



India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement

I. INTRODUCTION

On April 27, 2026, India and New Zealand signed the India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (**Ind-NZ FTA**) following an accelerated negotiating process launched on March 16, 2025, making it one of India's fastest-concluded FTAs. New Zealand's Minister for Trade and Investment, Mr. Todd McClay, has characterised the Ind-NZ FTA as a *"once-in-a-generation"* opportunity to boost exports, create jobs, and strengthen bilateral economic ties.¹ India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Piyush Goyal, has similarly described the Ind-NZ FTA as *"a defining milestone in India's engagement with the developed world."*²

Structurally, the Ind-NZ FTA combines comprehensive tariff liberalisation by both sides, with New Zealand granting full duty-free access on all Indian tariff lines from entry into force, alongside what it describes as its *"best-ever"* package for India on services, mobility and education, and an undertaking to facilitate USD 20 billion of investment into India.³ The Ind-NZ FTA is supported by a range of sector-specific annexes, schedules, and side letters, which set out detailed disciplines in areas such as services, mobility, regulatory cooperation, and product-specific market access, and form an integral part of its implementation framework.

This update highlights the key features and principal outcomes of the Ind-NZ FTA.

II. TRADE PROFILE

India's trade with New Zealand remains relatively modest in absolute terms. In FY 2025-26, India's exports to New Zealand were approximately \$480 million, resulting in a trade deficit of around \$15 million. While exports grew strongly by about 32% in FY 2024-25, they declined by 17.93% in FY 2025-26.

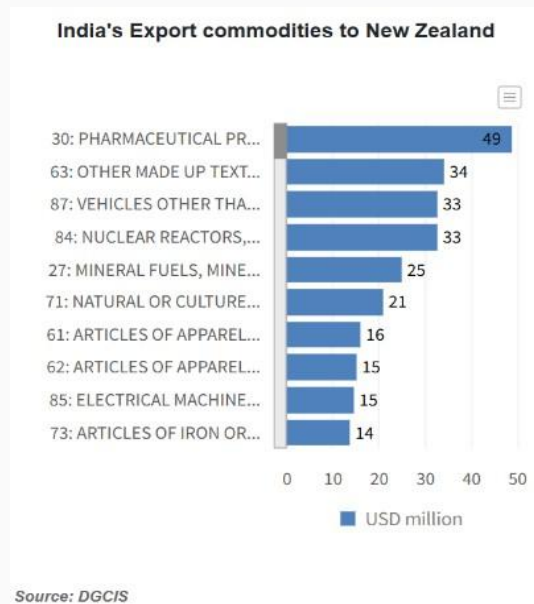
Overall, bilateral trade has remained largely stagnant over the past decade, with India reverting to a trade deficit in FY 2025-26 after a period of sustained surpluses.⁴ A broad snapshot of India's export basket during the FY 2025-26 is depicted below:

¹ Press Information Bureau, "India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement Signed: A New Generation Partnership for Viksit Bharat 2047" (April 27, 2026), Available at -<<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2255914®=3&lang=1>>.

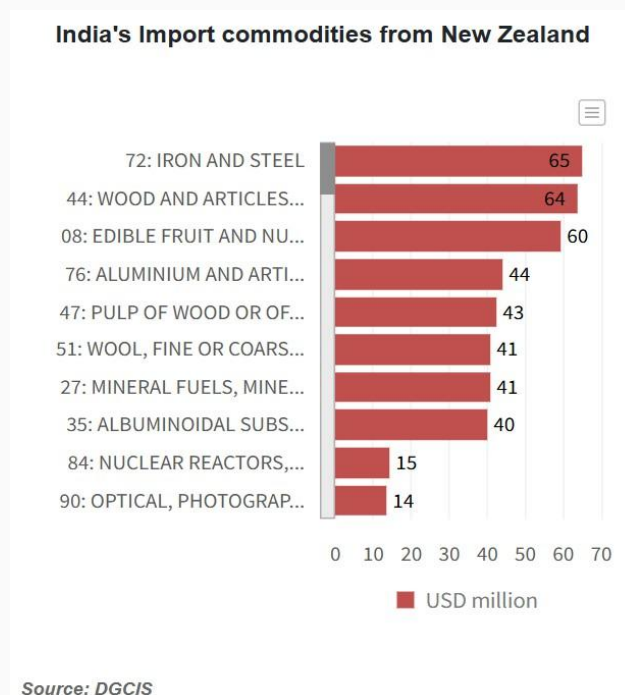
² Press Information Bureau, "India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement Signed: A New Generation Partnership for Viksit Bharat 2047" (April 27, 2026), Available at -<<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2255914®=3&lang=1>>.

³ Press Information Bureau, "India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement Signed: A New Generation Partnership for Viksit Bharat 2047" (April 27, 2026), Available at -<<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2255914®=3&lang=1>>.

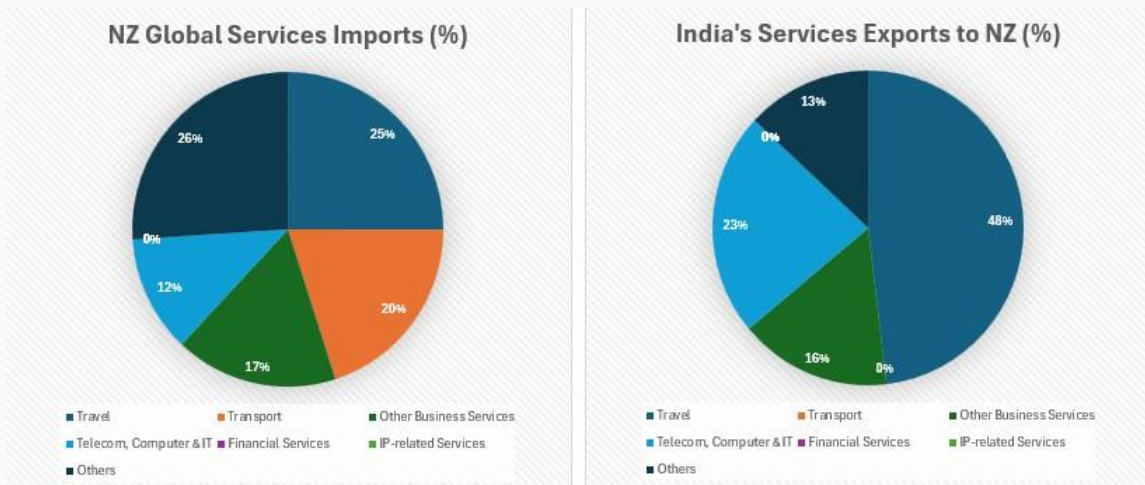
⁴ Based on the data reported by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Ministry of Commerce.



