
GOING FOR GROWTH

Summary of Government actions

MARCH 2026



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Government actions

Developing Talent

✓ Delivered

- Delivered a new **Tertiary Education Strategy** to define long-term strategic direction and priorities for the sector.
- Created a more **responsive vocational education and training system** to better meet the needs of students, industry and the economy by moving decision making back to regions, more closely aligned to the people it supports.
- **Launched Tahatū Career Navigator**, New Zealand's new online career planning website, designed to help New Zealanders make informed career decisions. It replaces careers.govt.nz, which was retired in December 2025.
- Implemented a service to provide **community job coaches for up to 10,000 young job seekers** across two years to support them to overcome barriers to obtaining sustainable employment.
- **Introduced two new seasonal visa pathways** to help businesses access the workers they need during peak periods, while also prioritising jobs for New Zealanders.
- **Improved school attendance** through tailored approaches to addressing the underlying causes of absence.
- Completed Phase 1 of the **Attendance Action Plan**, including the daily publication of attendance data, the introduction of updated attendance codes during Term 1 2025, and the rollout of a behaviour change campaign.
- Allocated nearly **\$123 million over four years for the delivery of a new attendance service and almost \$17 million to strengthen frontline attendance services**, aiming to reduce chronic absence and lift attendance rates.
- Commenced **investment in new teacher resources and support services**, backed by \$271 million over four years from Budget 2025.
- Made the **largest investment into learning support in more than 20 years** to support Kiwi kids to better thrive at school, including expanding the early intervention service, which includes 900,000 additional teacher aide hours by 2029.
- Implemented **changes to the Accredited Employer Work Visa** to make it easier for employers to hire skilled migrants when there are gaps in our local labour market. Changes include amending the labour market test to a declaration-based system alongside back-end system checks, removing the requirement to pay the median wage, and speeding up processing – while strengthening protections against exploitation.
- Implemented a **Parent Boost Visitor Visa** to incentivise skilled migrants to choose New Zealand, by making it easier for parents of New Zealand citizens and residents to visit New Zealand.
- Announced **new residence pathways** to help employers attract and retain skilled migrant workers with changes to be implemented in mid-2026.
- Introduced **Individual Employment Plans** to help job seekers overcome barriers to work.
- Implemented **new tools and requirements to ensure job seekers stay on track** with their obligations and engage more frequently with the Ministry of Social Development.
- Implemented more regular **reporting of school attendance** figures to get more students into 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 the classroom, by aligning actions with reporting on attendance and achievement targets and other education reports. This provides an evidence-base upon which we can draw when considering what works for Māori learners.
- Introduced a **Traffic Light System** to help job seekers understand what is required of them and keep track of their obligations while they are receiving a benefit.

Underway

- Exploring **system changes that focus on key life stages** where timely interventions can improve employment outcomes for young people at risk of persistent disadvantage.
- Establishing **10 new Polytechnics and 8 Industry Skills Boards** to better meet the needs of local communities, industries and the economy.
- Following public consultation, make decisions on the **future of NCEA** to explore how to make school qualifications more credible and coherent.
- **Removing red tape in Early Childhood Education** to make it more accessible, affordable and effective.
- Implementing **Teaching the Basics Brilliantly**, a multi-year strategy to provide more teacher resources, services and support to improve access and consistency in primary and secondary school around testing and delivery of tailored support.
- 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.
- Introducing **bonus payments to incentivise eligible young job seekers to stay off a benefit** for at least 12 months and enter employment.
- Implementing the **Employment Investment Strategy 2025-2028** to guide investment in the Ministry of Social Development's employment products and services.

