

National Centre for Research on Europe
University of Canterbury

New Zealand National Elite's Attitudes and Perceptions of the European Union.

Interim report
February 2004

Research project
“Rediscovering Europe: NZ Public, Elite and Media Perceptions of the EU”,
Dr. Natalia Chaban

Procedures overview

The survey of the NZ national elite perceptions of the EU is the third and final stage of the research project “Rediscovering Europe: NZ Public, Elite and Media perceptions of the EU” launched by the NCRE in 2002. The goal of the third stage of the research is to identify and explicate NZ policy and decision makers’ agenda on the EU, a study that has never been undertaken in NZ before.

Methodology.

Face-to-face interviews were employed. This particular method of information gathering was preferred to the mailed questionnaire (a method employed by the CERC, University of Melbourne, research of elite perceptions of the EU in Australia in 2000), as well as to the focus group discussions (a method used by the survey team A.A.R.S. Progetti S.r.l. when studying the elite perceptions on the EU in South East Asia in 2003). The choice of that particular method was driven by the consideration that written responses have a relatively low return rate due to the elites’ reservations to put anything in writing, general lack of time, and huge amount of information the elites are exposed to in which the request to fill out the questionnaire could be lost. Flexibility of schedule in arranging face-to-face interviews, undivided attention to the interviewee by the researcher during the conversation, and more open atmosphere during the individual interviews decided for that particular method against the focus group discussion one. The nature of NZ society, its elite’s egalitarian attitudes and relative availability reinforced the researcher’s decision to go for face-face interviews. Nevertheless, a small number of interviews did not happen, either due to the last minute changes in the schedules of the interviewees, or general unavailability due to their previous commitments, or due to the refusal to participate in attitudinal research.

Design of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1.)

This followed the general design of the questionnaire compiled for the survey of NZ public opinion carried out in 2003. This particular design provides grounds for the comparison between policy makers’ and public’s agenda on the EU. Naturally, the elite questionnaire was modified from the one designed for a 15-minute structured telephone interview of 1,000 respondents. The initial questionnaire was refined to include more open ended questions that provoke more in depth discussion. Elite interview lasted 40 minutes on average (some up to one hour). EU Delegation to NZ was informed about the interviews. The design of the questionnaire and the selection of interviewees happened independently from the Delegation, although the EC Delegation suggestions were taken into consideration.

Sample

Representatives of the political, business and media circles were approached. “Policy makers” were identified as current members of NZ parliament representing different parties. “Business elites” were chosen on the basis of their current participation in NZ Business Round Table and NZ Trade Liberalization Network. NZ “media elites” were identified as editor and lead reporters of the media outlets that were established in the first stage of the research project as the national leaders in the EU coverage. The request for interviews was answered by *The New Zealand Herald*, *The National Business Review*,

and TV3. TV1 did not respond to the request for interviews. Since this report presents interim findings, *The Dominion Post*, *The Press* and *The Southland Times* are still to be approached. The list of the interviewed individuals is in the Appendix 2 to this report.

With exception of two interviews that (in December 2003), the interviews were undertaken in January-February 2004. The current sample is 28 representatives of the national elite, however, more respondents are currently being approached. Among them there are 11 members of NZ Parliament, 12 representatives of business circles, and 5 media. Even with that limited number of opinion leaders who agreed to be interviewed, their opinions explicated a remarkable commonality in the EU perceptions. This commonality in perception patterns led us to the conclusion that for the country of NZ size and population that sample could be assumed to be sufficient. Similar research in South East Asia involved 100 opinion leaders from five countries (which roughly gives 20 opinion leaders per country). The interview stage also revealed certain manpower limitations -- the interviews and their analysis turned out to be a very time and cost consuming process. Similar research in the future would benefit from involving several researchers in this stage of attitudinal research.