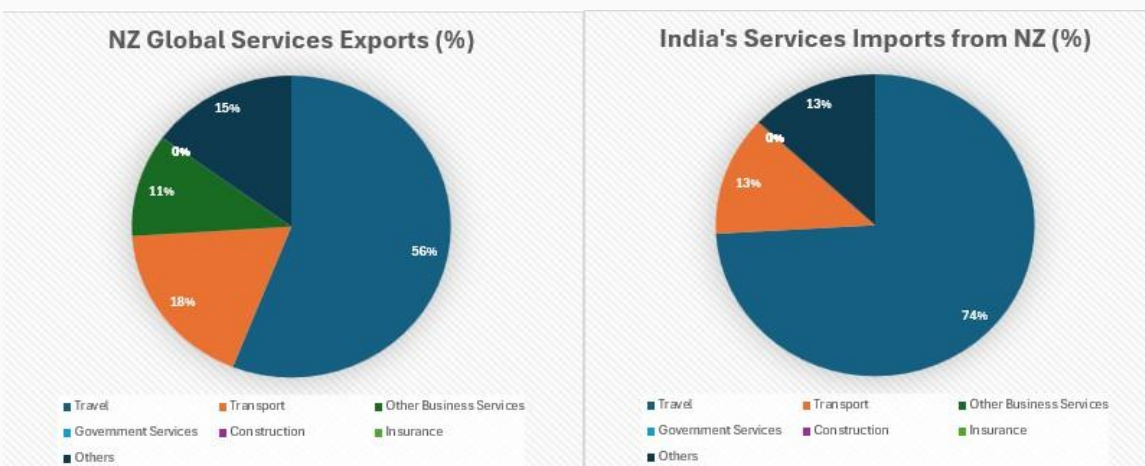
In terms of imports from New Zealand, the trend has remained steady year-on-year, with around \$495 million worth of goods imported in FY 2025-26. The top components of India’s import basket vis-à-vis New Zealand are as below:



Trade profile in the services sector. New Zealand’s global services import basket is concentrated in travel (25%) and transport (20%), followed by other business services (16.9%) and telecommunications, computer, and information services (12%). India’s services export profile to New Zealand is broadly aligned with these demand patterns, with Indian services exports concentrated in travel (48% of India’s services exports to New Zealand), telecommunications and IT services (23%), and other business services (15.8%). However, India’s overall market penetration remains modest, with its highest import share in telecommunications and IT services (5.1%) and travel (5.0%), and relatively low shares in transport (0.5%), financial services (0.6%), and intellectual property-related services (0.2%).



On the export side, New Zealand’s global services exports are heavily dominated by travel (56%), followed by transport (18%) and other business services (11%). India’s services imports from New Zealand mirror this pattern, with travel accounting for 73.8% and transport for 12.8% of India’s imports from New Zealand. New Zealand’s export dependence on India is moderate, with its highest export shares to India in government services (9.2%), travel (3.9%), construction (3.3%), and insurance (3.0%), while remaining limited across most commercial services segments. Overall bilateral services trade stands at approximately USD 634 million in India’s exports and USD 611 million in imports, yielding a small surplus of about USD 23 million in India’s favour.



The sectoral composition indicates that India runs surpluses in knowledge and skill intensive services such as telecommunications and IT (around USD 139 million), other business services (USD 76 million), insurance (USD 14 million), and financial services (USD 5 million), while recording deficits in travel (USD 144 million), transport (USD 51 million), and certain government and intellectual property related services.⁵

Overall, the bilateral trade relationship remains modest and concentrated in a narrow set of sectors, with India’s strengths lying in services and select manufacturing exports, and New Zealand’s exports dominated by primary and agriculture-based products.

⁵ Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Factsheet for India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, dated April 27, 2026, Available at - <https://www.commerce.gov.in/ministryofcommerce/sites/default/files/2026-04/final_0.pdf>.

III. TRADE IN GOODS

A. Tariff Commitments by New Zealand

India has gained immediate NIL duty entry for all its exports to New Zealand. Tariffs generally ranging from 0-10% (average 2.2%) will be eliminated once the Ind-NZ FTA comes into force.⁶ This would require legal committees from both sides vetting the text of the signed agreement, completing the legal processes for ratification by respective Parliaments, followed by a formal notification of the agreement. The process is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.

Once notified, this would primarily benefit exporters of textiles & apparels, leather, footwear, electronics, engineering goods, plastic and rubber, where the applicable duties were up to 10%. Additionally, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, agriculture and marine products will also attain greater benefits from the elimination of duties by up to 5%.

Currently, India's largest exports to New Zealand comprise of apparels & textile garments (~\$65 million in FY 2025-26, followed by pharmaceutical products (~\$48 million in FY 2025-26).⁷ Therefore, India's current export profile to New Zealand is aligned with the sectors benefiting from tariff elimination.