Government actions

Competitive Business Settings

✓ Delivered

- Completed a review of **New Zealand's competition settings** and introduced legislation to amend the Commerce Act to promote fair and effective competition and improve economic productivity.
- Concluded the Governance and Effectiveness **Review of the Commerce Commission** and introduced legislation to strengthen the Commission's governance arrangements.
- Passed the **Regulatory Standards Bill** to bring greater scrutiny to regulatory restrictions.
- **Improved the Government Procurement Rules** to reduce red tape and ensure spending promotes competition and supports New Zealand businesses.
- **Completed review of electricity markets** and agreed an energy package to deliver secure and affordable energy.
- Passed the **Fast-Track Approvals Amendment Bill** and put in place a single building consenting authority to make it easier and faster for new supermarkets to be built across New Zealand, as part of work to improve grocery competition.
- Passed the **Customer and Product Data Act** and applied the Act to the banking sector enabling data portability to drive competition and innovation.
- Implemented **Investment Boost** to reduce upfront costs for capital investment.
- Passed **tax simplification measures** through the Taxation (Annual Rates for 2024–25, Emergency Response, and Remedial Measures) Act to reduce complexity and compliance costs in the tax system.
- Removed the prospective financial information requirement at the initial public offering stage, **reducing costs and complexity in our capital market settings**.
- Completed sector reviews for:
 - **agricultural and horticultural products**, to improve the availability of new products to New Zealand's farmers and horticulturalists and lift the productivity of both sectors
 - **hairdressing and barbering**, to remove outdated rules and thereby reduce costs of compliance in this largely small-business sector
 - **early childhood education** to help early childhood education centres safely educate and care for our children without excessive compliance requirements and costs.
- 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 amendments to the Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act.
- Passed the **Contracts of Insurance Act** to modernise insurance law.
- Passed the **Employment Relations Amendment Bill** to give businesses certainty and reduce compliance costs.

Underway

- Passing **legislation to implement changes to the Commerce Act**.
- Developing amending legislation to give effect to the Government's response to the Governance and Effectiveness **Review of the Commerce Commission**.
- Strengthening trans-Tasman and **international regulatory standards alignment** to reduce duplication and compliance costs for businesses operating across borders.
- Developing a **joint Government and industry anti-scam response** to ensure that consumers and businesses can transact confidently online.
- Initiating a **sector review of the telecommunications sector** to reduce complexity and ensure the settings are right to enable innovation in the sector.
- Reviewing the **regulation of product labelling** to allow for more innovative ways of communicating key information.
- Reviewing the Crown Pastoral Land Act to **support economic growth** through productive use of Crown land.
- Progressing amendments to the **Māori Trustee Act** to unlock funding and improve land productivity.
- Engaging with financial institutions to **improve Māori access to capital**, including developing data collection processes.
- Enhancing monitoring and evaluation of funds available for Māori in **support of Māori economic development**.
- Continuing work on implementing the recommendations from the Commerce Commission's **review of competition into personal banking services**.
- Responding to the Finance and Expenditure Committee inquiry into **banking competition**.
- Implementing the **energy package** including investing in security of supply and building better markets to improve affordability.
- Progressing work to **improve competition in the grocery sector**, including increasing penalties under the Fair Trading Act to deter unfair conduct.
- Continuing to focus on ensuring that **tax settings** enable economic growth.
- Progressing **reform of health and safety laws** to reduce the compliance burden on employers and improve the focus on critical risks.
- Passing legislation to **streamline financial services regulations** and cut red tape.
- Progressing work to **modernise, simplify and digitise key legislation** for businesses, including improving the patenting process for New Zealand businesses.
- Continuing to **improve capital markets settings** and encourage investment in New Zealand.
- Examining settings around **Māori land use** to enable more productive use of Māori land.
- Implementing the sector review of **Early Childhood Education** to improve regulatory settings and reduce regulatory burden.
- Introduced the Health and Safety at Work Amendment Bill to **reduce the compliance burden on employers** and improve the focus on critical risks.
- Agreed to replace the Holidays Act with a new **Employment Leave Bill** to simplify the system to give businesses certainty and reduce compliance costs.

Government actions

Promoting Global Trade and Investment

✓ Delivered

- Concluded negotiations on a **Free Trade Agreement with India**.
- 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 **18 Ministerial trade missions**, most recently to Latin America, Saudi Arabia, China, and India.
- **Amended the Overseas Investment Act** to make investment into New Zealand faster and more efficient, enabling foreign capital to support our economy.
- 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.
- Entry into force of the **NZ-UAE Bilateral Investment Treaty** in November 2025, 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.
- 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.
- 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

- Progressing the New Zealand – India Free Trade Agreement through to signature and ratification.
- **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** and supporting the sector to grow.
- 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 trade agreements (including ongoing expansion and accession negotiations), **bringing 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.

