

PM Ardern announces Ministers, signs deal with Greens

November 2, 2020

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has announced her new Ministerial line-up, following an election that delivered a majority for Labour, the departure of New Zealand First from Parliament and the signing of a Labour-Green cooperation agreement.

There is also a reshuffling to reflect views on performance of Ministers and to improve demographic representation – the 26 Ministers are now 50% non-Pakeha, and 11 are female.

Changes of particular note are: Grant Robertson as Deputy Prime Minister, Chris Hipkins given responsibility for COVID-19 Response; Nanaia Mahuta as Foreign Affairs; Andrew Little as Health; Stuart Nash as Forestry and Tourism; and Michael Wood as Transport.

Six of the Ministers are new, with Ayesha Verrall making the rare step of becoming a Cabinet Minister immediately in her first term as an MP. David Clark and Meka Whaitiri are reinstated as Ministers after resigning or being removed last term, while Phil Twyford is demoted to Minister outside of Cabinet and Jenny Salesa loses her Ministerial portfolios altogether.

Cabinet Ministers

Jacinda Ardern

- Prime Minister
- Minister for National Security and Intelligence
- Minister for Child Poverty Reduction
- Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services
- Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

As well as the Prime Ministership, Ardern retains the portfolios she held in the previous term, with the exception of Arts, Culture and Heritage, which goes to Carmel Sepuloni.

Grant Robertson

- Deputy Prime Minister
- Minister of Finance
- Minister for Infrastructure
- Minister for Racing
- Minister for Sport and Recreation



Robertson retains Finance, while also gaining the role of Deputy Prime Minister, Infrastructure and Racing. The Infrastructure role reflects how central infrastructure will be in driving the COVID recovery.

Kelvin Davis

- Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti
- Minister for Children
- Minister of Corrections
- Associate Minister of Education (Māori Education)

Davis retains his portfolios from the previous term except for Tourism and becomes Minister for Children. He turned down the role of Deputy Prime Minister.

Dr Megan Woods

- Minister of Housing
- Minister of Energy and Resources
- Minister of Research, Science and Innovation
- Associate Minister of Finance

Woods retains her main portfolios, but has given up responsibility for the COVID managed isolation system to Hipkins. She picks up an Associate Finance role.

Chris Hipkins

- Minister for COVID-19 Response
- Minister of Education
- Minister for the Public Service

Hipkins gives up the Health portfolio he was handed when David Clark resigned but takes on a new portfolio with overall responsibility for managing the COVID-19 response.

Carmel Sepuloni

- Minister for Social Development and Employment
- Minister for ACC
- Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Minister for Disability Issues

Sepuloni takes on Arts, Culture, and Heritage, previously held by PM Ardern.

Andrew Little

- Minister of Health
- Minister Responsible for the GCSB
- Minister Responsible for the NZSIS
- Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations
- Minister Responsible for Pike River Re-entry



Little is handed Health, which had been temporarily held by Hipkins. He gives up Justice, as well as Workplace Relations which he held briefly following Iain Lees-Galloway's resignation.

David Parker

- Attorney-General
- Minister for the Environment
- Minister for Oceans and Fisheries
- Minister of Revenue
- Associate Minister of Finance

Parker retains his primary portfolios and gains Revenue as well as the new Oceans and Fisheries portfolio.

Nanaia Mahuta

- Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Minister of Local Government
- Associate Minister for Māori Development

Mahuta becomes New Zealand's first female Minister of Foreign Affairs, while retaining Local Government. She will continue to lead the three waters reform.

Poto Williams

- Minister for Building and Construction
- Minister of Police
- Associate Minister for Children
- Associate Minister of Housing (Public Housing)

Williams enters Cabinet, taking Building and Construction from Salesa, Police from Nash, and Associate Housing from Fafoi.

Damien O'Connor

- Minister of Agriculture
- Minister for Biosecurity
- Minister for Land Information
- Minister for Rural Communities
- Minister for Trade and Export Growth

O'Connor retains his focus on farming and exports, also taking on Land Information, which controls sales of land to overseas investors. He also takes the lead on Trade.

Stuart Nash

- Minister for Economic and Regional Development
- Minister of Forestry
- Minister for Small Business
- Minister of Tourism



Nash takes on Economic and Regional Development, Forestry and Tourism. He gives up Police and Revenue. Alongside his existing Small Business portfolio, this makes Nash a key economic Minister.

Kris Faafoi

- Minister of Justice
- Minister for Broadcasting and Media
- Minister of Immigration

Faafoi takes on Justice, giving up Commerce and Associate Housing.

Peeni Henare

- Minister of Defence
- Minister for Whānau Ora
- Associate Minister of Health (Māori Health)
- Associate Minister of Housing (Māori Housing)
- Associate Minister of Tourism

Henare takes on Defence, replacing the departing Ron Mark.

Willie Jackson

- Minister for Māori Development
- Associate Minister for ACC
- Associate Minister of Justice

Jackson inherits Māori Development from Mahuta.

Jan Tinetti

- Minister of Internal Affairs
- Minister for Women
- Associate Minister of Education

Tinetti is a new Minister, taking roles vacated by former New Zealand First and Green Ministers.