Other sectors, while accounting for a relatively lower share of total exports from India, are likely to get a boost from zero duties and improved access through the Ind-NZ FTA.

B. Tariff Commitments by India

India's commitments, on the other hand, are more nuanced, calibrated and phased over a period of time. Additionally, India has also been able to retain protection of sensitive and strategic sectors. A summary of the scope of India's commitments is reproduced below:⁸

Category	Percentage Share of Tariff Lines	Key Products
Immediate Elimination	30.00% (Full duty elimination from EIF)	Wood, wool, sheep meat, leather, -raw hides, etc.
Phased Elimination	35.6% (Full duty elimination in 3, 5, 7 & 10 years)	Petroleum oils, vegetable oils, malt extract, selected electrical and mechanical machinery
Tariff Reductions	4.37% (Duty reduced, not fully eliminated)	Pharmaceutical drugs, polymers, aluminium and iron/steel articles
Tariff Rate Quotas	0.06% (Calibrated access with safeguards)	Manuka honey, apples, kiwi fruit, albumins, including milk albumin
Exclusion	29.97%	Dairy products (milk, cream, whey, yoghurt, cheese, butter), animal products (other than sheep meat), agricultural products (onions, chana, peas, corn, almonds, etc.), sugar, artificial honey, vegetable fats and oils, arms and ammunition.

⁶ Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Factsheet for India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, dated April 27, 2026, Available at - https://www.commerce.gov.in/ministryofcommerce/sites/default/files/2026-04/final_0.pdf.

⁷ DGCI, Ministry of Commerce.

⁸ Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Factsheet for India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, dated April 27, 2026, Available at - https://www.commerce.gov.in/ministryofcommerce/sites/default/files/2026-04/final_0.pdf.

The Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) granted under the India-NZ FTA has been granted with additional safeguards through a minimum import price (MIP) and a seasonal window. The summary of the same is provided below:⁹

Product	MFN	Current Imports	In-Quota	Out-of-Quota	Remarks
Manuka Honey	66%	From New Zealand: 14.2 MT (USD 0.3 mn); From world: 356.8 MT (USD 1.9 mn)	200 MT per annum with MIP of USD 20/kg and 75% tariff reduction over 5 years	MIP of USD 30/kg with 75% tariff reduction over 5 years;	Duty reduces to 16.5% by year 5.
Apples	50%	From New Zealand: 31,392.6 MT; From world: 519,651.8 MT (USD 424.6 mn)	32,500 MT (Y1) rising to 45,000 MT (Y6) at 25% duty with MIP of USD 1.25/kg;	Applicable prevailing duty	Applicable during the seasonal window: 1 April- 31 August
Kiwi Fruit	33%	From New Zealand: 5,840 MT (USD 16.9 mn); From world: 49,167 MT (USD 61.4 mn)	6,250 MT (Y1) rising to 15,000 MT (Y6) at 0% duty with MIP of USD 1.80/kg;	50% MOP ¹⁰ with MIP of USD 2.50/kg	Applicable during the seasonal window: 1 April-15 October
Albumins (including Milk Albumin)	22%	From New Zealand: 3,429.7 MT (USD 28.9 mn); From world: 18,801.4 MT (USD 175.3 mn)	1,000 MT (Y1) rising to 3,000 MT (Y5) at 11% duty	Applicable prevailing duty	----

Moreover, in case of wine (HS 2204 and 2205), which is one of the important export items from New Zealand,¹¹ The staging of tariff reduction has been phased over a ten-year period as follows:¹²

CIF Value of container holding 750 ml	Base Rate	Concession
< USD 5	150%	No concession.

⁹ Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Factsheet for India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, dated April 27, 2026, Available at - <https://www.commerce.gov.in/ministryofcommerce/sites/default/files/2026-04/final_0.pdf>.

¹⁰ "50% MOP" means that a reduced rate of 50% of prevailing MFN rate.

¹¹ "The New Zealand Wine Industry, Highlights for 2025", Available at - <[NZ Wine Industry Statistics - Winetitles](#)>

¹² Para 7 of Section B of Schedule 2A of the India-NZ FTA

>= USD 5 to < USD 15	150%	Immediately effective 100%, with a phased reduction to 50% by year 10.
>= USD 15	150%	Immediately effective 75%, with a phased reduction to 25% by year 10.

In addition to quotas, phasing and other safeguards, the India-NZ FTA also tied these trade concessions to agricultural cooperation and the implementation of joint-action plans.¹³ The FTA sets out the establishment of institutional mechanisms through the Agriculture Productivity Partnership and Joint Agriculture Productivity Council to implement an effective strategy for the development of technical knowledge, research and development initiatives, supply-chain management, etc. The key thematic sectors included are forestry, horticulture, apiculture, livestock, aquaculture, wines, and organics.

Besides the tariff benefits, the India-NZ FTA also allows for a fast-track mechanism to source raw materials from New Zealand on a duty-free basis exclusively for export-oriented manufacturing.¹⁴ This would enhance India's global competitiveness and export potential without affecting the interests of the domestic industry.

The India-NZ FTA is likely to boost the exports from India across sectors while providing sufficient cushions to Indian producers through quotas, phasing, MIP or a combination thereof. New Zealand is a major exporter of dairy products, agricultural & horticulture items, meat, etc.¹⁵ Despite this, India has retained the exclusion of dairy, animal products, and most agricultural items, with a very limited quota for a specific few. Additionally, the establishment of centres of excellence for the agricultural sector, focused action plans and allied assistance will allow Indian farmers to learn from global practices and improve farm yield and export potential. In FY 2024-25, India's agricultural exports amounted to about \$51.8 billion, exhibiting a year-on-year growth of about 7%. The FTA may provide the necessary impetus to further enhance India's agricultural potential and expand its global reach and scale.

