



Australia-Oceania :: Tokelau (territory of New Zealand)

Introduction :: Tokelau

Background:

Originally settled by Polynesian emigrants from surrounding island groups, the Tokelau Islands were made a British protectorate in 1889. They were transferred to New Zealand administration in 1925. Referenda held in 2006 and 2007 to change the status of the islands from that of a New Zealand territory to one of free association with New Zealand did not meet the needed threshold for approval.

Geography :: Tokelau

Location:

Oceania, group of three atolls in the South Pacific Ocean, about one-half of the way from Hawaii to New Zealand

Geographic coordinates:

9 00 S, 172 00 W

Map references:

Oceania

Area:

total: 12 sq km

country comparison to the world: 242

land: 12 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

about 17 times the size of The Mall in Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

101 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

Climate:

tropical; moderated by trade winds (April to November)

Terrain:

low-lying coral atolls enclosing large lagoons

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m

highest point: unnamed location 5 m

Natural resources:

NEGL

Land use:

arable land: 0% (soil is thin and infertile)

permanent crops: 60%

other: 40% (2011)

Irrigated land:

NA

Natural hazards:

lies in Pacific typhoon belt

Environment - current issues:

limited natural resources and overcrowding are contributing to emigration to New Zealand

Geography - note:

consists of three atolls (Atafu, Fakaofu, Nukunonu), each with a lagoon surrounded by a number of reef-bound islets of varying length and rising to over 3 m above sea level

People and Society :: Tokelau

Nationality:

noun: Tokelauan(s)

adjective: Tokelauan

Ethnic groups:

Polynesian

Languages:

Tokelauan (a Polynesian language), English

Religions:

Congregational Christian Church 70%, Roman Catholic 28%, other 2%

note: on Atafu, all Congregational Christian Church of Samoa; on Nukunonu, all Roman Catholic; on Fakaofu, both denominations, with the Congregational Christian Church predominant

Population:

1,353 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 236

Age structure:

0-14 years: 42%

15-64 years: 53%

65 years and over: 5% (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

-0.01% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 198

Urbanization:

urban population: 0% of total population (2010)

rate of urbanization: 0% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Sex ratio:

NA

Infant mortality rate:

total: NA

male: NA

female: NA

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: NA

male: NA

female: NA

Total fertility rate:

NA

Drinking water source:

improved:

rural: 97% of population

total: 97% of population

unimproved:

rural: 3% of population

total: 3% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

rural: 93% of population

total: 93% of population

unimproved:

rural: 7% of population

total: 7% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

NA

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

NA

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

NA

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

63.4% (2007)

country comparison to the world: 4

Education expenditures:

NA

Literacy:

NA

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 12 years

male: 12 years

female: 13 years (2003)

Government:: Tokelau**Country name:**

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Tokelau

Dependency status:

self-administering territory of New Zealand; note - Tokelau and New Zealand have agreed to a draft constitution as Tokelau moves toward free association with New Zealand; a UN-sponsored referendum on self governance in October 2007 did not produce the two-thirds majority vote necessary for changing the political status

Government type:

NA

Capital:

none; each atoll has its own administrative center

time difference: UTC+13 (18 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

none (territory of New Zealand)

Independence:

none (territory of New Zealand)

National holiday:

Waitangi Day (Treaty of Waitangi established British sovereignty over New Zealand), 6 February (1840)

Constitution:

many previous; latest effective 1 January 1949 (Tokelau Islands Act 1948); amended many times, last in 2007

Legal system:

common law system of New Zealand

Suffrage:

21 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: Queen ELIZABETH II (since 6 February 1952); represented by Governor General of New Zealand Anand SATYANAND (since 23 August 2006); New Zealand is represented by Administrator Jonathan KINGS (since February 2011)

head of government: Foua TOLOA (since 21 February 2009); note - position rotates annually among the 3 Faipule (village leaders)

cabinet: the Council for the Ongoing Government of Tokelau, consisting of 3 Faipule (village leaders) and 3 Pulenuku (village mayors), functions as a cabinet

(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#).)

elections: the monarchy is hereditary; governor general appointed by the monarch; administrator appointed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade in New Zealand; the head of government chosen from the Council of Faipule and serves a one-year term

