

New Caledonia

Overview:

The Territory of New Caledonia and Dependencies (New Caledonia) is an overseas territory of France in the South Pacific, 1,200km east of Australia and 1,500km northwest of New Zealand. Vanuatu is to the northeast.

Territory:

New Caledonia is made up of the main island, or Grand Terre, and many smaller islands. The Belep archipelago is north of Grand Terre, the Loyalty Islands (four coral atolls: Lifou, Mare, Ouvea and Tiga) are to the east, the Ile de Pins is to the south, and the Chesterfield Islands and Bellona Reefs are to the west. Grand Terre is the largest island (16,372 sq km) and has a mountain range running along its length. The lowest point is 0 m, and the highest, Mont Panie, is 1,628 m high. The area is prone to earthquakes. Total Land Area: 18,575 sq km; Total Coastal Length: 2,254 km. Territorial sea: 12nm; EEZ 200nm.

Location:

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

Latitude and Longitude:

21 30 S, 165 30 E

Time Zone:

GMT +11

Total Land Area:

18575

EEZ:

1700000

Climate:

Tropical, modified by southeast trade winds. Hot, humid. Cyclones are common between November and March. Average rainfall is about 1,500mm on the Loyalty Islands, 2,000 mm at low elevations in the east of Grand Terre, and 2,000-4,000 at high elevations, and 1,200 mm on the west side.

Natural Resources:

Nickel (Grand Terre has the largest known nickel deposit in the world), chrome, iron, cobalt, manganese, silver, gold, lead, copper, marine resources.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:	
1999	4,307,783,376.00 USD
2003	3,158,000,000.00 USD

Per Capita GDP:	
2000	15,000.00 USD
2002	15,060.00 USD
2003	14,864.00 USD

% of GDP per Sector:			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1997	1.8%	22.4%	75.8%
1998	2%	21.6%	76.4%
1999	2%	22.4%	75.6%
2003	15%	8.8%	76.2%

% of Population Employed by Sector			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1999	7%	23%	70%
2002	20%	20%	60%

External Aid/Remittances:

In 1998 the islands were receiving 880 million USD in annual subsidies from France, and between 1998 and 2000 they were receiving 334 million USD in annual Official Development Assistance, or 1,586 per capita. There are many programs in place to aid development and the improvement of the local economy. The Girardin Law (2003-2017) and the Frogier Law (2003-2006) are both tax schemes that encourage local investment. The first promotes a relationship between a local entity on the islands wishing to start up some form of economic enterprise and an entity in France possessing the funding and willing to invest it in exchange for tax concessions. The second is a framework in which a firm wanting to make an investment on the islands can team up with a financial institution having the funding and wanting tax breaks. These two schemes can be combined resulting in huge tax breaks in

exchange for investing in local development initiatives that are later transferred over to local ownership. There are Development Codes for all three Provinces within which financial aid is given to development projects in a variety of sectors.

Growth:

New Caledonia's economy is growing, but it is predominantly dependent upon its mineral resources, whose extraction is dependent upon international corporations, and whose price is highly vulnerable to international market fluctuations.

The other area that it is investing in is the tourism industry which grows annually. Both of these sectors could be stimulated in a balanced fashion if the framework were in place to prevent over-exploitation of the finite island resources; however the islands seem to lack a lot of this infrastructure and the chance of environmental, cultural and economic collapse, especially due to the socio-economic inequalities, is a potential threat to the long-term economic development of the islands.

France's economic props are also a hindrance to sustainable economic development as they have propagated the expectation of a lifestyle that the islands' current infrastructure, natural, and human resources would not be able to support independently. Outside economic support has also delayed reconciliation between the native peoples and European settlers which might lead to a cooperative economic development plan. Steps are being taken to overcome many of these issues, but much remains to be addressed – perhaps once the islands gain independence.

Labour Force:	
1996	79,395
2004	78,990

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)
1996	19%
2004	17.1%

Industry:

Until recently, nickel mining and smelting was the only major industry in New Caledonia. In an effort to diversify the local economy, other industries have been promoted through the creation of market protection laws measures, and investment assistance. In 2002 there were a total of 2,061 registered industrial enterprises. These included 368 textile and clothing industries, 33 "other" manufacturing companies, 299 agricultural and food industries, 275 metallurgy and metal working industries, 247 paper and cardboard industries, 146 machine and equipment-producing industries, 118 industries producing transportation equipment, as well as chemical industries, rubber and plastics industries, non-metallic mineral-producing industries, electronic and electric equipment industries, leather and shoe industries, and wood and wood-working industries. The biggest employers (59%) are the metallurgy and metal work industries, and food and agriculture industries.

