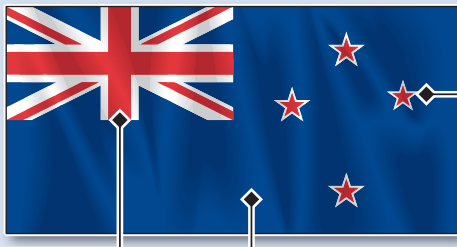


New Zealand to decide on new national flag

New Zealanders are considering changing their national flag for the first time in over a century, with 40 alternative design options chosen as finalists from more than 10,000 public submissions

CURRENT FLAG

Adopted in 1902. Seen by many people as outdated and too similar to flag of Australia



Southern Cross

Distinctive constellation in Milky Way galaxy, visible from Southern Hemisphere

Union Jack: Harks back to colonial past that some New Zealanders are eager to put behind them

Background colour: Derived from ensign of former **Blue Squadron** of Britain's Royal Navy

NEW DESIGNS: Examples of common features from 40 finalists

Koru: Spiral symbol often used in indigenous **Maori** art. Depicts unfurling fern frond and suggests circular nature of life

Silver fern: Represents unfurled koru. Has become national symbol, and is worn by many sports teams, including rugby's **All Blacks**

Other features: Include Southern Cross, seven stars of **Matariki** – Maori name for **Pleiades** star cluster – or combination of two features



Modern Hundertwasser
by Tomas Cottle



White & Black Fern
by Alofi Kanter



Koru and Stars
by Alan Tran

TIMESCALE FOR SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVE FLAG: Sep 2015-May 2016

■ Sep 14: Flag Consideration Panel – government-appointed group of 12 “respected New Zealanders” – chooses final four designs. Process includes consultation with Maori cultural experts and flag designers

■ Nov-Dec: New Zealanders vote for their favourite among final four designs in national referendum. Result declared Dec 15

■ April: Chosen flag goes head-to-head with current national flag in second referendum. Final result declared April 26

■ May: Implementation of new flag, if alternative design wins. Government departments expected to begin flying new flag but other New Zealanders will be free to change over as and when they wish