Currently, India's exports to New Zealand account for about a single-digit percentage share in New Zealand's key import markets. With this FTA, India is also poised to fully utilize New Zealand's main areas of imports like electrical machinery and computers (~\$9 billion annual imports), vehicles (~\$4.9 billion annual imports), pharmaceuticals (~\$1 billion annual imports), plastics (~\$1 billion annual imports), etc.¹⁶

IV. RULES OF ORIGIN (ROO)

The ROO under the India-NZ FTA largely mimics the recent FTAs like the India-United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (**Ind-UK CETA**), India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (**ECTA**), India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (**India-EU FTA**) in its broad structural design and architecture. It, however, does not delve into as much legal complexity and stricter compliance as are proposed under the draft text of the India-EU FTA.

The Ind-NZ FTA permits a flat 10% proportion of non-originating materials to be used even when the main origin rule is not fully satisfied. This contrasts with the India-EU FTA or Ind-UK CETA, where more layered and tiered rates (5%, 7.5%, 10%) have been notified depending on the HS chapters. Further, in cases where the origin criteria require the final good to be 'wholly obtained', the Ind-NZ FTA allows for a de minimis of 1% in line with the India-EU FTA.

¹³ Annexure 2B, Chapter 2 - Trade in Goods and Annexure 14A, Chapter 14 - Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance

¹⁴ Annexure 2C, Chapter 2 - Trade in Goods, India-NZ FTA

¹⁵ "New Zealand's Top 10 Exports", World's Top Exports, available at <[New Zealand's Top 10 Exports 2025](#)>

¹⁶ "New Zealand's Top 10 Exports", World's Top Exports, available at <[New Zealand's Top 10 Exports 2025](#)>

Under the Ind-NZ FTA, origin declarations are accepted either through a certificate of origin issued by a competent authority or through self-declarations made by a 'status holder' in India or an 'approved exporter' in New Zealand.¹⁷ In comparison, the Ind-UK CETA allows for a broader range of authentication methods, including the importer's knowledge for UK importers, as well as origin declarations by the exporter or producer.¹⁸ The Ind-NZ FTA does not provide this level of flexibility in its authentication framework. However, it does envisage limited flexibility in the acceptance of origin declarations by exporters or producers following a review of the Ind-NZ FTA five years after its entry into force.¹⁹

V. TRADE IN SERVICES

The Trade in Services chapter of the Ind-NZ FTA is notably more detailed than those found in India's recent FTAs with developed economy partners. It combines a General Agreement on Trade in Services (**GATS**) plus a horizontal framework with an extensive set of sector and instrument-specific disciplines and is implemented through twelve dedicated annexes that collectively structure the Parties' market access, regulatory cooperation, and mobility outcomes.²⁰

By contrast, India's recent agreements with partners such as the EU, the UK, the European Free Trade Association (**EFTA**) States, and Australia typically feature a more limited set of annexes²¹ within the services chapter, primarily covering financial services, telecommunications, professional services, and the entry and temporary stay of natural persons.²² The Ind-NZ FTA, however, goes further by incorporating standalone annexes on a foreign investment framework, student mobility and post-study work rights, and a joint framework on health-related services and traditional medicine, including AYUSH.²³ Comparable provisions in other recent FTAs are not structured as separate annexes. For instance, under the India-EU FTA, Indian traditional medicine services are addressed through a specific article rather than a sector-focused annex, and there is no equivalent to the foreign investment or student mobility instruments found in the Ind-NZ FTA.²⁴

Substantively, the Ind-NZ services commitments are also more extensive in its sectoral and modal coverage. New Zealand undertakes market-access commitments in about 118 services sectors, with particular depth in areas of Indian export interest such as computer and related services, professional and other business services, audio-visual and telecommunications services, construction and distribution, education and environmental services, financial services, tourism and travel-related services, and a range of health and social services.²⁵ In addition, New Zealand extends most-favoured-nation treatment in around 139 subsectors, locking in for India any more favourable treatment granted to other partners in many of these commercially significant areas.²⁶

¹⁷ Article, 3.15, Chapter 3- Rules of Origin, India-NZ FTA.

¹⁸ Article, 3.15, Chapter 3- Rules of Origin, India–United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement ("Ind-UK CETA").

¹⁹ Article, 3.15, Chapter 3- Rules of Origin, India-NZ FTA.

²⁰ Articles 8.2 and 8.4-8.8, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA; Annexes 8A-8L, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA

²¹ Trade in Services chapters and related annexes, India-UK FTA; India-EFTA TEPA; India-Australia ECTA; Chapter 8 - Trade in Services and associated annexes, draft India-EU FTA.

²² Annex 8A, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-EU FTA.

²³ Annex 8E - Foreign Investment Framework, Annex 8F - Students' Mobility and Post-Study Work Visa, and Annex 8G - Health-related Services and Traditional Medicine Services, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA.

²⁴ Article 8.14 - Indian Traditional Medicine Services, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, draft India-EU FTA.

²⁵ Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Factsheet for India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, dated April 27, 2026, Available at - <https://www.commerce.gov.in/ministryofcommerce/sites/default/files/2026-04/final_0.pdf>.

²⁶ Annex 8H - Schedule of Specific Commitments - India, and Appendix 8H-2 - Most-Favoured-Nation Treatment Sectoral Coverage, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA

Mobility-related annexes. The Ind-NZ FTA includes three mobility-focused annexes, covering the horizontal framework on the temporary movement of natural persons, India's schedule of commitments, and New Zealand's schedule on temporary employment entry. Together, these establish a layered Mode 4 architecture that goes significantly beyond the mobility provisions in India's earlier FTAs. This is reflected in more sophisticated category design, the introduction of numerically capped quotas, sector-specific occupational lists, and detailed conditions governing entry and stay.²⁷

Enhanced mobility outcomes. When read alongside the annexes on student mobility and post-study work, as well as those on health-related and traditional medicine services, this framework delivers a range of enhanced Mode 4 outcomes for India. These include, *inter alia*, numerically capped quotas and streamlined procedures for contractual service suppliers and independent professionals; the introduction of a new 5,000-slot temporary employment entry pathway for Indian skilled workers, including professions such as yoga instructors, AYUSH practitioners, Indian chefs, and music teachers.

