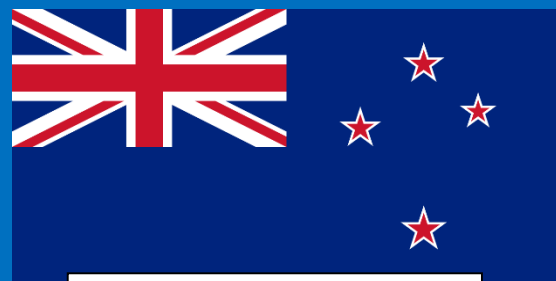


New Zealand Flag Debate

Introduction

The New Zealand Flag Debate is a very controversial debate on whether or not we should change our national flag. Some people want a new flag and some people want it to stay the same. Some members of the public have submitted designs for a new flag. The government has selected 12 New Zealanders to decide on 4 designs for our flag. We will have 2 referendums to decide the flag. The first one will be to decide 1 of 4 flag designs, submitted to the public, to be the alternative flag. In referendum 2, the alternative flag will then go up against the current flag, then the winner will be revealed.



The current New Zealand flag.

Arguments for a change in our national flag.

One of the main reasons why people think that New Zealand should change the flag, is that people mistake it for Australia's flag. Tests have shown that people confuse the current flag with flags from other countries, especially Australia. Another reason for a change is that people think that we should have a silver fern or a Kiwi on our flag to make it immediately recognisable to people from other countries.

Arguments against changing our national flag.

The main reason why people are against changing the New Zealand flag is because it's going to cost \$26 million. They think that we could be spending the money on better things, like feeding children, housing homeless people and keeping state houses in good condition. Another good reason why people think that we shouldn't change our flag is because our soldiers fought and died for the current flag. If a soldier died our flag was draped over their casket at the military funeral. The current New Zealand flag has a lot of history, pride and heritage that comes with it.

History of our current flag.

The current New Zealand flag has been New Zealand's flag since 1902. It is derived from the maritime British Blue Ensign. The soldiers in World War 1 and World War 2 fought, while our current flag was standing proudly. The royal blue background of our flag represents the blue sea and sky that surrounds New Zealand. The stars signify our place in the Pacific Ocean. The Union Jack recognises our historical foundations and that New Zealand was once a British colony and dominion.

Personal Opinion.

I think that New Zealand's flag should stay the same because the money could be spent in higher priority areas and because there is so much history that comes with our current flag. Firstly, it's going to cost \$26 million. We could spend the money on more important things, like helping the homeless, fixing state houses or in the health or education areas. Also, our soldiers fought and died under that flag and it has stood proudly when our athletes won medals at sporting events.



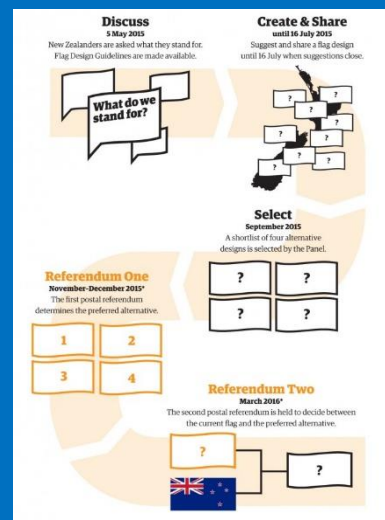
One of the many flag designs that the flag consideration panel will have to decide on.

How does the referendum process work?

The Government has chosen 12 New Zealanders to be a part of the Flag Consideration Panel. Then New Zealanders are asked if they would like to submit a design for a new flag. Next, the panel will then select 4 flag designs. They will hold a referendum and New Zealanders (over 18) will vote for the one they like the best. The preferred alternative will then go up against the current New Zealand flag in a second referendum. The one Kiwis like best will then be our flag.

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How the referendum process works.