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# GOING FOR GROWTH

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## Summary of Government actions

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**FEBRUARY 2025**

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**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

# Summary of Government actions

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## Developing talent

### ✓ Delivered

- Implemented the **attendance action plan**, including more regular reporting of attendance figures to get more students in school and learning
- Introduced better training and more **tools to support teachers** in reading, writing and maths
- Introduced **structured literacy and mathematics** teaching to raise achievement in schools
- Introduced a requirement for **one hour of reading, writing and maths** every day in schools
- Opened the first **Charter Schools** to provide more choice and diversity in the school system, allowing students to learn in ways that are specific to their needs
- Launched the **Māori Education Action Plan** to support higher achievement by Māori students in schools
- Changed the **Accredited Employer Work Visa**, including removing the median wage requirement to allow employers to get the workers they need
- Introduced a **Traffic Light System** so that jobseekers meet their obligations to be prepared for or find a job

### 🔄 Underway

- Implementing **Teaching the Basics Brilliantly** including the use of consistent assessment tools to identify students who need targeted help, and then providing that help
- Implementing next steps in the **attendance action plan** including a step system to set out requirements and expectations for parents, schools, and the Ministry of Education to get students in school
- Ensuring immigration settings attract the right migrants – including reviewing skilled residence settings
- Creating a more **responsive vocational education and training** system to better meet the needs of students, industry and the economy
- **Removing red tape in Early Childhood Education** to make it more accessible, affordable and effective
- Continuing to prioritise reforms to get **job seekers into work** and reduce benefit dependency
- Ensuring New Zealand's **university system can better cultivate talent**, expand opportunities, and fuel scientific innovation

## Competitive business settings

### ✓ Delivered

- **Repealed so-called 'Fair Pay Agreements'**, which reduced flexibility and increased costs for employers
- **Extended 90 Day Trials** to all employers so they can take a chance on a new employee
- Revoked overly prescriptive affordability requirements for **accessing credit**, through making it easier to borrow money
- Passed the **Contracts of Insurance Act** to modernise insurance law
- Conducted a sector review of **Early Childhood Education** to improve regulatory settings and reduce regulatory **burden**
- Launched a **review of New Zealand's competition rules** to combat monopolies and improve economic productivity

### 🔄 Underway

- Reviewing the **governance and effectiveness** of the Commerce Commission
- Acting on the recommendations of the Commerce Commission's review of **competition in the banking sector**, and progressing a Select Committee inquiry into banking competition
- Progressing the **electricity market performance review**
- Improving competition settings **in the grocery sector**
- Progressing the **Customer and Product Data Bill** to facilitate competition, innovation and productivity
- Considering how **tax settings** can be less complex and enable economic growth
- Progressing **reform of health and safety laws** to reduce the compliance burden on employers
- Progressing work on **employment relations** legislation, including passing reforms to the Holidays Act and Employment Relations Act, to simplify them, **give businesses certainty and reduce compliance costs**
- Progressing work on legislation to **streamline financial services regulations** and cut red tape
- Progressing work to **modernise, simplify and digitise key legislation for businesses**
- Legislating to **improve the patenting process** for New Zealand businesses
- Reforming **capital markets** settings by removing barriers to listing, reducing costs to firms and enabling greater investment in private assets from KiwiSaver providers
- Examining settings around **Māori land use** to potentially enable more productive use of Māori land
- **Conducting sector reviews** into Agricultural and Horticultural Products, and Hairdressing and Barbering to improve regulatory settings and reduce the regulatory burden
- Improving **Government Procurement Rules** to reduce red tape and ensure spending is responsible, promotes competition and supports New Zealand businesses
- Progressing work on the **Regulatory Standards Bill**

## Promoting global trade and investment

### ✓ Delivered

- Completed **Ministerial trade missions** to Brazil, China, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and the United States to build connections and promote New Zealand as open for business
- Resolved 14 **non-tariff barriers** affecting \$190 million worth of trade in the year to June 2024, assisting New Zealand businesses selling to the world
- Loosened **visitor visas** to allow digital nomads and others to continue to work remotely for foreign employers, meaning they will stay longer and spend more in New Zealand
- Agreed to **amend the Overseas Investment Act** to make investment into New Zealand faster and more efficient, enabling foreign capital to support our economy
- Announced **changes to investor visa settings** to better facilitate direct foreign investment and encourage economic growth
- Consulted on policy proposals to address an issue with **Foreign Investment Funds (FIF)** that may be deterring people from settling in New Zealand and contributing to economic growth
- Signed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and investment treaty with the **United Arab Emirates**, to reduce duties on New Zealand exports and unlock opportunities for Kiwi businesses
- Concluded negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with the **Gulf Cooperation Council** to unlock the region for New Zealand exporters
- Launched a **new Minerals Strategy** and **Critical Minerals List** to support a productive and resilient economy