Government actions

Innovation, Technology and Science

✓ Delivered

- Confirmed a new national **Intellectual Property management policy** for government-funded science and research, putting researchers in the driver's seat.
- Established the **Prime Minister's Science, Innovation and Technology Advisory Council** to identify priorities for New Zealand science, innovation and technology.
- Simplified science funding by **creating Research Funding New Zealand** to streamline processes, reduce bureaucracy and enable researchers to focus more time on science and innovation.
- Established **three new Public Research Organisations** from existing CRIs, focused on the bioeconomy, earth sciences, and public health and forensic science.
- Committed \$231 million to **establish a fourth Public Research Organisation for advanced technology**.
- Confirmed the first investment for advanced technology, with **\$71 million committed to future magnetic and materials technology** to grow New Zealand's hi-tech exports based on cryogenics, superconductors, magnets and processed materials.
- Committed investment of up to **\$70 million over seven years to support innovative AI research and applications** through the New Zealand Institute for Advanced Technology, to develop world-class expertise and sharpen New Zealand's competitive edge.
- Launched a \$1.35 million discovery phase to explore a national quantum technologies platform.
- Launched **New Zealand's first AI Strategy** to leverage artificial intelligence for our economy.
- Published **Responsible AI Guidance for Business** to accelerate private sector adoption and innovation.
- Committed additional funding for the **Centre of Digital Excellence** to accelerate growth in New Zealand's gaming sector and create high-value digital jobs.
- Invested **\$24 million in seven joint research projects with Singapore**, deepening New Zealand's research ties with Singapore and building our capability in AI and biotechnology.
- Committed **\$42.8 million to establish a Biodiscovery Platform** to harness New Zealand's unique biodiversity to drive innovation, create high-value products, and grow a globally competitive bioeconomy.
- **Funded 46 bold, high-risk and innovative Smart Ideas projects from the Endeavour Fund**, ranging from MedTech and quantum computing, to climate resilience and sustainable agriculture to unlock new knowledge, technologies and capabilities.
- Launched **He Ara Whakahihi** a new, consolidated fund designed to unlock the economic potential of Māori-led research and innovation.
- Invested \$49 million in the **Antarctic Science Platform** to conduct research on Antarctica's impact on our earth and enable collaboration with our international partners on the Continent.
- Committed **\$23 million to the Gene Technology Regulator** to enable safe and effective use of gene technology, following the passing of legislation.
- Committed an extra **\$100 million to the Elevate Venture Capital Fund** at Budget 2025 to back start-ups and support a self-sustaining venture capital market in New Zealand
- Established a **Special Use Airspace at the Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre** which will help advanced aviation innovators to test and commercialise their technology and ideas.
- Invested \$5.6 million to support five joint projects as part of the **NZ-NASA Partnership**, addressing challenges like disaster resilience and climate change.

- Signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation with the State of Colorado**, focused on opportunities in aerospace, quantum and geothermal technology.
- Confirmed a **further seven interns to work at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory** for 13 weeks as part of the annual NZSA Space Scholarships Programme.
- Invested \$5.3 million through the Catalyst Fund for **three innovative trans-Tasman space projects** designed to enhance maritime awareness, improve agricultural planning and secure satellite communications.
- 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

- Ensuring healthy early stage and venture capital markets so that **startups can access capital** to scale.
- Progress legislation to **integrate Earth Sciences New Zealand and MetService** to improve the weather forecasting system for New Zealand.
- Progress legislation to **formalise and embed changes to the Science, Innovation and Technology system** to ensure the benefits are enduring.
- Continuing work on the **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.
- Continuing work to **remove unnecessary red tape for the space and aviation sectors**, freeing up innovators to test and commercialise their technology and ideas.
- Engaging with business on how to **lift their investment in research and development and capital intensity**, to accelerate uptake of automation, AI, data analytics and better technology.
- Implement the Public Service AI Work Programme.
- Publish the first Science Investment Plan to direct the Government's investment in Science, Innovation and Technology.
- Implement the **national IP policy** and strengthen commercialisation support.
- Continue establishing the **New Zealand Institute for Advanced Technology**.

