

## French Presence in New Zealand

France is New Zealand's third-largest individual trading partner within the European Union. Top exports to France include sheepmeat, medical apparatus, fish and sheepskin while top imports into New Zealand include aircraft, vehicles, machinery and wine. Imports from France dominate the two-way trade representing.

While many New Zealanders recognise French brands such as L'Oreal, Veolia and Danone, there are many other smaller businesses joining the French New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (FNZCCI) to expand their operations in New Zealand.

However, for the moment, French franchises do not yet have a notable presence in New Zealand, despite the implantation of other international franchise systems. New Zealand has welcomed overseas franchise systems from countries such as Australia, UK, USA, Canada, South Africa and Asian countries.

France has had diplomatic relations with New Zealand since August 1945.

France also provides a significant source of investment into New Zealand, particularly in the wine industry which includes Veuve Clicquot and Deutz. Yoplait is a very well-known yoghurt brand in the New Zealand agri-food sector. Investment have also been made in New Zealand's transport and communications sector by Alcatel, Alstom and in the waste management sector by ONYX.

French tourists are on the rise in New Zealand. There was a 13% increase in French visitors in the year 2014 compared to the previous year and the number of young French people coming to New Zealand has increased exponentially in the last two decades with 115 people recorded in 2000 under the Working Holiday Scheme to 8000 in 2014.

The Education Cooperation Agreement signed in September 2013 strengthens educational ties between France and New Zealand. It promotes student and teacher exchanges and the learning of the two respective languages of the countries.

French is still the most popular foreign language of choice in New Zealand.

In 1991, the New Zealand-France Friendship fund which provides for cultural, literary and educational exchanges was established following the Rainbow Warrior incident.

Gilles Menguy - Avocat à la Cour

gmenguy@gm-avocats.com