Consolidated Overview of the Perceptions of the EU in NZ (interim findings)

a. exposure to the EU

NZ elites showed a high awareness and knowledge of the EU, its policies, institutions, initiatives and key decision makers. Elites reported a significant personal and business involvement with the EU. The preferred sources to get information on the EU are Internet (EU and individual countries websites in particular), EU Delegation newsletter, international media (*The Economist* in particular), and NZ Parliament Library. The interviewed mentioned extensive contacts with EU MPs, either through MEPs visits to NZ or NZ MPs visits to the EU Parliament, as well as numerous EU delegations to NZ, business partnership, business offices in EU countries, regular business trips, meetings with EU countries ambassadors to NZ, and participation in different events that involve EU issues. The opening of the EU Delegation in Wellington was highly regarded. It was characterized as “*a long overdue process*” and “*the sign of recognition of NZ by the EU*”. However, several interviewed were concerned with a low key of the Delegation’s opening in Wellington. Only a couple of interviewed were not aware of this recent development in EU-NZ relations.

Certain exposure patterns were traced. The political elites explicated less direct involvement with the EU (either through the activities of the NZ government, or through the meetings with EU representatives in NZ), rather than direct interactions in the EU itself. Arguably those interactions were perceived as “*minimal*” or “*not significant*”.

as a member of Parliament in a small trading nation that heavily relies on primary production to sustain our economy and looks for free trade opportunities with the rest of the world.

as a member of the NZ government I am involved via the actions of the government with different relations with the EU

It's very limited apart from meeting with people who come from their Parliamentary delegations, or occasionally with the Secretariat, or delegation based in Canberra, but not a great deal to do with the EU.

Business and media representative showed more of a direct involvement:

We have our office in Europe, in Brussels

offices in London, Düsseldorf, Amsterdam, France, Italy

All interviewed indicated a high level of personal involvement with Europe either in terms of having ancestral roots, or going on regular leisure travels, or having friends and/or family members living there, or being educated there, or living there for extensive periods of time. A certain age related dynamics was noticed -- older respondents tend to travel less to Europe, but were more prompt to stress their European roots. On the other hand, younger respondents trend to bring the travels and friends references to the front, while stress European forebears in second turn. Another finding concerned the division between political and business/media elites. While all approached representatives of business and media circles have been to Europe, several political opinion leaders have never been to any European country.

Without exception, political and business opinion leaders noticed a poor coverage of the EU in national media. NZ media “*myopic and introspective*” coverage of foreign news reporting was mentioned as possibly depriving NZers of a chance to out themselves in a truly global context. News on the EU was mentioned as not covered in depth, representing only “*trivia*”. While the attempts of print and radio media to present a more detailed analysis of the EU were acknowledged by the several interviewed, a low quality foreign news on NZ TV production was repeatedly stressed. ***None of the respondents named national media as a primary source of information on the EU***, although several have admitted that for the small country far away from Europe, NZ media is certainly representing much more about Europe, than Europe represents about NZ. ***Sources of information about the EU is one of remarkable, but predictable difference between public's and elites' agendas -- the survey of NZ public opinion on the EU indicted that NZers use national media, and especially TV news, as a leading source of information on the EU.***

the media every now and again will do a feature on the EU

I am proactively seeking information on the EU, I can't just wait until NZ media decide to do something about it.

I found NZ media to be very shallow. Any in depth insights at all.

We like to see some TV programs about [Europe]. But increasingly and sadly we are being Americanized. In many of our TV programs come from America. We

regret that we are not getting more from Europe, not sourcing more programs and information from Europe.

There is not a high quality of NZ media reporting on the EU. It is also very little information in comparison to the UK and the USA.

We don't get enough detail, we get the trivia, we always will be told a mad decision by the EU parliament, an extreme rather than a lot of other issues. You have to dig our if you want to find out. In terms of the decision being made in Brussels, we don' have much at all

NZ media is pretty hopeless. We don't get much information on news in the world at all, it's usually very strange international news. I don't mean only about the EU, but about other overseas locations.

We don't see much of the EU in NZ media, but I think it's a general criticism about NZ media. NZ media tends to report things in NZ context, it does not report things in global context. It does not place NZ in the global context. You don't get this analysis. Very-very local, just not much scrutiny and some politicians get their ideas from.