Most companies on the islands are small with an average of 14 employees. Almost 30% of industrial companies are involved in trade activities, which increase with the size of the company.

New Caledonia owns between 20% and 40% of the world's known nickel resources, and produces about 12% of global production. In 2003, nickel represented 87.85% of the islands' exports (much of which go to Japan, Australia, France, and other Asian countries), and the sector contributed 6.9% of GNP. Mining activities employ about 5% of New Caledonia's population. Between 1998 and 2001 the Caledonian mining industry included about 20 companies of varying sizes. There largest mining companies are Societe Le Nickel (SLN), which belongs to ERAMET and was privatized with the approval of the French government; Societe des Mines du Sud Pacifique (SMSP – South Pacific Mining Company) which belongs to the Northern Province. The SMSP's garnierite exports represent over 70% of total exports; Societe des Mines de la Tontouta (SMT – Tontouta Mining Company) which is owned by the Ballande group; Societe Miniere Georges Montagnat – SMGM (Georges Montagnat Mining Company) which is private; INCO – a Canadian company, which is the second largest nickel company in the world; and Falconbridge, also Canadian, and owned by Noranda, the world's third largest nickel company. There are many tax concessions given to mining companies operating on New Caledonian soil. These exemption from General Import Tax, property tax, general service tax, company tax, registration fees and mortgage tax for the period of construction and operation of the operation. A tax stability system is also in place whereby companies can have their any long-term taxes that are due set at a fixed price for a maximum of 15 years. A minimum investment of 420 million euro must be made and 500 direct jobs created in order for companied to qualify for the concessions.

Niche Industry:

Tourism activities such as: windsurfing, scuba diving, snorkeling, jet skiing, surfing, and sailing. Hotels also offer: tennis, squash, bowling, golf, rugby, cricket, and soccer as paid recreation.

Tourism:

Tourism and Commerce: In 2003, 101,983 tourists visited the islands, and in 2004, 99,203. 27.9% were from France, 28.9% from Japan, 6.5% from New Zealand, 16.2% from Australia, and 20.5% from other countries. More than 75% of tourist activities are centered in Noumea and its periphery. 66% of all hotels are located in Noumea, and 92% of all tourism jobs are in the Southern Province. In 2002, there were 45 hotels in the Southern Province, with a bed capacity of 1,731. The Northern Province had 25 establishments with a capacity of 294, and the Island Province had 13 establishments with a capacity of 115. The main activities on the islands are windsurfing, scuba diving, snorkeling, jet skiing, surfing, and sailing. The islands also cater to the hotel tourist who enjoys tennis, squash, bowling, golf, rugby, cricket, and soccer. The commercial sector includes retail stores, wholesalers and automobile and auto repair sales. In 2002 there were 3,433 registered commercial companies, employing 7,126 people. Retail sales composes 2,051 companies, employing 3,855 people.

Imports and Exports:	
Tot. Value of Imports	1,998,000,000.00 USD (2006)
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	
Partners Outside EU:	
	Import Partners (1999): France (50.2%), Australia (15.1%),



Import Partners:	Singapore (5.9%), New Zealand (5.2%), Japan (3.7%). France 38.9%, Singapore 15.3%, Australia 11.4%, NZ 4.8% (2006)
Tot. Value of Exports	1341000000 USD (2006)
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	Export Partners (1999): Japan (25.8%), France (18.8%), Taiwan (12%), Australia (8.2%), USA (3.0%). Japan 17.8%, Taiwan 14.9%, France 13.7%, China 11.1%, Spain 9.7%, Belgium 7.5%, Italy 6.2%, Australia 4.7% (2006)
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	
Main Imports:	Transportation equipment, machines and electrical equipment, hydrocarbons, mineral products, wine, sugar, rice, other foodstuffs (2004). machinery and equipment, fuels, chemicals, foodstuffs (2006)
Main Exports:	Nickel ore, metallurgical products, seafood, fruits and vegetables (2004). ferronickels, nickel ore, fish (2006)

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports: 25

In 2007 there were 12 airports with paved runways and 13 with unpaved runways. There were also 6 heliports. The major international airport is Tontouta, in Noumea. Main airlines serving the islands are Air France, Air New Zealand, Air Vanuatu, Qantas, AOM and the charter company Corsair. Aircalin or Air Caledonie International focuses mainly on Pacific destinations, and Air Caledonie has domestic services to Grand Terre, each of the Loyalty Islands, Ile des Pins, and Walaa on Iles Belep. Private planes and helicopters can also be chartered. Passengers: 667,801; Internal: 42.3%; External: 57.5%; Cargo (2004): (millions of tonnes): 6,038; Internal: 14%; External: 86%;

Number of Main Ports: 3

The three main ports and harbours are Mueo, Noumea, and Thio. Noumea is the only official port of entry for yachts. The peak season for arrivals is August through October.