In addition, for the first time in any agreement with New Zealand, it provides for an uncapped and dedicated student mobility and post-study work pathway for Indian students; and a structured framework for the recognition, licensing, and joint governance of AYUSH and Māori health-related services.²⁸

Side letter on working holiday visa. In parallel, the Parties have concluded a side letter establishing a dedicated working holiday visa arrangement. Under this mechanism, New Zealand has undertaken to introduce, within two years of the Ind-NZ FTA entry into force, a scheme providing up to 1,000 multiple-entry working holiday visas annually for eligible Indian nationals. These visas will permit stays of up to 12 months, subject to specified conditions relating to age, qualifications, insurance, and prior participation. This arrangement complements and reinforces the broader Mode 4 and temporary employment framework under the Ind-NZ FTA.²⁹

Conclusion on Trade in services. In summary, the trade in services chapter gives India a wider and deeper package than in its other recent FTAs, both in terms of sectoral coverage and Mode 4 access.

VI. INVESTMENT AND COOPERATION

The '*Investment Promotion and Cooperation*' chapter of the Ind-NZ FTA is designed as an investment facilitation and cooperation instrument rather than a traditional investment protection chapter. Its stated objective is to enhance FDI as a means to foster economic growth, capital intensity, capacity-building, innovation and employment, while explicitly grounding cooperation in the Parties' right to regulate and principles of good faith and mutual benefit. Unlike many investment chapters under the other FTAs, it does not provide for dispute settlement, standards of treatment (fair and equitable treatment, expropriation, etc.), or free-transfer provisions.³⁰

A central feature is New Zealand's headline, time-bound investment-promotion commitment: New Zealand "*shall promote FDI from investors of New Zealand into India with the aim to increase such investment by USD*

²⁷ Temporary Movement of Natural Persons, Annex 8C, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA; Schedule of Specific Commitments on Temporary Movement of Natural Persons - India, Annex 8J, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA; Schedule of Commitments on Temporary Employment Entry - New Zealand (including Temporary Employment Entry schedule), Annex 8L and Appendix 8L-1, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA.

²⁸ Students' Mobility and Post-Study Work Visa, Annex 8F; Health-related Services and Traditional Medicine Services, Annex 8G; Schedule of Commitments on Temporary Employment Entry - New Zealand (Temporary Employment Entry schedule), Annex 8L and Appendix 8L-1, Chapter 8 - Trade in Services, India-NZ FTA.

²⁹ *India's Letter to New Zealand on Working Holiday Visas*, April 27, 2026, India-NZ FTA.

³⁰ Article 9.1, Chapter 9 - Investment Promotion and Cooperation, India-NZ FTA; Articles 9.2-9.11, Chapter 9 - Investment Promotion and Cooperation, India-NZ FTA (absence of ISDS/treatment/transfer clauses)

20 billion within 15 years” of entry into force, with detailed footnotes clarifying attribution rules (including for routed investments) and the macro-economic basis for the target.³¹

To support this, the chapter sets out a broad cooperation agenda on investment, R&D collaboration, technology cooperation, skill development, joint ventures and public-private dialogue, particularly in high-value sectors linked to regional and global value chains such as renewable energy, digital services and infrastructure, and envisages regular missions, high-level meetings, sector-specific roundtables, expert exchanges and support for investment-promotion agencies.³²

When viewed against India’s recent practice, this structure most closely resembles the “*investment facilitation and promotion*” approach in the India-EFTA TEPA, where the EFTA States as mentioned in the text of the TEPA, “*endeavour to encourage*” its investors to increase FDI into India by USD 100 billion over a 15-year period, of which USD 50 billion must be invested within 10 years from the entry into force and an additional USD 50 billion in the succeeding 5 years.³³ The India-NZ FTA commits NZ to a similar FDI commit *albeit* structures it differently.

The India-NZ FTA embeds a quantified, time-bound FDI objective of USD 20 billion within 15 years, with fixed review points at 5, 10 and 15 years. The FTA establishes a detailed, three-stage consultation ladder, which may grant a three-year grace period to NZ at the end of the 15-year horizon to fulfil its FDI commitment. The FTA further provides for proportionate remedial measures in India’s tariff concessions if NZ is unable to meet its commitment.³⁴

Conclusion. The Ind-NZ FTA promotes investment facilitation and cooperation, and simultaneously, commits NZ to a USD 20 billion FDI in India.

VII. NON-TARIFF BARRIERS

The IN-NZ FTA addresses non-tariff barriers primarily through its dedicated chapters on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade, which reaffirm and build on the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade Agreements while establishing additional, more operational disciplines and cooperation mechanisms designed to ensure that sanitary & phytosanitary and technical measures do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade.³⁵

A. Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)

The TBT chapter applies to standards, technical regulations and conformity-assessment procedures of central government bodies affecting trade in goods between the Parties. Further, it commits Parties to use relevant international standards as a basis for their measures, including conformity assessment, consider less trade-restrictive alternatives, and accept equivalent regulations that achieve the same objectives.³⁶

It also provides for enhanced transparency, including English-translation of notified texts or summaries, a standard 60-day comment period (save for urgency), participation rights for persons of the other Party in

³¹ Article 9.2 and footnotes 1-2, Chapter 9 - Investment Promotion and Cooperation, India-NZ FTA.

³² Article 9.3(1)-(3), Chapter 9 - Investment Promotion and Cooperation, India-NZ FTA.

³³ Article 7.1, Chapter 7 – Investment Promotion and Cooperation, India-EFTA TEPA.