Occasionally you can see NZ media do their best, particularly print media and radio to provide a little bit more analysis of what is happening in Europe, and trying to make a more explicit connection between what is happening and how it affects us here in NZ. I don't think that the television does that, because the television rating is right through them, I think their coverage of new is very shallow, not only about Europe, but also news that happens here.

Interviews with media elites explicated that NZ media editorial policies do not allocate any additional resources or staff to cover EU related issues, or foreign issues for that matter. In their views, Europe will further decrease in its presence in NZ media, since the general feeling is that NZ audience is not interested in those issues. Interestingly, NZ political and business elites expressed an opposite opinion.

b. importance

The diversity of attitudes ranged on a scale from Europhiles to Euro-sceptics. However, the content analysis on the interview texts revealed a distinct commonalities in the array of opinions – ***all respondents, irrespective of their pro- or con stances stressed a good and positive state of relationships between NZ and EU at the present moment as well underlined huge importance of the EU for NZ.***

When asked to characterize their perception of the state of EU-NZ relations the answers unanimously indicated a high satisfactory level of those relations:

Excellent

Very strong. Apart from the strength, those connections are coming through the war.

Close. Very warm relationship, there is a mutual respect both for the EU and for the number of member states, and certainly this relationship is the success of this government puts an emphasis on,

Good. In terms, not much tensions If look at relationship between NZ and export countries in the EU, especially France, agricultural areas there have increased tensions. But that's true to the US too.

Cordial, but a little bit distant, because we continue to have issues with trading relationships on quotas on sheep meat, dairy, we don't agree on their agricultural policies, and that does not make for a really great relationship, but we are fine, we work together.

I'd describe like "big brother-little brother" relationship, quite affectionate one toward the other but a very clear understanding who is in charge. Not in a nasty way, it is just a reality when you are dealing with small countries whose significance internationally is rather small,

I think that at a political level NZ has a good relationship with the EU. On a trade level it could be a potentially difficult relationship. But at a higher political level and a lower commercial level it's a good relationship.

Very positive. We have a lot of things in common, we export our products to the EU, they export a lot of goods in NZ. So much history and culture shared, I would hope that they are very positive in a general sense, but there are a lot of frustrations around trading issues.

Very good. We feel warmly disposed towards Europe generally

Most European countries and their populations have a reasonable understating what of our country. It's popular to visit NZ and come to NZ, and look around. There is a strong sense of similarity between our societal values, and the ways we organize our societies, so we are not strangers to each other, and it is important that we work hard to make sure that our dialogue with other European countries is good and mutually respectful,

Without exception, ***all respondents underline that the importance of the EU to NZ remains high, as well as the importance of individual European countries, UK in particular.*** UK is profiled highly as an immediate reference to the EU, on the background of its accession to the EU in 1971 and economic consequences of that move to NZ.

EU is extremely important

EU is of huge importance to NZ

EU is very important

in terms of a national perspective on Europe, it is still as a major and perhaps underrated partner for NZ

Obviously there are connections with the British Isles, they go way back.

when young NZers go off overseas, they usually go to London first, because they know they are at home and they will allowed to work there and save some money to travel around, much the same way I did.

The importance of Europe to NZ was perceived foremost in economic terms on par with the importance in cultural/historical terms, followed by the perception of EU growing importance in political/security terms.

Historical perceptions:

Historical/cultural perceptions of the Union in its relation to NZ were detected in almost every interview:

I think Europe important from a historical perspective,

Many of our people come from Europe, our ancestors, I am Irish, there is always connection there

It is very important for us, a large amount of our population came from there a few years ago, a hundred years ago, and it is still considered to be the part of us in a way

I don't regard myself as European, I am a Pacific islander, but several generations back my forbears were European.

From a historical point of view it's very important as well because there are a large number of New Zealanders whose families two, three, four generations back have immigrated from Europe

Because of all those cultural links, it is also of great importance

There is a lot of cultural underpinning of NZ of European NZers from Europe, we still have much more affinity towards Europe, and particular he UK than we do towards the US.