Government actions

Infrastructure for Growth

✓ Delivered

- Passed the **Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill** to provide resource management system improvements and enable housing growth in our largest cities.
- Introduced a second **RMA reform Bill** to Parliament to make it quicker and simpler to consent renewable energy, boost housing supply and reduce red tape.
- Passed the **Public Works (Critical Infrastructure) Amendment Bill** to streamline the land acquisition process for major infrastructure projects.
- Removed the requirement for **granny flats up to 70 square metres** to have a building consent and a resource consent, a key milestone in the Government's efforts to improve the building consent and planning system.
- Reduced cost across the system by standardising the **wastewater consenting process**.
- Delivered the **Wood Energy Strategy and Action Plan** to accelerate wood energy as a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy resource for domestic and export markets.
- Agreed to commit \$1.136 billion from the \$1.200 billion **Regional Infrastructure Fund** to fund projects over 14 regions and a range of sectors, including flood resilience, energy, water storage, and Māori development.
- Developed the 30-year National Infrastructure Plan which will give a long-term view of planned investment.
- Agreed first steps for three **City and Regional Deals** to unlock regional potential and lift economic growth in Auckland, Otago/Central Lakes and Western Bay of Plenty.
- Accelerated **economic regulation requirements for Wellington City Council** under the Local Water Done Well Programme to ensure it is delivering value for money for ratepayers.
- Agreed policy decisions for further amendments to the **Public Works Act** to make it easier for the Crown to engage with landowners, support disaster recovery, and deliver infrastructure projects that provide wide public benefit.
- Delivered the **New Zealand Infrastructure Investment Summit**, which demonstrated that New Zealand is open for business and actively attracting foreign and local investment into infrastructure, including partnerships such as that between Brookfield and Waikato-Tainui on the Ruakura industrial and logistics hub.
- Launched a **refreshed Public Private Partnership (PPP) framework** that delivers infrastructure projects efficiently and provides value for money through drawing on greater private sector capital and capability.
- Completed consultation on improving **thin capitalisation rules** to remove a potential barrier to foreign investments in non-PPP infrastructure projects.
- Agreed policy decisions on improvements to **infrastructure funding and financing** to support urban growth.
- Passed the first reading of the **Land Transport Management (Time of Use Charging) Bill**, which will enable charging schemes for our most congested roads to improve traffic flow.
- Passed the **Water Services Authority levy** to secure ongoing funding to ensure water is safe to drink and to protect the environmental performance of public drinking water, wastewater and stormwater networks.
- Passed the **Watercare Charter** into law to ensure affordable water services in Auckland, saving households about \$899 million over four years and improving service quality and infrastructure investment to facilitate housing growth in the city.

- Released **NZ Verify**, an app to support a range of accredited, public and privately issued digital credentials, such as Mobile Driver Licences, Photo ID Cards, Qualifications, Digital Super Gold Cards and Community Services Cards.
- 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.
- Set the **National Land Transport Fund at \$22 billion** over the next three years including investment in the **Roads of National Significance** programme.
- **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 NZ.
- Responded to the **Independent Inquiry into the School Property System**, to improve the provision of school infrastructure and ultimately lead to safer, warmer and drier buildings for students.

Underway

- Establishing an **LNG import facility** to ensure fuel supply for secure electricity generation and other gas users.
- Developing a **geothermal strategy** to unlock the full potential of New Zealand's under-utilised geothermal resources.
- Delivering shared infrastructure for **digital identity credentials** across the economy, coordinating Public Service efforts to enhance government services via the Service Modernisation Roadmap.
- Expediting significant Iwi and Māori led or partnered Fast-track projects.
- Encouraging **investor interest in infrastructure** to encourage world-class, innovative ideas in how we provide solutions to community needs and build infrastructure.
- Moving to more standardised and regular updates of the **Building Code** system, with updates every three to four years.
- Progressing legislation to improve the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act 2020 to make it easier to **fund and finance infrastructure projects** using this model.
- Introducing legislation to replace development contributions with a **development levy system** for funding infrastructure needed to meet housing growth.
- Improving **drinking water infrastructure** for rural Māori communities through the Marae Drinking Water Programme.
- Progressing work to identify system changes and processes required to support a successful **fleetwide transition to Road User Charges (RUC)**.
- Supporting **Iwi-led system innovation** and investment collaboration with Iwi partners.
- Breaking ground on \$6 billion in **infrastructure projects** between July and December 2025, including schools, hospitals and roading projects.
- Developing the Government's response to the **National Infrastructure Plan** by 20 June 2026.
- Considering and approving investments to be made by the **Regional Infrastructure Fund**, contributing to regional economies and creating jobs, including strengthening New Zealand's **flood resilience infrastructure**.
- Introducing a national instrument to **free up land for urban development** to enable our towns and cities to grow both up and out and 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 planning system to make it easier to build homes, including papakāinga on Māori land without planning 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.
- Reforming water services through **Local Water Done Well** to lift investment in this critical infrastructure, including supporting territorial authorities to deliver **Water Services Delivery Plans**.
- 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.
- Supporting the **uptake of renewable energy and alternative fuels**, including updating fuel specifications and safety regulations, and setting smart Electric Vehicle 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.



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