³⁴ Articles 9.2 and 9.9(2) (5), Articles 9.9(6)-(12), Chapter 9 - Investment Promotion and Cooperation, India-NZ, India-NZ FTA.

³⁵ Articles 6.2-6.4, Chapter 6 - Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, India-NZ FTA; Articles 7.2-7.4, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FT

³⁶ Article 7.3, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA; Articles 7.5-7.7, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA

domestic consultation processes and electronic information exchange, supported by a Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade and designated contact points.³⁷

This general TBT framework is operationalised through three product-specific annexes that are particularly relevant to Indian export interests in regulated sectors.

Annex and Side Letter on Medical Devices. The medical-devices annex requires each Party's national regulatory authority to work to reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers, to participate in international harmonisation initiatives, and to utilise, where provided by the applicant, pre-market evaluation reports issued by "comparable regulators", while accepting Quality Management System (QMS) or Good Clinical Practice (GCP) certificates, or test results from conformity-assessment bodies approved or recognised by such regulators, with own inspections or additional testing as an exception to normal practice.³⁸ These commitments are reinforced by an exchange of side letters on medical devices that identify, for both India and New Zealand, the list of foreign regulatory agencies currently recognised as "comparable regulators" for the purposes of this annex, with an obligation to notify any subsequent changes.³⁹

Annex and Side Letter on Pharmaceuticals. The pharmaceuticals annex establishes a similar reliance-based regime for human prescription medicines (including generics and biosimilars), under which each Party's national regulatory authority is to use pre-market evaluation reports and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) inspection reports or certificates from comparable regulators, normally accept GMP certifications from those regulators without prior inspection, and consider "fast-track" procedures for products already approved by them, subject to domestic law and carved-out product types.⁴⁰ Here too, a parallel side letter on pharmaceuticals clarifies, for each Party, the list of foreign regulators currently treated as "comparable" (and the conditions attaching to that status) and provides for timely notification of any changes.⁴¹

Annex on wine and whiskey. The annex on wine, whisky and other distilled spirits reduces TBT-type frictions by harmonising and simplifying wine labelling and certification rules, including allowing supplementary labels (that may be affixed after import), limiting mandatory date-marking, setting common thresholds for vintage (85%) and varietal claims (75% for single and 85% for multi-varietal wines), and removing routine official-origin certification for vintage, varietal and regional claims, while establishing a dedicated Wine, Whisky and Other Distilled Spirits Working Group to address technical issues (such as oenological practices, alcoholic-strength tolerances, acidity limits, labelling location and maturation rules for whisky and other spirits), with matters under the annex carved out from state-to-state dispute settlement pending a future review.⁴²

These outcomes are complemented by a side letter in which India confirms that, from entry into force of the Ind-NZ FTA, imports from New Zealand of goods under HS heading 2204 will receive treatment at least as favourable as that accorded to like imports from any non-party with respect to customs duties, the method of levying such duties and the applicable minimum CIF import value.⁴³

³⁷ Article 7.7, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA; Articles 7.10 and 7.14, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA.

³⁸ Articles 2-4, Annex 7A - Medical Devices, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA.

³⁹ India's Letter to New Zealand on Medical Devices, 27 April 2026.

⁴⁰ Articles 2-4 and 7-9, Annex 7B - Pharmaceuticals, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA.

⁴¹ India's Letter to New Zealand on Pharmaceuticals, 27 April 2026.

⁴² Articles 26-40, Annex 7C - Wine, Whisky and Other Distilled Spirits, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA.

⁴³ India's Letter to New Zealand on Wine, 27 April 2026.

B. Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS)

The SPS chapter applies to all SPS measures that may directly or indirectly affect trade and seeks both to reaffirm the Parties' WTO SPS obligations and to support their "enhanced implementation", by providing a framework to facilitate bilateral agri-food trade while protecting human, animal and plant life or health and ensuring that SPS measures do not create unjustified barriers to trade.⁴⁴

It contains detailed provisions on risk assessment (including reliance on Codex, WOH and IPPC standards where they exist, consideration of less trade-restrictive options, transparency on progress and reasons for delays and an undertaking not to stop imports solely because a review is under way), adaptation to regional conditions (recognition of pest- or disease-free areas and areas of low prevalence, procedures for assessment of regionalisation requests and modification/revocation of determinations), and equivalence (including system-wide or product-specific equivalence, information-sharing obligations and continuity of trade during assessments).⁴⁵

Conclusion on Non-tariff Barriers. In comparative terms, the IN-NZ SPS and TBT chapters share a common architecture with India's recent FTAs with the EU, UK, EFTA and Australia in reaffirming WTO SPS and TBT rules, emphasising international standards, requiring transparency and notification, and establishing SPS and TBT committees and consultation mechanisms.

At the same time, the Ind-NZ FTA goes further in certain respects. It incorporates detailed, reliance-based annexes for pharmaceuticals and medical devices, which operationalise the use of approvals and certifications from "comparable regulators" in order to reduce duplicative inspections and testing requirements for Indian producers. In addition, the agreement provides for a structured annex on wine, whisky, and other distilled spirits, supported by a dedicated working group focused on product-specific TBT issues in these sectors.⁴⁶

VIII. ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance chapter of the Ind-NZ FTA is structured and operational. It has a clear overarching objective of supporting implementation and utilisation of the FTA through trade-, investment- and capacity-building activities, and explicitly links cooperation to improving market access and openness, rather than treating it as generic policy dialogue.⁴⁷

Institutionally, this chapter is built around a dual-pillar structure: an Agriculture Productivity Partnership (**APP**) for agriculture and allied sectors, overseen by a high-level Joint Agriculture Productivity Council (**JAPC**); and a Committee on Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance (**CECTA**) for all non-agricultural sectors.⁴⁸ Both bodies can establish and supervise working groups, work programmes and action plans, creating a project-management hierarchy that is more developed than the cooperation committees or sub-committees found in India's other recent FTAs.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Articles 6.1-6.4, Chapter 6 - Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, India-NZ FTA.