Tonnes of Merchandise Transported (millions) (2004): 8,585;

Internal: 34.9% (3,001 mill. tonnes);

External: 65.1% (5,584 mill. tonnes).

Merchant marine:

total: 2 ships (1000 GRT or over) 3,566 GRT/2,543 DWT

by type: cargo 1, passenger/cargo 1 (2007)

Internal:

Air

Road:

There are 5,432 km of roads in New Caledonia (2000); 2,287 km are paved and 3,145 km are unpaved. 10,585 new vehicles were registered in 2004. Rental cars are available as well as taxis, and motorcycles. A bus system on Grande Terre serves almost all main towns and villages.

Sea:

There is a ferry service between Noumea, the Loyalty Islands and Ile des Pins.

Other Forms of Transportation:

Bicycles can be rented on Grand Terre.

Telephones--main lines in use: 55,300(2005)

Telephones--mobile cellular: 134,300 (2005)

Telephone system: domestic: a submarine cable network connection between New Caledonia and Australia, scheduled for completion in 2008, will improve high-speed connectivity and access to international networks

international: country code - 687;

satellite

earth station - 1 Intelsat (Pacific Ocean)

Radio broadcast stations:

AM 1, FM 5, shortwave 0 (1998)

Television broadcast stations:

6 (plus 25 repeaters) (1997)

Internet country code: .nc

Internet hosts: 14,252 (2007)

Internet users: 80,000 (2006)

Economic Zones:

Noumea has duty free high-end shopping with imported goods from all over the world. It also has tax concessions for those involved with the mining industry (see section on industry).

Energy Policy:

In 2002 New Caledonia was producing 1,581 billion KWh of electricity, and consuming 1,471 billion KWh. In 2004, the islands were producing 1,677 billion KWh. 80% is thermal, 19.4% hydraulic, and .6% wind. The islands have the largest French wind farm, located in Negandi, near Noumea. The wind farm generates 4.5 MW of electricity annually. New Caledonia imports mainly oil, as well as small amounts of coal. It has no local source of either.

Year	Total Energy Production (Mwh)	Type			Total Energy Consumption (Mwh)	Sector				
		Thermic (Mwh)	Geothermic (Mwh)	Other (Mwh)		Domestic (Mwh)	Commercial (Mwh)	Public Service (Mwh)	Industry (Mwh)	Public Lighting (Mwh)

Official Currency:

Fr Pacific Franc and Euro

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:

Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:

Number of Insurance Companies:

French Pacific Francs and the Euro. The issue of whether to shift to the Euro has been intimately connected to the movement towards autonomy as some feel that adopting the Euro as their sole currency would only continue to promote France's domination.

New Caledonia had 5 banks in 2003: Banque Caledonienne d'investissement, Banque de Nouvelle-Caledonie, Banque Nationale de Paris Paribas Nouvelle-Caledonie, Societe Generale Caledonienne de Banque, and Caisse d'Epargne et de Prevoyance de Nouvelle Caledonie. The islands also have 5 financial institutions: Credit Caledonien et Tahitien, Credit Commercial de Noumea, Caisse de Credit Agricole Mutuel, Noumea Credit, and General Electric Financement Pacifique. There are also the services offered by the Post and Telecommunications Office (OPT). The New Caledonia Public Treasury represents the Caisse des Depots et Consignations for revenue collection from institutions. New Caledonia also has credit institutions connected to outside entities such as the Agence Francaise de Development (French Development Agency), Banque Europeenne d'Investissement (European Investment Bank), Dexia, Societe de Gestion des Fonds de Garantie des Territoires d'Outre-Mer (Management Company for Deposits from Overseas Territories), and Banque Populaire. The institut d'Emission d'Outre-Mer (IEOM) plays an important role in the islands' banking system. It prints money, ensures that the banking system is operating smoothly, and directs credit policy. In 2003 there were 54 teller windows in the Southern Province, 21 in the Northern Province, and 4 in the Loyalty Islands. The territory had 90 ATM machines and 1,800 automatic payment terminals.

