
GOING FOR GROWTH

Promoting Global Trade and Investment Update

NOVEMBER 2025



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Promoting Global Trade and Investment

New Zealand's economy relies heavily on exports from a range of sectors, including food and fibre, tourism, technology, and education. These industries are key sources of foreign income. The Government has set an ambitious goal of doubling export value in 10 years. To achieve this, New Zealand must improve access to international markets, increase the value and diversity of its exports, and attract high-quality investment to boost productivity and support long-term growth.

Since the release of *Going For Growth* in February, the Government has delivered 18 initiatives aimed at addressing these and other challenges. Delivered actions include:

- **Opening Invest New Zealand** to increase capital into our high potential sectors.
- **Boosting the Elevate Fund** to support its target of stimulating \$1 billion worth of investments over 15 years.
- **Refreshing the Active Investor Plus Visa** to make it easier for high-net-worth individuals to contribute skills, capital and international connections to grow New Zealand.
- **Completing 17 Trade Missions** to open doors for New Zealand businesses and showcase Kiwi products and services to the world, most recently Saudi Arabia, China and India.
- **Accelerating Māori exports** and supporting Māori businesses to grow and prosper.

These actions are boosting dynamism in New Zealand's trade sectors, fostering investment and opportunities, and laying the foundation for high-value exports.

Hearing from business on their priorities

Throughout our consistent engagement with the business community, we have heard how trade and investment is vital to grow New Zealand. Capital needs to be easier to access, investment processes need to be more straightforward for international investors, Kiwi exporters need better access to foreign markets, and we need to unlock the export potential of Māori owned firms.



Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon Todd McClay, takes part in a livestream to promote premium New Zealand products to Chinese audiences during the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai, November 2025.

Case Studies

Invest New Zealand has opened its doors



Invest New Zealand officially opened its doors in July 2025. This marks a bold new chapter in our economic strategy, illustrating the Government's commitment to bring productive capital to New Zealand.

This new Autonomous Crown Entity is designed to position New Zealand as a leading destination for foreign direct investment. It will attract billions in global capital by connecting international investors, bringing both expertise and funding, with high-quality investment opportunities across the country. This streamlines the investment process and provides tailored support to these international investors. Invest New Zealand will attract investment into high-potential sectors that will support its mandate to boost productivity, foster innovation, and create high-paying jobs. Invest New Zealand may have just opened but will be a cornerstone of the Government's ambition to build lasting economic momentum.

Active Investor Plus success



The Government has seen a surge in interest from global investors following changes to the Active Investor Plus visa scheme. Previously underutilised, the revamped visa has attracted 443 applications since April 2025. In the first six months, the total number of applications received exceeded those in the previous two and a half years. This influx represents a potential \$2.6 billion in new investment.

Already, 312 applications have been approved in principle, with 50 investors transferring funds and receiving residence. These early investments total at least \$594 million.

The initiative is a win-win: boosting local businesses and employment by investing in our business sector while positioning New Zealand as a stable, innovation-friendly destination for global investors.



Sunset over Auckland City. Credit: Shutterstock.

Elevate Fund boost supports business growth



The Government wants more export-focused startups supported to pursue and create opportunities in the global market. A key lever to accomplish this is the Elevate Venture Capital Fund. The Elevate Fund is a government-funded investment programme designed to support the growth of early-stage, high-growth startups, especially those with global ambitions.

High-growth startups in New Zealand will have access to funding they need through an extra \$100 million committed to the Elevate Fund, made up of \$61 million from the New Zealand Super Fund and \$39 million from Budget 2025.

With the help of Elevate-backed funds, high-growth New Zealand business can more easily access the capital and connections they need to be successful. Startups such as Dawn Aerospace are developing reusable spaceplanes and non-toxic satellite propulsion systems and have expanded operations to France and the Netherlands, while still being run out of Christchurch. Other startups like Halter are transforming day-to-day farming operations with smart collars for cows that enable farmers to guide livestock via phone. Since receiving Elevate Fund support, Halter has nearly quadrupled its workforce to meet growing demand and has attracted significant further funding including from international venture capital funds.



Minister for Economic Development, Hon Nicola Willis, on a Streetdog50 electric motorbike at FTN Motion, Hamilton. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise supported FTN Motion secure funding and prepare for international expansion.

Successful Trade Mission to Viet Nam unlocks opportunities for business



Earlier in the year, the Prime Minister led a delegation that included senior New Zealand business leaders to Viet Nam. With over two decades averaging over five per cent annual economic growth, and with a population of more than 100 million people, Viet Nam is a market with huge opportunity for New Zealand, particularly in the areas of international education and high-quality food and beverage offerings.

Over \$131 million in potential export value over the next three years was unlocked during the visit. The mission saw 16 export deals and commercial partnerships signed across three days. While in Viet Nam, Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and his counterpart, Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, announced the elevation of the New Zealand-Viet Nam relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Strengthening our relationship with Viet Nam is important to New Zealand's economic future, with more opportunities for New Zealand businesses to access this crucial market.



Prime Minister Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, pictured with the business delegation in Viet Nam in February 2025.

Accelerating Māori Exports



The Accelerated Export Capability Programme equips Māori exporters to connect the stories behind their brands to the international market, creating brand affinity, leading to new collaborations and sales opportunities.

