

New Zealand

Total area: 268,680 sq km

Population: 4 million

Capital: Wellington

Geography

New Zealand consists of two islands that are located south-east of Australia in the South Pacific. Both islands are well known for their beautiful scenery. There are active volcanoes, caves, deep **glacial lakes**, amazing fjords, and long sandy beaches.

The majority of the people live on the North Island, **mainly for** its mild climate and economic potential, since the capital city, Wellington, as well as the largest city, Auckland, are also situated here. New Zealand's largest natural lake, the Taupo, is also to be found on the North Island.

On the South Island you can find the Southern Alps, a 300-mile long mountain range, with the highest peak Mount Cook (3,754 metres). There are more than 360 glaciers in the Southern Alps.



New Zealand's largest natural lake, the Taupo



Maori people performing their traditional dances.

History

It is generally agreed that the first settlers in New Zealand came from Eastern Polynesia in the Central Pacific around AD 800. These were most likely the **ancestors** of the Maori population. The first European to reach New Zealand was a Dutch sailor, Abel Tasman, in 1642. However, it was the British naval officer James Cook who really explored the country and colonists and **tradesmen** soon followed him to the islands.

Great Britain **took control of** the South Island **by right of discovery**, and the North Island also became a British colony in 1840, when the **Treaty** of Waitangi was

signed by the Maori northern chiefs. The Maori were promised protection. A few years later war **broke out** between the Maori and the British, as some Maori **were not willing to sell** their land **to the newcomers and felt deceived** by the Treaty. The Maori **resistance** was more or less crushed by 1870.

The **effort** to achieve independence from Britain **culminated** after WWII, and New Zealand became formally independent in 1947. It is still a member of the Commonwealth.

Political system

New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy in which the British monarch is the formal head of state and **appoints** a governor-general. **Legislative power resides with the single-chamber** House of Representatives (Parliament), whose members are elected for three-year terms. The party that has a majority in the House forms the government, which comprises the prime minister (the leader of the winning party) and their ministers. There are two major parties - National and Labour.

People

The majority of the population (about 74 per cent) are made up of those of European **descent**. The Maoris form the second **largest group** (about 13.5 per cent). New Zealanders are known for being friendly and **easygoing**.

Holidays

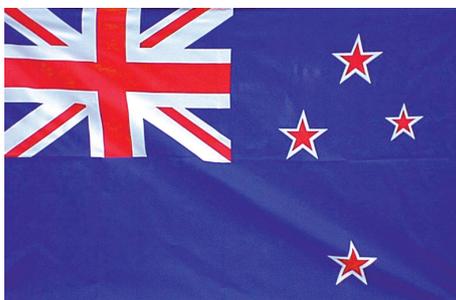
Since 1960, February 6 is celebrated by New Zealanders as Waitangi Day. It is an occasion for thanksgiving, and for remembering the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Some recognise Anzac Day, a public holiday held on 25 April each year. This is a holiday to honour those New Zealanders who were killed in the two world wars. The holiday **celebrates those values admirable about this nation - comradeship**, unity, courage, **self-sacrifice**, and loyalty.

Marie Šormová, Phil Jones (Great Britain)

vocabulary

glacial lake ['gleɪʃl leɪk] - ledovcové jezero
mainly for - hlavně kvůli
ancestor ['ænsɪstə] - předchůdce
tradesman ['treɪdzmən] - obchodník
took control of... by right of discovery [kən'trəʊl dɪ'skav(ə)rɪ] - ovládl... právem objevitele
treaty ['tri:tɪ] - dohoda, smlouva
to break out - vypuknout
were not willing to sell... to the newcomers and felt deceived ['nju:kəmæz dɪ'si:vɪd] - nebyli ochotni prodat... přistěhovalcům a cítili se podvedeni
resistance [rɪ'zɪst(ə)ns] - odpor
effort... culminated ['efət 'kʌlmɪneɪtɪd] - snaha... vyvrcholila
to appoint [ə'pɔɪnt] - jmenovat
legislative power resides with the single-chamber ['ledʒɪslətɪv rɪ'zɪdɪz 'tʃembə] - zákonodárná moc přísluší jednokomorovému
descent [dɪ'sent] - původ
easygoing [i:zɪ'gəʊɪŋ] - pohodový
celebrates those values admirable about this nation ['vælju:z 'ædm(ə)rəb(ə)l] - oslavuje vlastnosti, které jsou na tomto národu obdivuhodné
comradeship ['kɒmreɪdʃɪp] - kamarádství, soudržnost
self-sacrifice [self'sækrɪfəsɪz] - obětavost
star formation [stɑ:'mɛʃ(ə)n] - souhvězdí



New Zealand's flag, like the Australian one, has a royal blue background with a small Union Jack, the flag of Great Britain, in the top-left corner. The four five-pointed red stars represent the Southern Cross **star formation** that is found in the Southern Hemisphere.