Financial Services:

The Institut Caledonien de Participation (ICAP) was created in 1989 by the Caisse Centrale de Cooperation Economique and the Three provinces. It is a development tool to promote projects that aim to improve the economic balance between Noumea and the rest of the territory. ICAP provides financial backing in order to consolidate the level of equity capital and quasi-equity capital of businesses in order to allow them to partially self-finance their investments and benefit from bank assistance with good borrowing conditions. There are also a number of other schemes in places for financial assistance at a local level. All three Provinces have holding companies, which are semi-public entities that bring together the Province, public establishments, and a group of private individuals. In the Southern Province this entity is called PROMOSUD. And works to finance projects mainly in the sectors of tourism, the hotel industry, fishing and aquaculture, and innovative technologies and the mining industry. The Northern Province has SOFINOR which finances mainly projects in mining, the hotel industry and aquaculture. In the Loyalty Islands SODIL finances projects related to transport, the hotel industry and fishing. The Overseas Issuing House (IEOM) - the central bank of the Overseas Territories promotes loans for projects in areas seen as key in promoting local economic development. SOFOTOM, the Company for the Management of Guarantee Funds for Overseas Territories, unifies the three Interbank Guarantee Funds (FGI) of French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna, and New Caledonia. The FGI in New Caledonia was created in 1982 and facilitates the granting of financial aid by credit institutions to borrowers who lack security. In 1989 the Association for the Right to Economic Initiative (ADIE) was created (establishing a presence in New Caledonia in 1999) to help people who do not have access to bank loans to obtain loans in order to create their own job. This initiative is funded by the State, the European Social Fund, the local community, banks, foundations and companies.

Communications/E-Commerce:

In 2002 there were 52,000 telephone lines in use in New Caledonia and 80,000 cellular phones. In 2003 there were 4,449 internet hosts, and 60,000 internet users. E-commerce seems to be an area that is in its initial stages of development, but the service sector is utilizing it as a marketing resource to attract tourism and international investment to the islands.

Public Ownership:

There are three different types of land in New Caledonia: public land (57% of the total); private land (17%), which is primarily around Noumea and on the west coast; and customary land (26%), which includes much of the northern lands and Loyalty Islands. There are no laws against foreign ownership of land in New Caledonia. The 300 Kanak clans will rent their communally owned land, but do not sell it.

Land Use:

Land use 2005:

arable land: 0.32%

permanent crops: 0.22%

other: 99.46%

Irrigated land 2003: 100 sq km

In 2000, 33% of total land area was forested, 18% was shrublands, grasslands and savanna, 40% was cropland and crop/natural vegetation mosaic, 0.1% urban and built-up areas, and 9% wetlands and water-bodies. There were 16 nature reserves, wilderness areas and national parks in New Caledonia in 2003. As a result of having been geographically isolated for 80 million years, 76% of the archipelago's flora and fauna evolved on the islands. New Caledonia has the most diverse bird life in the Southwest Pacific, with 68 species, 22 of which (32%), and 30 sub-species, are found only in the territory.

Agriculture/Forestry:

Total surface area of New Caledonian agricultural land is 289,545 hectares or 15% of the total landmass. The proportion of agricultural land to total available land in two of the three Provinces is: Southern Province, 21.53%; and Northern Province, 14.28%. Natural and replanted forests are included in these figures, and represent 6.4% of total agricultural land. The amount of agricultural area actually used as a percentage of the amount available is 85.6%. A large percentage of the islands' land is not suitable for farming, limiting the area available for this sector.



In 2002 there were 5,574 agricultural businesses on the islands, 40% in the Northern Province, 31% in the Southern Province, and 29% in the Loyalty Islands. 11% of these owned 85% of the total available agricultural land, and the remainder had plots smaller than 1 hectare. In 2002 only 22% of farms were mechanized indicating the large number of non-commercial tribal farms. Up until 1999, the bovine meat sector was the largest agricultural producer. The sector is still the second most important agricultural activity, using 96% of agricultural land, and representing 21.1% of final agricultural production. Vegetable production in New Caledonia has been growing consistently since the early 1990s, with 228 producers in 2000, 7.5% of whom produced 50% of the vegetable production, and 50% of whom produce 94.5% of total vegetables grown. In 2003, 24.5% of vegetable production was exported, primarily squash, courgettes, pumpkins, sweet onions, and watermelons (mainly to Japan and New Zealand). 90% of vegetables sold come from the Southern Province, but the Northern Province and the Loyalty Islands have a greater number of family farms. The main fruits produced in New Caledonia are pineapples, bananas, oranges, watermelons, grapefruit, litchis, limes, mangoes, melons, strawberries, and avocados. The islands export to Japan, New Zealand, French Polynesia, and France.

