Geographic coordinates:

21 30 S, 165 30 E

#### Map references:

Oceania

#### Area:

**total:** 18,575 sq km

**country comparison to the world:** 156

**land:** 18,275 sq km

**water:** 300 sq km

#### Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than New Jersey

#### Land boundaries:

0 km

#### Coastline:

2,254 km

#### Maritime claims:

**territorial sea:** 12 nm

**exclusive economic zone:** 200 nm

#### Climate:

tropical; modified by southeast trade winds; hot, humid

#### Terrain:

coastal plains with interior mountains

#### Elevation extremes:

**lowest point:** Pacific Ocean 0 m

**highest point:** Mont Panie 1,628 m

#### Natural resources:

nickel, chrome, iron, cobalt, manganese, silver, gold, lead, copper

#### Land use:

**arable land:** 0.38%

**permanent crops:** 0.27%

**other:** 99.34% (2011)

#### Irrigated land:

100 sq km (2003)

#### Natural hazards:

cyclones, most frequent from November to March

**volcanism:** Matthew and Hunter Islands are historically active

#### Environment - current issues:

erosion caused by mining exploitation and forest fires

#### **Geography - note:**

consists of the main island of New Caledonia (one of the largest in the Pacific Ocean), the archipelago of Iles Loyaute, and numerous small, sparsely populated islands and atolls

### **People and Society :: New Caledonia**

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#### **Nationality:**

**noun:** New Caledonian(s)

**adjective:** New Caledonian

#### **Ethnic groups:**

Melanesian 44.1%, European 34.1%, Wallisian & Futunian 9%, Tahitian 2.6%, Indonesian 2.5%, Vietnamese 1.4%, Ni-Vanuatu 1.1%, other 5.2% (1996 census)

#### **Languages:**

French (official), 33 Melanesian-Polynesian dialects

#### **Religions:**

Roman Catholic 60%, Protestant 30%, other 10%

#### **Population:**

264,022 (July 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 183

#### **Age structure:**

**0-14 years:** 24% (male 32,390/female 30,996)

**15-24 years:** 17.1% (male 23,000/female 22,060)

**25-54 years:** 42.6% (male 56,533/female 55,907)

**55-64 years:** 8.1% (male 10,526/female 10,842)

**65 years and over:** 8.2% (male 9,732/female 12,036) (2013 est.)

#### **Dependency ratios:**

**total dependency ratio:** 48.3 %

**youth dependency ratio:** 33.6 %

**elderly dependency ratio:** 14.7 %

**potential support ratio:** 6.8 (2013)

#### **Median age:**

**total:** 30.7 years

**male:** 30.1 years

**female:** 31.3 years (2013 est.)

#### **Population growth rate:**

1.45% (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 83

#### **Birth rate:**

15.81 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 127

#### **Death rate:**

5.39 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 177

#### **Net migration rate:**

4.12 migrant(s)/1,000 population

**country comparison to the world:** 27

*note:* there has been steady emigration from Wallis and Futuna to New Caledonia (2013 est.)

#### **Urbanization:**

**urban population:** 57% of total population (2010)

**rate of urbanization:** 1.4% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

#### **Major urban areas - population:**

NOUMEA (capital) 144,000 (2009)

#### **Sex ratio:**

**at birth:** 1.05 male(s)/female

**0-14 years:** 1.05 male(s)/female

**15-24 years:** 1.04 male(s)/female

**25-54 years:** 1.01 male(s)/female

**55-64 years:** 0.98 male(s)/female

**65 years and over:** 0.81 male(s)/female

**total population:** 1 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

#### **Infant mortality rate:**

**total:** 5.54 deaths/1,000 live births

**country comparison to the world:** 178

**male:** 6.54 deaths/1,000 live births

**female:** 4.49 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

#### **Life expectancy at birth:**

**total population:** 77.13 years

**country comparison to the world:** 70

**male:** 73.08 years

**female:** 81.37 years (2013 est.)

#### **Total fertility rate:**

2.02 children born/woman (2013 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 126

**HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:**

NA

**HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:**

NA

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:**

NA

**Education expenditures:**

NA

**Literacy:**

**definition:** age 15 and over can read and write

**total population:** 96.2%

**male:** 96.8%

**female:** 95.5% (1996 census)

**Government:: New Caledonia**

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**Country name:**

**conventional long form:** Territory of New Caledonia and Dependencies

**conventional short form:** New Caledonia

**local long form:** Territoire des Nouvelle-Caledonie et Dependances

**local short form:** Nouvelle-Caledonie

**Dependency status:**

territorial collectivity (or a sui generis collectivity) of France since 1998

**Government type:**

parliamentary representative democracy

**Capital:**

**name:** Noumea

**geographic coordinates:** 22 16 S, 166 27 E

**time difference:** UTC+11 (16 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

**Administrative divisions:**

none (overseas territory of France); there are no first-order administrative divisions as defined by the US Government, but there are three provinces named Province des Iles, Province Nord, and Province Sud

**Independence:**

none (overseas territory of France); note - a referendum on independence was held in 1998 but did not pass; a new referendum is scheduled to take place between 2014 and 2018

**National holiday:**

Fete de la Federation, 14 July (1789); note - the local holiday is New Caledonia Day, 24 September (1853)

**Constitution:**

4 October 1958 (French Constitution with changes as reflected in Noumea Accord of 5 May 1998)

**Legal system:**

civil law system based on French law; the 1988 Matignon Accords (signed in the Matignon Hotel) set up a ten-year period of development during which the Kanak community received substantial autonomy but agreed not to raise the independence issue

**Suffrage:**

18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:**

**chief of state:** President Francois HOLLANDE (since 15 May 2012); represented by High Commissioner Jean-Jacques BROT (since 2 February 2013); note - he was nominated on 23 January 2013

**head of government:** President of the Government Harold MARTIN (since 3 March 2011); note - since 3 March 2011, three different governments of Harold MARTIN have collapsed over the choice of a flag that will be used while it is being decolonized; President Harold MARTIN is head of a caretaker government

**cabinet:** Cabinet consisting of 11 members elected from and by the Territorial Congress

(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#))

**elections:** French president elected by popular vote for a five-year term; high commissioner appointed by the French president on the advice of the French Ministry of Interior; president of the government elected by the members of the Territorial Congress for a five-year term (no term limits); note - last election held on 10 June 2011 (next to be held in June 2016)

**Legislative branch:**

unicameral Territorial Congress or Congres du territoire (54 seats; members belong to the three Provincial Assemblies, or Assemblies Provinciales, elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms)

**elections:** last held on 9 May 2009 (next to be held on 10 May 2014)

**election results:** percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - UMP 13, Caledonia Together 10, UC 8, UNI 8, AE 6, FLNKS 3, Labor Party 3, other 3

**note:** the Customary Senate is the assembly of the various traditional councils of the Kanaks, the indigenous population, which rules on laws affecting the indigenous population; New Caledonia holds two seats in the French Senate; elections last held on 21 September 2008 (next to be held not later than September 2014); results - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - UMP 2; New Caledonia also elects two seats to the French National Assembly; elections last held on 17 June 2012 (next to be held by June 2017); results - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - UMP 2

**Judicial branch:**

**highest court(s):** Court of Appeal in Noumea or Cour d'Appel (the highest local judicial court; organized into civil, commercial, social, and pre-trial investigation chambers; number of judges NA); Conseil d'Etat (the highest local administrative court; number of judges NA)

note - final appeals are heard before the Court of Cassation or Cour de Cassation, in Paris

**judge selection and term of office:** NA

**subordinate courts:** Courts of First Instance include: civil, juvenile, commercial, labor, police, criminal, Assizes, and also a pre-trial investigation chamber; Joint Commerce Tribunal; administrative courts