⁴⁵ Articles 6.5-6.7, Chapter 6 - Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, India-NZ FTA.

⁴⁶ Annexes 7A-7C, Chapter 7 - Technical Barriers to Trade, India-NZ FTA; Articles 6.5-6.10 and 6.14, Chapter 6 - Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, India-NZ FTA.

⁴⁷ Article 14.1 - Objectives, and Article 14.2 - General Provisions, Chapter 14 - Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance, India-NZ FTA

⁴⁸ Article 14.4 - Purpose of the Agriculture Productivity Partnership, Article 14.5 - Joint Agriculture Productivity Council, and Article 14.6 - Operation of Committee on Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance, Chapter 14 - Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance, India-NZ FTA.

⁴⁹ Articles 14.7-14.9 - Working Groups, Work Programmes and Action Plans, Chapter 14 - Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance, India-NZ FTA.

A. Thematic Coverage

Agriculture Cooperation and Technical Assistance Thematic Areas. Annex 14A sets out agriculture cooperation areas (forestry, horticulture, apiculture and honey, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, wine, organics and cooperatives), backed by specific cooperation tools such as centres of excellence and commodity-specific action plans (Kiwifruit, Apple, Apiculture and Honey) whose performance is legally tied to the continuation of certain Tariff Rate Quotas.⁵⁰

Non-Agriculture Cooperation and Technical Assistance Thematic Areas. Annex 14B adopts a similar approach for non-agricultural sectors, including traditional knowledge and traditional medicine, tourism, audiovisual production, and sports. It outlines defined modes of cooperation such as joint research initiatives, business forums, and co-production arrangements, thereby providing a structured and operational basis for collaboration.⁵¹

Compared with the FTAs with developed economies, which generally list broad cooperation areas in dispersed chapters (for example, on trade and sustainable development, SMEs, innovation or culture) without this degree of annex-level operational detail or an APP-style governance mechanism, the IN-NZ FTA framework is more granular and implementation-oriented.

In parallel, a side letter on trade in organic food and agricultural products records an interim mutual-recognition arrangement based on acceptance of Australia's organic standard, to apply from entry into force of the FTA, and the Parties' endeavour to conclude, within 12 months of entry into force, a mutual-recognition assessment of equivalence between their own organic technical regulations and conformity-assessment systems, thereby operationalising and deepening the Annex 14A cooperation heading on organics.⁵²

It also goes further in expressly facilitating technology development, sharing and transfer within the Annex 14A and 14B areas and allowing participants to agree tailored Intellectual Property arrangements for new or transferred technologies.⁵³

IX. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, CULTURAL RIGHTS AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) chapter of the IN-NZ FTA follows a WTO Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) compliant, non-TRIPS-plus template. It reaffirms core multilateral instruments⁵⁴ and sets objectives that link IP protection to innovation, technology transfer, public health and socio-economic development, while preserving policy space to prevent abuse of IP rights and protect public health and nutrition, consistent with TRIPS flexibilities.⁵⁵ It expressly reaffirms the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health and preserves Parties' rights under TRIPS Articles 31 and 31*bis* of the TRIPS (including compulsory licensing and exports under compulsory licence), a balance that is broadly in line with India's

⁵⁰ Annex 14A - Agriculture Cooperation and Technical Assistance Thematic Areas, Articles 14A.2-14A.9, and cross-reference to Annex 2B - Implementation and Review of Economic Cooperation Action Plans and Related Tariff Rate Quotas, India-NZ FTA.

⁵¹ Annex 14B - Non-Agriculture Cooperation and Technical Assistance Thematic Areas, Articles 14B.2-14B.5, India-NZ FTA.

⁵² India's Letter to New Zealand on Trade in Organic Food and Agricultural Products, April 27, 2026.

⁵³ Article 14.3 - Scope of Cooperation Activities and Technical Assistance, and Article 14.10 - Technology Development, Sharing and Transfer, Chapter 14 - Economic Cooperation and Technical Assistance, India-NZ FTA

⁵⁴ TRIPS, Paris, Berne, WCT/WPPT, PCT, Marrakesh.

⁵⁵ Article 11.1 - Objectives and Principles, and Article 11.2 - General Provisions, Chapter 11 - Intellectual Property, India-NZ FTA.

positions in earlier FTAs.⁵⁶ The chapter does not introduce additional obligations on patent-term extension, data exclusivity or market exclusivity for pharmaceuticals or biologics.⁵⁷

Geographical indications (GI). The GI in the Ind-NZ FTA are addressed in a relatively lean GI section supplemented by a side letter. The chapter allows GIs to be protected via trade-mark, sui generis or other mechanisms and requires opposition procedures where administrative recognition is used.⁵⁸ Under the side letter, India and New Zealand agree to review the GI section within six months of entry into force, with a view to: (i) creating a mechanism to identify and protect specific GIs; (ii) ensuring that GIs nominated by India, explicitly including “BASMATI”, receive treatment no less favourable than that granted under New Zealand’s FTA with the EU or any other international agreement (including for wines, spirits and other goods); and (iii) requiring New Zealand to complete all legislative and regulatory steps necessary to protect those GIs, aiming to do so within 12 months of completing the review.⁵⁹

Cultural, Trade, Traditional Knowledge and Economic Cooperation. Unique to the India-NZ FTA, a separate chapter on cultural, trade, traditional knowledge and economic cooperation is recognised and cross-referenced in the IP framework, providing specific treatment of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions and linking to the new World Intellectual Property Organization Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (TK).⁶⁰ It encourages quality patent examination that takes documented TK into account (including use of databases such as India’s Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), and envisages cooperation on examiner training, while the chapter on TK provides a parallel cooperation track on AYUSH and Rongoā Māori systems, traditional cultural expressions, and SME- and community-led businesses relying on TK.⁶¹