Marine Activity:

Fishing:

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

Fishing is an important provider of jobs, and contributed 8% of New Caledonia's supply of protein for local consumption in 2000. The fishery industry also contributes to export revenues (2,875 tonnes of seafood was exported in 2004 with a value of 19,052,000 USD). Main catch are shrimp, tuna, sea-cucumbers, and scallops. In 2000, there were 793 people employed in fishing and aquaculture.

There are three main types of fishing in New Caledonia: lagoon fishing, which occurs within the lagoons using small motorboats; coastal fishing, which occurs slightly outside the lagoons using larger boats; and deep sea fishing which is carried out by small trawlers.

Non-commercial fishing is a major contributor to local subsistence and has a higher catch than the commercial fishery. Aquaculture is an area that is growing in economic importance. While the main product farmed is shrimp, producers are expanding to farm giant clams, crayfish, and oysters.

Marine Life:

Jurisdiction over ocean resources is shared between three levels: the French government; the island government, which is responsible for regulations and managing exploration, operation and management rights, and protecting the national, biological and non-biological resources within the EEZ; and the three provinces, which have authority over maritime fishing regulations within the national and territorial waters, and are responsible for the creation of natural parks and reserves. The provinces also have authority over economic development in marine areas.

Prospecting:

It is thought that there is a large petrol or natural gas deposit 200km from New Caledonia's west coast that may prove to be one of the largest in the world. Scientific exploration began at the end of 2004 to verify the existence of these hydrocarbons, which will undoubtedly dramatically affect the economic diversity as well as impacting marine issues over the next few years.

Marine Conservation:

There were 57 marine and littoral protected areas in 2003. New Caledonia has an extremely rich marine biodiversity as well as extensive areas of coral reef within its EEZ. In 2003 there were 613 known species of fish in the islands' waters, one of which was known to be threatened. Coral reef mining for calcium carbonate to neutralize acidic tailings from nickel mining is a serious problem in the islands and is being fought by a number of environmental groups.

Critical Issues:

Jurisdictional:

The Matthew and Hunter Islands are a group of 2 small and uninhabited volcanic islands in the South Pacific, located 300 km east of New Caledonia and south-east of Vanuatu archipelago. Hunter Island and Matthew Island, 70 km closed, are both claimed by Vanuatu (for Tafea province) and France (for New Caledonia).

Environmental:

The islands have numerous environmental problems associated with unplanned development and natural resource exploitation. These include extensive deforestation, widespread mining and mineral exploration along ridges resulting in watershed pollution, landscape and habitat destruction, and inappropriate and excessive urban development around Noumea.

Social/Political: New Caledonia's economic inequalities are a major issue that needs to be addressed. Currently 65% of the population and 75% of the economic enterprises are in Noumea, which represents only 9% of the territory. The islands are implementing policies to promote a more equitable distribution of both inhabitants as well as income but many problems and tensions still exist between European settlers in the south and native islanders in the north and on the Loyalty Islands.

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

Capital:

Noumea

Political System:

New Caledonia is a Collectivity Sui Generis. It is composed of 3 Provinces and 33 Municipalities.

Its legislative body is the Congress, composed of 54 Councillors from the three provincial assemblies. It is elected every 5 years by universal suffrage, and meets twice a year – in June and November. The Congress elects a committee in charge of running the institution when it is not in session, as well as internal committees, each having their own competence. The Congress is composed of 32 members from the Assembly of the Southern Province, 15 members from the Assembly of the Northern Province, and 7 members from the Assembly of the Province of the Loyalty Islands.

The Government is elected by the Congress for a period of 5 years and is the executive body. Members of Congress elected to government cease to belong to the Assembly. The Government is responsible for preparing and implementing the Congress's resolutions, and for making the statutory decrees needed to enact its acts. The terms of Government and Congress begin and end at the same time.

In addition to these two bodies there are also two Councils: the Economic and Social Council (CES), whose responsibility is to express wishes on bills related to the economy, social or cultural policy that have been submitted to it by the Congress, Provincial Assemblies, and the Senate or the Government; and the Customary Council, which represents the indigenous authorities in each of the 8 customary areas.

The territory's 8 areas are subdivided into customary districts, which are in turn made up of tribes formed of clans. Two customary senators are appointed to each area, and they elect their President once a year. These senators are in reality the Great Chiefs for each of the districts. The Customary Senate deals with bills related to the Kanak identity.

