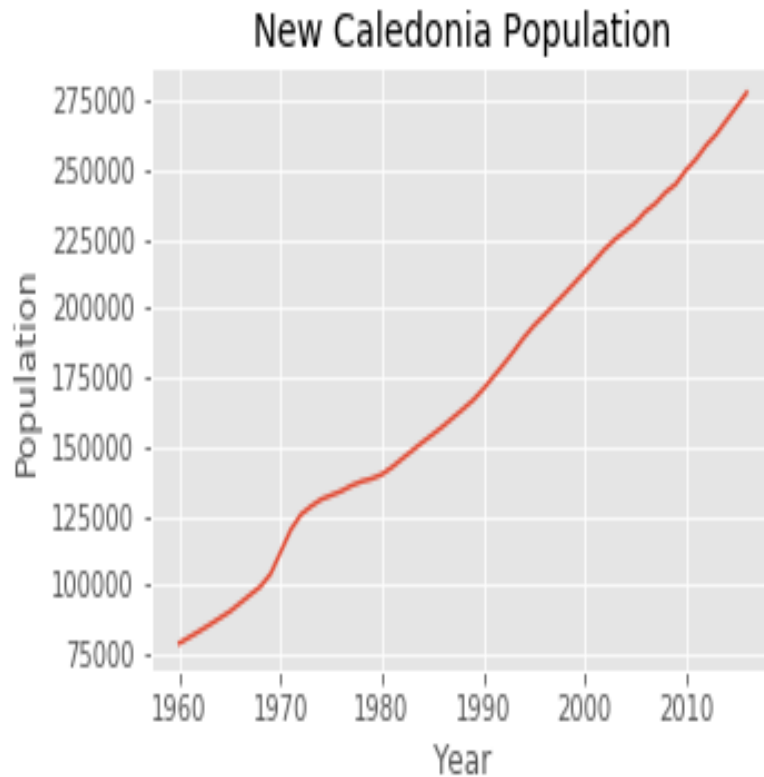


# New Caledonia



Coordinates: 21°15′S 165°18′E﻿ / ﻿21.25°S 165.30°E﻿ / -21.25; 165.30New Caledonia (French: Nouvelle-Calédonie)<sup>[nb 1]</sup> is a special collectivity of France in the southwest Pacific Ocean, 1,210 km (750 mi) east of Australia and 20,000 km (12,000 mi) from Metropolitan France. The archipelago, part of the Melanesia subregion, includes the main island of Grande Terre, the Loyalty Islands, the Chesterfield Islands, the Belep archipelago, the Isle of Pines, and a few remote islets. The Chesterfield Islands are in the Coral Sea. Locals refer to Grande Terre as Le Caillou ("the pebble"). New Caledonia has a land area of 18,576 km<sup>2</sup> (7,172 sq mi). Its population of 268,767 (Aug. 2014 census) consists of a mix of Kanak people (the original inhabitants of New Caledonia), people of European descent (Caldoches and Metropolitan French), Polynesian people (mostly Wallisians), and Southeast Asian people, as well as a few people of Pied-Noir and North African descent. The capital of the territory is Nouméa.