Michael Wood

- Minister of Transport
- Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety

Wood is a new Minister, taking Transport from Twyford (Wood was briefly Labour's Transport spokesperson in opposition) and the Workplace Relations role vacated by Iain Lees-Galloway.

Kiri Allan

- Minister of Conservation
- Minister for Emergency Management



- Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Associate Minister for the Environment

Allan is a new Minister. She is a lawyer by background. She takes Conservation from the departing Eugenie Sage and Emergency Management from Henare.

Dr David Clark

- Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
- Minister for the Digital Economy and Communications
- Minister for State Owned Enterprises
- Minister of Statistics Minister Responsible for the Earthquake Commission

Clark is reinstated after his resignation in July over his handling of the Health portfolio during COVID. He picks up the new Digital Economy and Communications portfolio.

Dr Ayesha Verrall

- Minister for Food Safety
- Minister for Seniors
- Associate Minister of Health
- Associate Minister of Research, Science and Innovation

Verrall is a new Minister. Her background in infectious diseases is reflected in her portfolios.

Ministers outside Cabinet

Aupito William Sio

- Minister for Courts
- Minister for Pacific Peoples
- Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Associate Minister of Education (Pacific Peoples)
- Associate Minister of Justice
- Associate Minister of Health (Pacific Peoples)

Sio takes on Courts from Little, and retains Pacific Peoples.

Hon Meka Whaitiri

- Minister of Customs
- Minister for Veterans
- Associate Minister of Agriculture (Animal Welfare)
- Associate Minister of Statistics

Whaitiri is reinstated as a Minister after being sacked last term.

Phil Twyford

- Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control
- Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth



- Associate Minister for the Environment
- Associate Minister of Immigration

Twyford loses his Transport, Economic Development, and Urban Development roles and is demoted from Cabinet. His Trade portfolio is essentially an associate role to Damien O'Connor.

Priyanca Radhakrishnan

- Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector
- Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities
- Minister for Youth
- Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment

Radhakrishnan is a new Minister, taking on a set of portfolios focused on the NGO sector.

Marama Davidson

- Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence
- Associate Minister of Housing (Homelessness)

Green Co-Leader Marama Davidson is a new Minister. She takes on new portfolios arising from the Labour-Greens cooperation agreement.

James Shaw

- Minister of Climate Change
- Associate Minister for the Environment (Biodiversity)

Green Co-Leader James Shaw retains his Climate Change role, which sees him an important Minister across a swathe of government policy.

Labour and Greens confirm 'Cooperation Agreement'

The Green Party has agreed to support a majority Labour Government in exchange for two Ministers outside Cabinet and an agreement to work together on policy areas of mutual interest.

The Greens' co-leaders will be Ministers in the following portfolios:

James Shaw

- Climate Change
- Associate Environment (Biodiversity)

Marama Davidson

- Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence
- Associate Housing (Homelessness)

This will be Davidson's first time as a Minister.



Two current Green Ministers will lose their portfolios: Eugenie Sage (currently Conservation, Land Information and Associate Environment) and Julie Anne Genter (Women, Associate Transport and Associate Health). Green MP Jan Logie also loses her position as Under-Secretary for Justice.

The Green Party will get one Select Committee Chair and one Deputy Chair. It is expected these will be in the Environment and Transport & Infrastructure Committees.

Labour and the Greens will cooperate on the following agreed areas where they have common goals:

1. Achieving the purpose and goals of the Zero Carbon Act through decarbonising public transport, decarbonising the public sector, increasing the uptake of zero-emission vehicles, introducing clean car standards, and supporting the use of renewable energy for industrial heat.
2. Protecting our environment and biodiversity through working to achieve the outcomes of Te Mana o te Taiao - Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020, protecting Kauri, building on pest management programmes, and taking action to minimise waste and problem plastics.
3. Improving child wellbeing and marginalised communities through action on homelessness, warmer homes, and child and youth mental health.

The Greens will also support Labour on a series of procedural matters in Parliament.

Green Ministers will be bound to collective responsibility only in relation to their portfolio areas, and may note where Government policy in their portfolios differs from Green Party policy. This gives the Greens significant room to differentiate from the Government where they feel necessary.

This agreement falls short of the Confidence & Supply agreement between Labour and the Greens in the previous term of Parliament. It provides for fewer Ministerial positions and fewer policy concessions and has no requirement for the Greens to support Labour on votes of confidence and supply. Instead, the Greens are pledged to merely 'not oppose' these votes.

This reflects the fact Labour does not need the Greens' votes in order to govern. Labour is also conscious that it has received a mandate from voters to govern alone, including from former National voters who are suspicious of the Greens.

With this agreement, Labour gets the benefit of Green Ministers (particularly James Shaw as Climate Change Minister) and a greater margin on key votes in Parliament. It also gives the Greens a stake in the success of the Government and maintains a working relationship in advance of the 2023 election, where Labour is likely to need the Greens in order to govern.

Referendum results

The Electoral Commission has released preliminary results for the cannabis legalisation and voluntary euthanasia referendums. These are:



End of Life Choice

Yes: 65.2%

No: 33.8%

Informal votes: 1%

Result: Passed

Cannabis legalisation

Yes: 46.1%

No: 53.1%

Informal votes: 0.8%

Result: Failed

The cannabis referendum is close enough that the result could conceivably change following the release of special votes, however this would require close to 70% support from special votes

Further information

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