The Government of the Republic is represented on the islands by the High Commissioner of the Republic. This position is appointed by the President of the Republic. The High Commissioner's responsibilities are diminishing as more responsibility is passed over to the islands' institutions, but he/she is the liaison between the French Government and New Caledonia's Government and Congress. He/she is represented by a delegated official of the Republic in each province. His/her main responsibilities are ensuring the legality of national drafts applicable in New Caledonia; supervising organizations or people benefiting from State subsidies or contributions; authorizing public expenses by the State and stipulating the implementation of public revenue; publishing the government gazette of New Caledonia for decisions that come under the State's authority, and ensuring that New Caledonia's institutions of governance are respected. Eventually the State should only have responsibility for foreign affairs, justice, defense, public order, and treasury.

New Caledonia's institutional organization and competencies result from the Noumea Agreement, which was amended on March 19, 1999 and establishes the framework for the transfer of competences from the French Republic to the islands. There is a movement towards decentralization of power both to the territorial level, as well as to the provincial level.

The territories' competencies currently include: customary civil status; information on measures taken regarding law and order; regulations on entry and residence of foreign nationals; insurance law; cooperation and mutual insurance; civil procedure and the regulation of public and ministerial officials; primary education curricula; teacher training and pedagogical supervision; research agreements; postal and telecommunications services; domestic and international air service (subject to State authority); port and airport facilities; the road network; the transportation of electrical energy and regulations relating to hydrocarbons; meteorology; the tax system; the civil service in the Territory; the regulation of procurement contracts; the organization of public services and establishments; statistics; foreign trade; the customs system; the regulation of direct foreign investment; commercial and liberal professions; the regulations of weights and measures; competition and the suppression of fraud; the tobacco trade and price regulation; labour and trade union law; factory inspectorate; vocational training; local job protection; social welfare; public health and hygiene; border health checks; hospital facilities; the regulation of sports and socio-educational activities; regulations relating to nickel, chromium and cobalt; the regulation and exercise of rights; the management and conservation of natural resources in the EEZ; state-administered public domain law; the customary land system; and the principles of town planning. Over the next few years the State will transfer competence to New Caledonia's Government in the areas of internal maritime and airport police and safety; secondary education; private primary education; the accounting and financial system of government organizations; civil and commercial law; the principles of landed estate; and registration of births, marriages, and deaths. The Provinces have the following competences: The adaptation of primary education curricula; the maintenance of high schools and boarding schools; provincial airports and ports; special surtaxes; the management of provincial staff; vocational training programmes; employment; the construction and management of provincial health care facilities; the application of public health and social welfare regulations; free medical aid; social housing; the promotion of sport and tourism; decision regarding regulations on hydrocarbons, nickel, chromium and cobalt; protection of the environment; province-administered public domain law and town planning and construction law. The municipalities and provinces have their own budgets and are freely governed by assemblies elected by direct universal suffrage.

Political Parties:

Alliance pour la Caledonie or APLC; Caledonian Union or UC; Federation des Comites de Coordination des Independantistes or FCCI; Front National or FN; Front Uni de Liberation Kanak or FULK; Kanak Socialist Front for National Liberation or FLNKS (includes PALIKA, UNI, UC, and UPM); Parti de Liberation Kanak or PALIKA; Rally for Caledonia in the Republic (anti independent) or RPCR-UMP; The Future Together or AE; Union Nationale pour l'Independance or UNI; Union Progressiste Melanesienne or UPM.

Important Legislation:

UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) (1960) and Resolution 65/118 (December, 1980): These documents highlight the role that Indigenous peoples have in deciding the political status of their nation.

Matignon Accords (1988):

These Accords were signed in Paris in response to violent confrontations between the Kanaks (the local islanders), the European settlers, and the French military. They state that the French government will, between 1988 and 1998 introduce concrete policy measures to redress the socioeconomic disparities that exist between the Kanaks and the other communities in the territories. Some of the measures included in these documents are the introduction of more training and education programmes, the division of the territory into three provinces in order to decentralize the power system which was concentrated in the Southern, mainly white Province, and most importantly, an article that stipulated that in 1998 the islanders would be given the chance to vote, in public referenda, whether or not they wanted to remain part of France.

Noumea Accord (1998):

This is an agreement between the three parties that had signed the Matignon Accords in 1988, the French Government, the anti-independence RCPR (Rassemblement Pour la Caledonie dans la Republic, and the pro-independence FLNKS (Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak et Socialiste), that provides a framework within which, over the ensuing 15 years, New Caledonia will gradually, and irreversibly, assume responsibility from France for most areas of government with the exceptions of defense, money, public order, and justice. At the end of this period, residents who have resided on the islands since the 1988 Matignon Accords will vote to decide whether to assume these remaining powers and become completely independent.