In May 2025 the programme supported a delegation from Māori Kiwifruit Growers Inc (MKGI) to visit the United Arab Emirates to develop new partnerships, leveraging the Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Chapter under the NZ-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The tikanga and kawa, values-led approach alive within Māori businesses delivers value for overseas consumers. A direct outcome of the visit is a dedicated Dubai programme with MKGI, highlighting Māori values and the Māori economy. Revenue resulting from this new approach in Dubai will be evident over the next 12 months, and will enable future growers to continue to add value to the New Zealand economy and pave the way for increased export revenues for Aotearoa.

Kiwifruit is a \$3.9 billion export industry with forecasts expected to rise to \$4 billion in 2026. Māori make up nearly 10 percent of the industry by footprint, with Māori Kiwifruit Growers contributing \$1.9 million of total sales. The Māori Kiwifruit Growers collective works to build and grow, protect, and sustain Māori Kiwifruit operations for future generations.



Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon Todd McClay pictured with the #MadewithCare fruit truck in Bangkok, Thailand. Kiwifruit is a \$3.9 billion industry with forecasts expected to rise \$4 billion in 2026.

Government's Actions

The Government has delivered 26 actions to drive global trade and investment with a further eight underway. A new action has been added to modernise the concessions system for mining and tourism to drive better economic outcomes. We are delivering investment and working to double the value of New Zealand's exports in 10 years.

✓ Delivered

Delivered since February 2025

- Hosted an **Infrastructure Investment Summit** to generate investment interest in infrastructure opportunities in New Zealand.
- Established **Invest New Zealand** as a one-stop-shop to attract foreign direct investment.
- Completed **17 Ministerial trade missions**, most recently to Saudi Arabia, China, and India.
- Introduced legislation to Parliament to **amend the Overseas Investment Act**.
- Released the **Tourism Growth Roadmap** to boost numbers of international visitors, supporting the tourism sector to grow.
- Launched the **Tourism Boost Package** to support immediate growth in visitor numbers, drive export activity and deliver broader economic growth in New Zealand.
- **Resolved 15 non-tariff barriers affecting \$600 million worth of trade** in the year to June 2025, assisting New Zealand businesses selling to the world.
- Provided **tariff advice to exporters** in response to developments in US trade policy through weekly reports, interactive webinars and a specialised helpdesk.
- Delivered legislation to **remove barriers to overseas investment** in 'build to rent' housing, enabling housing growth.
- Resolved a **dairy dispute with Canada** under the CPTPP, delivering up to \$157 million per year in export value for New Zealand dairy exporters.
- Enabled New Zealand businesses to **access a \$500 billion market through the NZ-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (FTA)**, which entered into force in August 2025.
- Signed a **NZ-UAE Bilateral Investment Treaty** in January, complementing the NZ-UAE FTA.
- Launched negotiations on a **Green Economy Partnership Agreement** to create a level playing field for green technologies and goods, and channel financial flows to future technologies.
- Established the **Future of Investment and Trade Partnership** with Singapore, Switzerland, the UAE, and 12 other small- and medium-sized economies to generate trade and investment opportunities among members.
- Concluded the **Agreement on Trade in Essential Supplies Agreement** with Singapore, strengthening our access to critical goods during times of crisis.
- Changed **Active Investor Plus visa settings** to boost local businesses and employment by attracting investment in our business sector while positioning New Zealand as a stable, innovation-friendly destination for global investors.
- Launched **FernMark Grass-Fed certification scheme** to help New Zealand red meat and dairy producers compete in international markets and allow New Zealand farmers to better benefit from premium earnings.
- Adjusted **New Zealand Screen Production Rebate-International settings** to attract a broader range of global productions, boost local jobs, and strengthen New Zealand's screen industry.

Delivered prior February 2025

- 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.
- 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.
- Implemented **changes to investor visa settings** to better facilitate foreign direct investment and encourage economic growth.
- Developed policy proposals regarding foreign investment 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

New actions since February 2025

- **Improve the Department of Conservation concession management system**, particularly for mining and tourism to provide certainty for business investment and achieve better economic outcomes.
- Progress **biodiscovery protection** for indigenous flora/fauna and improve recognition of cultural intellectual property and provenance to provide certainty for businesses and make it easier to securely participate in the global bioeconomy market.
- Promoting New Zealand to **boost numbers of international students**, supporting the sector to grow and increasing New Zealand's international connectivity.

Actions underway prior to February 2025

- Undertaking trade missions to build relationships and advancing market access for New Zealand businesses.
- Progressing **resolution of non-tariff barriers** that impede trade outcomes to give New Zealand exporters a fair go, including advocating to defend, strengthen and modernise the rules-based trading system that provides the platform for businesses to operate and levels the playing field.
- Implementing the Tourism Growth Roadmap to **boost international visitors** and double the value of tourism exports by 2034.
- Negotiating new trade agreements (including with India and ongoing expansion and accession negotiations), bringing **new Free Trade Agreements** into force and fully implementing them to maximise the benefits for New Zealand exporters. This includes, where applicable, dedicated Māori and Indigenous Trade and Economic Cooperation Chapters and strengthening Māori-Indigenous connections through the Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Arrangement (IPETCA) and the bilateral Indigenous Collaboration Arrangements with Australia and Canada.
- **Implementing the Minerals Strategy** for New Zealand, ensuring the sector can grow and contribute positively to New Zealand's economic prospects.

If you want more on *Going For Growth* including this pillar and why it is key for economic growth see:

www.goingforgrowth.govt.nz



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