#### Political parties and leaders:

Caledonia Together [Philippe GOMES]

Caledonian Union or UC [Daniel GOA]

Front National or FN [Marine LE PEN]

Kanak Socialist Front for National Liberation or FLNKS (includes PALIKA, UNI, UC, and UPM)

Labor Party [Louis Kotra UREGEI]

National Union for Independence (Union Nationale pour l'Independance) or UNI

Parti de Liberation Kanak or PALIKA [Paul NEAOUTYINE]

Socialist Group [Jean Pierre BEL]

Socialist Kanak Liberation or LKS [Nidoish NAISSELINE]

The Future Together or AE [Harold MARTIN]

The Rally or UMP [Pierre GROGIER]

Union of Pro-Independence Co-operation Committees [Francois BURCK]

#### Political pressure groups and leaders:

NA

#### International organization participation:

PIF (associate member), SPC, UPU, WFTU (NGOs)

#### Diplomatic representation in the US:

none (overseas territory of France)

#### Diplomatic representation from the US:

none (overseas territory of France)

#### Flag description:

the flag of France is used

#### National symbol(s):

kagu bird

#### National anthem:

**name:** "Soyons unis, devenons freres" (Let Us Be United, Let Us Become Brothers)

**lyrics/music:** Chorale Melodia (a local choir)

**note:** adopted 2008; the anthem contains a mixture of lyrics in both French and Nengone (an indigenous language); as a self-governing territory of France, in addition to the local anthem, "La Marseillaise" is official (see France)

### Economy:: New Caledonia

#### Economy - overview:

New Caledonia has about 25% of the world's known nickel reserves. Only a small amount of the land is suitable for cultivation, and food accounts for about 20% of imports. In addition to nickel, substantial financial support from France - equal to more than 15% of GDP - and tourism are keys to the health of the economy; during 2009-10, France sent more development assistance to New Caledonia than to any of its other overseas territories. Substantial new investment in the nickel industry, combined with the recovery of global nickel prices, brightens the economic outlook for the next several years.

#### GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$9.28 billion (2008 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 154

\$3.158 billion (2003 est.)

#### GDP (official exchange rate):

\$9.28 billion (2008 est.)

#### GDP - real growth rate:

0.6% (2008 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 169

#### GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$37,700 (2008 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 30

\$15,000 (2003 est.)

#### GDP - composition, by end use:

**household consumption:** 65.5%

**government consumption:** 28%

**investment in fixed capital:** 28.2%

**investment in inventories:** 0%

**exports of goods and services:** 26.8%

**imports of goods and services:** -48.5%

(2012 est.)

#### GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

**agriculture:** 2.1%

**industry:** 28.3%

**services:** 69.6% (2012 est.)

**Agriculture - products:**

vegetables; beef, deer, other livestock products; fish

**Industries:**

nickel mining and smelting

**Industrial production growth rate:**

7% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 35

**Labor force:**

106,400 (2010)

**country comparison to the world:** 183

**Labor force - by occupation:**

**agriculture:** 20%

**industry:** 20%

**services:** 60% (2002)

**Unemployment rate:**

17.1% (2004)

**country comparison to the world:** 152

**Population below poverty line:**

NA%

**Household income or consumption by percentage share:**

**lowest 10%:** NA%

**highest 10%:** NA%

**Budget:**

**revenues:** \$996 million

**expenditures:** \$1.072 billion (2001 est.)

**Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):**

NA% of GDP

**Fiscal year:**

calendar year

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):**

1.7% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 35

2.4% (2011 est.)

**Market value of publicly traded shares:**

\$NA

**Exports:**

\$1.321 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 150

\$1.661 billion (2011 est.)

**Exports - commodities:**

ferronickels, nickel ore, fish

**Exports - partners:**

Japan 17.2%, France 16.3%, South Korea 12.3%, China 9.6%, Australia 8.4%, Belgium 4.9% (2012)

**Imports:**

\$3.245 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 143

\$3.698 billion (2011 est.)