Principal Taxes:

New Caledonia is in charge of its fiscal policies, and as such has many taxes levied on local as well as international entities located on the islands. In 2002, the islands' tax revenues were 82 billion CFP (French Pacific Francs). General Import Tax is the largest generator of tax revenue - 12 billion CFP in 2002. Income tax for people and companies generated 8.9 billion CFP and 10.9 billion CFP, trading license payments and property tax represented 3.4 billion and 1.9 billion CFP. The general tax categories are income tax, company tax, community taxes (including property tax, insurance, vehicle registration, etc), import tax, customs tax, and registration fees.

Associated Power:

Republic of France

Citizenship:

All islanders are French citizens and carry French passports. They have the right to vote in legislative and presidential French elections. As of recently islanders, as well as those having established residency prior to the introduction of the new law, also hold New Caledonia citizenship. Only those with New Caledonian passports can now vote in local elections. New arrivals from France cannot participate in the local political process.

Paradiplomacy:

New Caledonia is a member of FZ, ICFTU, PIF (observer), UPU, WFTU, and the WMO.

The islands host a few international consulates including New Zealand's Consulate General, Australia's Consulate General, as well as Consulate Generals from Indonesia and Vanuatu. They are represented overseas by French consular offices.

The State can and does on occasion allow New Caledonians to represent themselves at an international level regionally.

HUMAN RESOURCES

New Caledonia has three Provinces: Iles Loyaute, Nord, and Sud. These are in turn divided into 33 Municipalities. Population density is about 12 inhabitants per sq km.

Principal Towns Population (2002/2003)

Noumea 77,000;
 Mont-Dore 21,000;
 Dumbéa 14,000;
 Païta 8,000;
 Bourail 4,400;
 Poindimié 4,350;
 Houailou 4,350;
 Kone 4,100;
 Canala 3,400;
 Koumac 2,650.

Estimated 2007 population: 221,943
 Median age: 28.1 yrs.

2007			
Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population

Age of Population: 0-14; 15-64; 65 and up;

2002: 30%; 64.1%; 5.9%;

2004: 29.4%; 63.4%; 6.3%;

2007: 27.9%; 65.3%; 6.8%

Total fertility rate: 2.25 children born/woman (2007 est.)

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
2002	30	0	0	0	5
2004	29	0	0	0	6
2007	27	0	0	65	6

Migration:
 New Caledonia's population is growing at an annual rate of 1.28%. The net migration rate is zero. The islands' new citizenship policies may start to put a cap on the growing population as mainland French citizens no longer have the same rights as those holding New Caledonian passports.

2007 est. migration rate:

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population note: there has been steady emigration from Wallis and Futuna to New Caledonia

Crude Birth Rate:	
2003	18.6%
2004	18.98%
2005	18.49%
2007	17.75%

Life Expectancy:

74.04 (women: 77.16; men: 71.07). Estimated 2007 life expectancy: 74.5%. Males: 71.52 yrs, Females: 77.63 yrs.

Crude Death Rate:	
2003	5.1%
2004	5.64%
2005	5.56%
2007	5.72%

Ethnicity:

Melanesian 42.5%, European 37.1%, Wallisian 8.4%, Polynesia 8.4%, Indonesian 3.6%, Vietnamese 1.6%, other 3%.

Class Division:

There is a very distinct ethnically-based class division system in New Caledonia in which the Kanak People are being marginalized and the white European settlers are benefiting from most of the economic prosperity and opportunities. The Kanak People live predominantly in the northern and island provinces, the southern province being predominantly inhabited by white European settlers. The Kanak People are very much in favour of independence from France because of the discriminatory colonial policies that they feel have been levied against them throughout French control.

Languages:

Official language is French. There are also 33 Melanesian-Polynesian dialects spoken.

Religion:

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



Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 96.2%

male: 96.8%

female: 95.5% (1996 census)

Education System:

Schooling in New Caledonia is compulsory until the age of 16 and is modeled after the French system, offering a comparable quality of education.

(2003) Students Enrolled: Elementary (36,995); High-school (30,940); University (2,597).