Compared with India’s recent FTAs with the UK, EU, EFTA and Australia, which refer to TK issues more generically, the IN-NZ configuration offers a more integrated TK and IP approach, combining defensive TK protection (e.g., TKDL, Māori cultural-IP mechanisms) with targeted IP-chapter references and stand-alone cooperation disciplines.⁶²

X. TRADE PLUS CONCERNS

A. Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD)

The TSD chapter broadly reflects India’s evolving FTA template. It adopts a comprehensive, cooperation-driven and non-justiciable framework covering areas such as trade and labour, trade and gender, trade and environment, biodiversity, forests, marine fisheries, and climate change. The chapter is anchored in UN and ILO instruments, as well as in multilateral environmental agreements, and provides for institutional mechanisms including a dedicated TSD Committee, designated contact points, and structured consultations and dialogue, without recourse to dispute settlement under the FTA.⁶³ This approach is consistent with, and closely aligned to, India’s recent practice in its newly concluded FTAs.

⁵⁶ Article 11.3 - Public Health, Chapter 11 - Intellectual Property, India-NZ FTA.

⁵⁷ Articles 11.5-11.9, Chapter 11 - Intellectual Property, India-NZ FTA.

⁵⁸ Section E - Geographical Indications, Chapter 11 - Intellectual Property, India-NZ FTA.

⁵⁹ India’s Letter to New Zealand on Geographical Indications, April 27, 2026, paras. 1-4.

⁶⁰ Articles 13.1-13.3, Chapter 13 - Cultural, Trade, Traditional Knowledge and Economic Cooperation, India-NZ FTA.

⁶¹ Article 13.3(c), (g)-(j), Chapter 13 - Cultural, Trade, Traditional Knowledge and Economic Cooperation, India-NZ FTA.

⁶² Article 13.2(2)(d), Article 13.3(b), (c), Chapter 13 - Cultural, Trade, Traditional Knowledge and Economic Cooperation, India-NZ FTA.

⁶³ Articles 12.1–12.3, 12.5–12.9, 12.9–12.14, Chapter 12 – Trade and Sustainable Development, India–NZ FTA

B. Competition

The Competition chapter is similar to the ones as agreed in recently concluded FTAs. It requires each party to maintain and enforce a competition law that applies to all commercial activities, including public enterprises, and that prohibits anti-competitive agreements.⁶⁴ It further mandates procedural fairness (transparency, rights of defence, protection of confidential information), provides for voluntary cooperation and government-to-government consultations, and excludes the chapter from state-to-state dispute settlement, mirroring competition provisions in India's other recent FTAs.⁶⁵

C. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

The Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (**SMEs**) chapter is a cooperation and transparency instrument, similar in structure to SME chapters in India's other recent FTAs. It commits the parties to foster SME cooperation, including through linkages between SME support infrastructures (incubators, accelerators, export-assistance centres). Further, it promotes women- and youth-owned SMEs and start-ups, and collaboration on access to finance, government procurement and digital trade.⁶⁶

XI. CONCLUSION

Tariff concessions. The Ind-NZ FTA gives Indian goods full duty-free entry into a developed market while letting India open its own market more slowly and selectively. Tariffs are removed on all Indian exports to New Zealand, but India keeps exclusions for sensitive sectors such as dairy and certain agricultural products, and applies TRQ, MIP and a seasonal window for products such as apples and kiwifruit. This combination should support Indian exporters in sectors like textiles (\$65 million exports to NZ in FY 2025-26), pharma (\$48 million exports to NZ in FY 2025-26), engineering, electricals and machinery (\$48 million exports to NZ in FY 2025-26) and vehicles (\$33 million exports to NZ in FY 2025-26) etc., while limiting adjustment risks for farmers and domestic manufacturers.

Mobility package. New Zealand has scheduled deep commitments in IT, professional services, education, health and other knowledge-intensive sectors, and has agreed to a layered Mode 4 framework, a 5,000-slot temporary employment entry route, an uncapped and more generous student-mobility and post-study work regime, and a working-holiday scheme. This is likely to benefit Indian IT and professional-services firms, students, skilled workers and niche occupations such as AYUSH practitioners, yoga instructors and chefs, and will also require Indian regulators and professional bodies to engage more closely with their New Zealand counterparts on recognition and licensing.

Non-tariff barriers. On the regulatory side, the SPS and TBT chapters and annexes are designed to turn tariff cuts into usable market access. Reliance on "comparable regulators" for medical devices and pharmaceuticals, and detailed rules for wine and spirits, can lower compliance costs and shorten time to market for Indian producers and exporters, while still allowing both sides to run robust safety and quality systems. Farmers, food exporters and regulated manufacturers will need to track these new procedures and certification options.

Investment and cooperation. The investment and cooperation provisions, together with the IP and cultural-rights framework, are meant to create longer-term value. New Zealand's USD 20 billion, 15-year FDI

⁶⁴ Article 10.1 and Article 10.2, Chapter 10 – Competition, India–NZ FTA.

⁶⁵ Articles 10.3–10.6, Chapter 10 – Competition, India–NZ FTA.

⁶⁶ Articles 15.1–15.5, Chapter 15 – Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, India–NZ FTA.

objective, backed by an institutional follow-up and a rebalancing clause, signals a stronger pipeline for capital and technology into Indian priority sectors.

The IP chapter keeps India's TRIPS-flexibility space but adds a path to upgrade GI protection and a more integrated treatment of traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, including AYUSH and Māori systems, which were not recognised explicitly under other recently concluded FTAs.

We trust you will find this an interesting read. For any queries or comments on this update, please feel free to contact us at insights@elp-in.com or write to our authors:

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