**Imports - commodities:**

machinery and equipment, fuels, chemicals, foodstuffs

**Imports - partners:**

France 33.5%, Singapore 22.5%, Australia 11.7%, NZ 5.1% (2012)

**Debt - external:**

\$79 million (1998 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 192

**Exchange rates:**

Comptoirs Francais du Pacifique francs (XPF) per US dollar -

85.74 (2011 est.)

90.01 (2010 est.)

**Energy:: New Caledonia**

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**Electricity - production:**

1.978 billion kWh (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 135

**Electricity - consumption:**

1.84 billion kWh (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 140

**Electricity - exports:**

0 kWh (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 108

**Electricity - imports:**

0 kWh (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 110

**Electricity - installed generating capacity:**

499,000 kW (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 138

**Electricity - from fossil fuels:**

76.8% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 95

**Electricity - from nuclear fuels:**

0% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 146

**Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:**

15.6% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 98

**Electricity - from other renewable sources:**

7.6% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 30

**Crude oil - production:**

0 bbl/day (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 197

**Crude oil - exports:**

0 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 160

**Crude oil - imports:**

0 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 100

**Crude oil - proved reserves:**

0 bbl (1 January 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 168

**Refined petroleum products - production:**

0 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 210

**Refined petroleum products - consumption:**

13,640 bbl/day (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 148

**Refined petroleum products - exports:**

116.9 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 119

**Refined petroleum products - imports:**

14,670 bbl/day (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 120

**Natural gas - production:**

0 cu m (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 171

**Natural gas - consumption:**

0 cu m (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 176

**Natural gas - exports:**

0 cu m (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 152

**Natural gas - imports:**

0 cu m (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 102

**Natural gas - proved reserves:**

0 cu m (1 January 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 174

**Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:**

3.026 million Mt (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 140

## Communications :: New Caledonia

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### Telephones - main lines in use:

80,000 (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 151

### Telephones - mobile cellular:

231,000 (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 178

### Telephone system:

**general assessment:** a submarine cable network connection between New Caledonia and Australia, completed in 2007, increased network capacity and improved high-speed connectivity and access to international networks

**domestic:** combined fixed-line and mobile-cellular telephone subscribership exceeds 100 per 100 persons

**international:** country code - 687; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Pacific Ocean) (2010)

### Broadcast media:

the publicly owned French Overseas Network (RFO), which operates in France's overseas departments and territories, broadcasts over the RFO Nouvelle Caledonie TV and radio stations; a small number of privately owned radio stations also broadcast (2008)

### Internet country code:

.nc

### Internet hosts:

34,231 (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 104

### Internet users:

85,000 (2009)

**country comparison to the world:** 165

## Transportation :: New Caledonia

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### Airports:

25 (2013)

**country comparison to the world:** 128

### Airports - with paved runways:

**total:** 12

**over 3,047 m:** 1

**914 to 1,523 m:** 10

**under 914 m:** 1 (2013)

### Airports - with unpaved runways:

**total:** 13

**914 to 1,523 m:** 5

**under 914 m:**

8 (2013)

### Heliports:

8 (2013)

### Roadways:

**total:** 5,622 km (2006)

**country comparison to the world:** 151

### Merchant marine:

**registered in other countries:** 3 (France 3) (2010)

**country comparison to the world:** 135

### Ports and terminals:

Noumea

## Military :: New Caledonia

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### Military branches:

no regular military forces; French military, police, and gendarmerie (2012)

### Manpower available for military service:

**males age 16-49:** 68,219 (2010 est.)

### Manpower fit for military service:

**males age 16-49:** 56,233

**females age 16-49:** 55,983 (2010 est.)

### Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

**male:** 2,272

**female:** 2,167 (2010 est.)

### Military expenditures:

NA

### Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of France

**Disputes - international:**

Matthew and Hunter Islands east of New Caledonia claimed by France and Vanuatu