Total Pre-schools:()	
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	
Second Level:	
Third Level:	
Total Secondary Schools:	
Total Professional Schools	
Universities:	

Number of Schools per Island:										
	Pre-school		Elementary			High-school		Prof.	University	
	Pub	Priv	1	2	3	Pub	Priv		Pub	Priv

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	Pre-School	Elementary	High-school	Prof.	University
2003	0	36,995	30,940	0	2,597

Teachers							
Year	Pre-School	Elementary			High-School	Prof.	University
		1	2	3			

In 2002 the success rate for the secondary school leaving certificate was 69.6%; for the BEP (vocational diploma), 62.7%, and for the CAP (vocational training certificate), 75.5%.

For many years most students wishing to continue with their education past high school went to France, but the number of higher training courses in New Caledonia has been constantly increasing. There is currently one university, the University of New Caledonia, offering two-year university diplomas, bachelor degrees, a graduate program in public law, and a few post-graduate degrees. In addition to formal tertiary education, the Department of Education offers a wide range of BTS (advanced vocational training certificate) courses.

Other educational institutions include the School of Management and Commerce, run by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, offering a three-year training course for those wishing to enter the corporate world; the Teacher Training Institute, which requires an entry exam to get into but once students are accepted they are considered trainee civil servants and receive pay; The School of Art, a two-year arts academy; the Training Centre for Health Professions, a three-year course of study; and the School of Engineering, a higher education centre offering courses in general and technical sciences, economics, and social sciences. The degree offered upon completion is in engineering.

There is an extremely diverse and practical vocational sector in New Caledonia, mostly provided by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Department of Education, in cooperation with more than 250 businesses who offer internships to the trainees.

Medical Services:

The provision of health services is primarily under provincial jurisdiction, however independent healthcare facilities operate under the authority of the Department of Health and Social Services of New Caledonia (DASS-NC).

This Territorial entity is responsible for hospitals, health regulations, the management of training centres, planning and statistics. Each province has its own Provincial Department of Health and Social Affairs (DPASS). These facilities are complemented by three private clinics, all in Noumea. The quality of healthcare is considered high, and most medical professionals are trained in France.

There are more than 450 doctors, 120 dental surgeons, 90 pharmacies, and 1,024 nurses. In 2002, the last year for which statistics are currently available, short-term hospital capacity was 786 beds, or 3.61 per 1,000 inhabitants. Despite the high quality healthcare, in 2002, there were 1911 medical evacuations out of New Caledonia, 89.9% going to Australia, and most of the remainder to France.

HISTORY AND CULTURE**History:**

The Lapita, skilled navigators and agriculturalists, arrived in New Caledonia in 1500 BC. Polynesians later arrived and mixed with the original settlers. European contact with the islands was in the late 18th century when British explorer, James Cook, saw Grand Terre, naming it New Caledonia. British and North American whalers and sandalwood dealers traded with the islanders, dishonesty and cheating creating tensions between the outsiders and those inhabiting the islands. Europeans bartered with alcohol and tobacco—introducing social problems, as well as spreading diseases such as smallpox, measles, dysentery, influenza, syphilis and leprosy that killed many. As this type of trade began to die out, islanders started being exported as

slaves to work in Australian and Fijian sugar plantations. This continued until the early 1800s when Catholic and Protestant missionaries arrived, eradicating much of the traditional indigenous cultural practices.

France settled New Caledonia in the first half of the 19th century, making it a French possession in 1853. From 1864 until the early 1900s New Caledonia served as a penal colony. New Caledonia remained a colony until 1946 when it was made an Overseas Territory.

In 1985 the Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak Socialiste (FLNKS) started a movement for independence, calling for the establishment of an independent state of 'Kanaky'. In 1988 violent unrest led to the signing of the Matignon Accords which increased the degree of autonomy afforded the region, followed by the 1998 Noumea Accord. In 1999 the islands' status changed again, establishing them as a Collectivity Sui Generis – a status unique in the French Republic.

Referenda:

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 as many as three referenda between 2013 and 2018, to decide whether New Caledonia should assume full sovereignty and independence.

Recent Significant Events:

National holiday: Bastille Day, 14 July (1789).

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

The native New Caledonian Kanak music is a blend of traditional Melanesian music with modern pop and world music. Traditional instruments include bamboo flutes and conch shells. Kanaks are known for many kinds of folk dances, most famous 'the pilou', was banned in 1951.

The Pacific Tempo is an important music festival, held every three years in Noumea.

The Avocado Festival is held in mid to late-May, the three-day Foire de Bourail from late-August to early September, and the biennial 'quinox' in October.

Performers of this traditional/modern music include OK! Ryos, Edou and Gurejele. The most well-known modern record label on New Caledonia is Alain Lecante's Mangrove Studios, which distributes much of the Kaneka music.

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