Legislative branch:

unicameral General Fono (20 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms based upon proportional representation from the three islands - Atafu has 7 seats, Fakaofu has 7 seats, Nukunonu has 6 seats); note - the Tokelau Amendment Act of 1996 confers limited legislative power to the General Fono

elections: last held on 19-21 January 2011 (next to be held in 2014)

election results: independents 20

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Court of Appeal in New Zealand (consists of the court president and 8 judges sitting in 3- or 5-judge panels depending on the case)

judge selection and term of office: judges nominated by the Judicial Selection Committee and approved by three-quarters majority of the Parliament; judge tenure NA

subordinate courts: High Court, in New Zealand; Council of Elders or Taupulega

Political parties and leaders:

none

Political pressure groups and leaders:

none

International organization participation:

PIF (observer), SPC, UNESCO (associate), UPU

Diplomatic representation in the US:

none (territory of New Zealand)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

none (territory of New Zealand)

Flag description:

a yellow stylized Tokelauan canoe on a dark blue field sails toward the manu - the Southern Cross constellation of four, white, five-pointed stars at the hoist side; the Southern Cross represents the role of Christianity in Tokelauan culture and, in conjunction with the canoe, symbolizes the country navigating into the future; the color yellow indicates happiness and peace, and the blue field represents the ocean on which the community relies

National symbol(s):

tuluma (fishing tackle box)

National anthem:

name: "Te Atua" (For the Almighty)

lyrics/music: unknown/Falani KALOLO

note: adopted 2008; in preparation for eventual self governance, Tokelau held a national contest to choose an anthem; as a territory of New Zealand, "God Defend New Zealand" and "God Save the Queen" are official (see New Zealand)

Economy:: Tokelau

Economy - overview:

Tokelau's small size (three villages), isolation, and lack of resources greatly restrain economic development and confine agriculture to the subsistence level. The people rely heavily on aid from New Zealand - about \$10 million annually in 2008 and 2009 - to maintain public services. New Zealand's support amounts to 80% of Tokelau's recurrent government budget. An international trust fund, currently worth nearly US\$32 million, was established in 2004 to provide Tokelau an independent source of revenue. The principal sources of revenue come from sales of copra, postage stamps, souvenir coins, and handicrafts. Money is also remitted to families from relatives in New Zealand.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$1.5 million (1993 est.)

country comparison to the world: 229

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$NA

GDP - real growth rate:

NA%

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$1,000 (1993 est.)

country comparison to the world: 217

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: NA%

industry: NA%

services: NA%

Agriculture - products:

coconuts, copra, breadfruit, papayas, bananas; pigs, poultry, goats; fish

Industries:

small-scale enterprises for copra production, woodworking, plaited craft goods; stamps, coins; fishing

Labor force:

440 (2001)

country comparison to the world: 232

Unemployment rate:

NA%

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Budget:

revenues: \$430,800

expenditures: \$2.8 million (1987 est.)

Fiscal year:

1 April - 31 March

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

NA%

Exports:

\$0 (2002)

country comparison to the world: 222

Exports - commodities:

stamps, copra, handicrafts

Imports:

\$969,200 (2002)

country comparison to the world: 223

Imports - commodities:

foodstuffs, building materials, fuel

Exchange rates:

New Zealand dollars (NZD) per US dollar -

1.23 (2012)

1.26 (2011)

1.39 (2010)

1.6 (2009)

1.42 (2008)

Energy:: Tokelau

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 191

Communications :: Tokelau

Telephone system:

general assessment: modern satellite-based communications system

domestic: radiotelephone service between islands

international: country code - 690; radiotelephone service to Samoa; government-regulated telephone service (TeleTok); satellite earth stations - 3 (2009)

Broadcast media:

no TV stations; each atoll operates a radio service that provides shipping news and weather reports (2009)

Internet country code:

.tk

Internet hosts:

2,069 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 162

Internet users:

800 (2008)

country comparison to the world: 216

Transportation :: Tokelau

Ports and terminals:

none; offshore anchorage only

Military :: Tokelau

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of New Zealand

Transnational Issues :: Tokelau

Disputes - international:

Tokelau included American Samoa's Swains Island (Olosega) in its 2006 draft independence constitution