

New Zealand

Head of state **Queen Elizabeth II represented by Anand**

Satyanand

Head of government **John Key**

Death penalty **abolitionist for all crimes**

Population **4.3 million**

Life expectancy **80.6 years**

Under-5 mortality (m/f) **6/5 per 1,000**

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Indigenous Peoples' property rights were recognized by the Marine and Coastal Area Bill. The Immigration Act continued to put asylum-seekers at risk of persecution because of the passenger screening process.

Indigenous Peoples' rights

In April, the Government announced its support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In September, the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Bill was introduced which aims to repeal the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 that discriminated against Maori property claims. However, the Bill did not afford Indigenous Peoples the right to exclusive occupation or the right to register a claim for property already in private ownership. The Bill was pending before parliament at the end of the year.

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Counter-terror and security

In August, the Minister of Defence confirmed that detainees arrested by the Afghan Crisis Response Unit, which the New Zealand Special Air Service has worked with, had been transferred to the National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan's Intelligence Service, where they were at grave risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

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Refugees and asylum-seekers

The Immigration Act 2009 allowed the detention period for refugees and asylum-seekers to be extended without warrant to up to 96 hours and lacked an explicit guarantee against the detention of children and young people. The Act empowered the chief executive of the Immigration Department to refuse a person permission to board an aircraft to travel to New Zealand without providing a reason. This could expose asylum-seekers to harm if they were at risk of torture or other serious human rights violations in their own countries. The Act also denied asylum applicants access to judicial review.

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Legal, constitutional or institutional developments

The Immigration Act 2009 allows schools to provide education to children who are unlawfully in New Zealand, partly remedying New Zealand's General Reservation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The government continued to refuse to legally entrench the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, allowing for the possible enactment of legislation that could be inconsistent with its provisions.

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Police and security forces

In March, a High Court judge found that police in Whakatane had subjected a detainee to excessive use of force. The detainee had been held in a cell for over seven hours and repeatedly squirted with pepper spray and hit with a baton.

An investigation into complaints against three police officers for the ill-treatment of detainees was ongoing at the end of year.

In October, two off duty policemen in Manukau were convicted of assaulting a group of students.

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