### 🔄 Underway

- Delivery of **further international trade missions** to key markets to build New Zealand's profile and support businesses on the international stage
- **Resolving further non-tariff barriers** that impede trade outcomes to give New Zealand exporters a fair go
- Developing a marketing plan to **boost numbers of international visitors**, supporting the tourism sector to grow
- Delivering a marketing plan to **boost numbers of international students**, supporting the sector to grow and increasing New Zealand's international connectivity
- Passing legislation to **remove barriers to overseas investment** in 'build to rent' housing, enabling housing growth
- Reforming the **Overseas Investment Act** to energise and facilitate more Foreign Direct Investment
- Establishing **Invest New Zealand** as a one-stop-shop to attract foreign direct investment
- Hosting an **Infrastructure Investment Summit** to generate investment interest in infrastructure opportunities in New Zealand
- Bringing **new Free Trade Agreements** into force and fully implementing them to maximise the benefits for New Zealand exporters
- Implementing the **Minerals Strategy** for New Zealand, ensuring the sector can grow and contribute positively to New Zealand's economic prospects

## Innovation, technology and science

### ✓ Delivered

- Announced **reforms to the innovation, technology and science system** to clarify priorities, lift economic outcomes and harness advanced technology for a more prosperous future
- Introduced legislation to **remove the gene technology ban** and enable the safe use of gene technology in agriculture, health science and other sectors
- Launched the **Space and Advanced Aviation Strategy 2030** with a target of doubling the value of the sector by 2030
- Created the first **Prime Minister's Space Prize**, to inspire the next generation of space professionals
- Launched a framework to accelerate the responsible use of **Artificial Intelligence technologies** across the New Zealand Public Service

### 🔄 Underway

- Establishing new **Public Research Organisations**, focused on the bio-economy, earth sciences, health and forensic sciences, and advanced technologies
- Establishing the Prime Minister's **Science, Innovation and Technology Advisory Council** to enable prioritisation and focus across the science, innovation and technology system
- Passing a new **Gene Technology Bill** to end the near 30-year ban on gene technology outside the lab, and to establish a regulator to enable the safe use of gene technology and regulated organisms
- Encouraging the **growth of the space and advanced aviation sector** by removing unnecessary red tape and freeing up innovators to test and commercialise their technology and ideas
- Developing a **National AI Strategy**, highlighting the opportunities it offers for economic growth in both the public sector and wider economy
- Engaging with business on how to **lift their investment in R&D and capital intensity**, to accelerate uptake of automation, AI, data analytics and better technology

## Infrastructure for growth

### ✓ Delivered

- Introduced a **second RMA reform Bill to Parliament** to make short-term improvements to streamline the current system to make it quicker and simpler to consent renewable energy, boost housing supply and reduce red tape.
- Passed the **Fast-track Approvals Act** to speed up consenting of projects with significant regional or national benefits
- **Established National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited** to improve the financing and funding of the infrastructure system
- Opened the \$1.2 billion **Regional Infrastructure Fund** to invest in regional growth initiatives to grow local economies and create jobs, which has already included projects on flood-resilience, geothermal energy, Māori development and economic development.
- Set the **National Land Transport Fund at \$22 billion** over the next three years through the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport investing in transport including the **Roads of National Significance** programme to unlock growth
- **Streamlined building regulation** for building plans and MultiProof designs and put a spotlight on building consent delays, to make it easier and cheaper to build in New Zealand
- Delivered **Independent Inquiry into the School Property System**, to establish a better way of delivering school property infrastructure

### 🔄 Underway

- Preparing legislation to **replace the Resource Management Act** (the third and final phase of RMA Reform)
- Developing the 30-year **National Infrastructure Plan**, to be completed by the end of 2025, which will give a long-term view of planned investment
- Considering and approving investments to be made by the **Regional Infrastructure Fund**, contributing to regional economies and creating jobs
- Policy changes to **free up land for urban development** to address the housing shortage
- Enacting legislation to **allow more overseas building products** to be used, making it easier to build and creating more flexibility
- Improving the **building consent and planning system** to make it easier to build homes, including enabling granny flats up to 60 square metres without a building consent
- Increasing **remote inspections** in the building consent process and developing an opt-in **self-certification scheme** for low-risk residential building work, to streamline the building of houses
- Taking decisions on **Public Works Act** reform, to make it easier for the Crown to deliver infrastructure projects that provide wide public benefit
- Reforming water services through **Local Water Done Well** to lift investment in this critical infrastructure
- Enacting legislation to enable **offshore renewable energy** generation and progressing changes to the planning system to implement **ElectrifyNZ** and open up opportunities in the energy sector
- Responding to the **Independent Inquiry into the School Property System**, to improve the provision of school infrastructure and ultimately lead to safer, warmer and dryer buildings for students
- Removing regulatory barriers to the **uptake of renewable energy and alternative fuels** to maximise choices for businesses and consumers, including updating fuel specifications and safety regulations, and setting smart EV charging standards
- Finalising the first **Regional Deal** between central and local government to support collaboration for long-term infrastructure investment and help to unlock funding and financing tools by December 2025



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