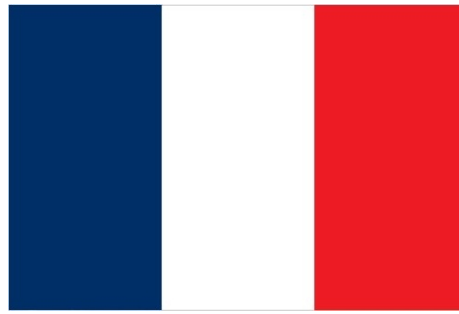




NEW CALEDONIA



INTRODUCTION

The Lapita, skilled navigators, first settled in New Caledonia around 1600 B.C. British explorers arrived in 1774. In 1853, France annexed New Caledonia. During World War II, New Caledonia became an important base for Allied troops. In 1953, French citizenship was granted to all inhabitants.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

President Emmanuel MACRON; represented by High Commissioner Patrice FAURE

Head of Government

President of the Government Louis MAPOU

Government Type

parliamentary democracy (Territorial Congress); an overseas collectivity of France

Capital

Noumea

Legislature

unicameral Territorial Congress or Congrès du Territoire (54 seats)

Ambassador to US

NA

US Ambassador

NA

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 18,575 sq km
Land: 18,275 sq km
Water: 300 sq km

Climate

tropical; modified by southeast trade winds; hot, humid

Natural Resources

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

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

upper-middle-income French Pacific territorial economy; enormous nickel reserves; ongoing French independence negotiations; large Chinese nickel exporter; luxury eco-tourism destination; large French aid recipient; high cost-of-living; lingering wealth disparities

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$10.27 billion (2021)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$35,700 (2021)

Industries - nickel mining and smelting

Agricultural products - coconuts, vegetables, maize, fruit, beef, pork, potatoes, bananas, eggs, yams

Exports \$1.92 billion (2021 est.)

iron alloys, nickel, essential oils, recreational boats, shrimp (2021)

partners: China 55%, South Korea 16%, Japan 11%, Taiwan 4%, Spain 3% (2021)

Imports \$2.26 billion (2021 est.)

refined petroleum, coal, cars, packaged medicines, delivery trucks (2021)

partners: France 39%, Australia 14%, Singapore 11%, New Zealand 7%, China 7% (2021)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

300,680 (2023 est.)

Population Growth

1.17% (2023 est.)

Ethnicity

Kanak 39.1%, European 27.1%, Wallisian, Futunian 8.2%, Tahitian 2.1%, Indonesian 1.4%, Ni-Vanuatu 1%, Vietnamese 0.9%, other 17.7%, unspecified 2.5% (2014 est.)

Language

French (official), 33 Melanesian-Polynesian dialects

Religion

Christian 85.2%, Muslim 2.8%, other 1.6%, unaffiliated 10.4% (2020 est.)

Urbanization

urban population: 72.7% of total population (2023)

rate of urbanization: 1.72% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)