Real lining involved in world relationship and security, NZ of course for many years of from our pioneering birth were enclave of Europe, principally, Great Britain, our population is predominantly of European descend

NZ whole society and consciousness was and remains vitally important by Europe, that's where many of our families come from. It's in many ways home, for many people, even like me who is the 4th or 5th generation NZer. I think there is a very strong sense of affinity that remains to this day,

When asked to rate the perceived importance of the EU to NZ in comparison to Australia, the US, China, Japan, and South America most of the respondents were cautious to prioritize or rank the regions. Although Europe and the EU is perceived to never disappear from the list of 'significant Others' to NZ, **its importance in the future is foreseen to diminish in favour of NZ's changing orientation towards Asia-Pacific region.** The EU was seen as a successful example of regional integration that could and

should inspire Asian and Pacific countries to further integrate. In this context, the importance of Asia to NZ, China in particular, was underlined:

The future economically for NZ has to be primarily in our region, the Asia-Pacific region. I'd like to believe that NZ economic and ultimately cultural future will lie increasingly in our Asia –Pacific region.

We also try to get our own regional grouping in this part of the world through the APEC

And so the APEC cooperation with those Asian nations, South-East Asia, China, will be important.

We also try to get our own regional grouping in this part of the world through the APEC

And so the APEC cooperation with those Asian nations, South-East Asia, China, will be important.

NZ was and is a strong supporter of the notion of the APEC. If we are able to create something analogous to the EU in Asia –Pacific, and hopefully we'll do that on a complimentary basis rather than through trade blocks, swallowing each other off, I'd like to believe that NZ economic and ultimately cultural future will lie increasingly in our Asia –Pacific region.

Professionally I see more opportunities in Asia

We will be strengthening our links and connections with China we.

No doubts that China and Asia will be the markets of the most importance to NZ in 10-20 years

We are part of the Pacific and Asia region, that will continue to develop, but attachments based on your history go back hundreds of years, I don't see that lessening too much, trade issues will be more focused, or equally focused on Asia-Pacific region than we have on Europe today, that's probably likely to happen

I think with Britain joining the EU and other global chain factor, NZ emphasis changed. We now increasingly realize that we are in the South Pacific, and what people in Europe call 'Far East' is 'Near North' for us.

Australia and the US, NZ's traditional allies including the Pacific rim countries, were mentioned as the regions of great importance to NZ. Australia as an immediate member in the region was placed high on the rating list by many respondents:

Australia is our most important trading partner, our ally, our friend. Our links -- economical, political, social, -- are probably the most important for us. The neighbourhood is first of all.

The relations with Australia are the long-term close economic relations. It is geographically the closest partner for NZ.

NZ should be looking first towards Australia

The US, is viewed as a traditional ally who is now possesses an unparalleled importance to NZ as the only superpower in the world. ***The responses often framed the role of the EU as an emerging healthy counterbalance to the only dominating world power:***

US is a key player in the Pacific, and our close defence strategic alliance traditionally

We are too far away for start to do that, their countries are not going to come to our aid, we are physically closer to the US and to Australia.

US is also very important because the world tends to take its politically and economically from the events in the US, so there is no escape in the importance of the influence of the US in the relationships with NZ

With regard to the US, the most important issue at all is the political security outlook for the world which NZers are part.

if you look at Europe as collective that is EU economies and nations combined into one, on in my view in economic terms is not less significant than the US

Asia, Australia, the US might be more immediate targets for our trade

In the longer term, for a global security you don't want one pre-eminent, and with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US has emerged through the 90s as a very sole geopolitical power, and I think Europe, the United States of Europe, is the natural check and balance on that.

The traditional NZ allies – Australia, the UK (usually singled out of the EU), the US are perceived to downgraded by present Government closer orientation towards Europe.

I believe Helen Clark's government and she herself is very European orientated, and she has a political philosophy that is very strong in Europe

However, another frequent response was that NZ, a small trade dependent nation in South Pacific, “can't afford the luxury of picking and choosing one group of friends and ignoring the others”.

NZ can't put all our eggs into one basket and focus solely on one part of the world as a trade and political target, we need to try to work with everybody

The EU is a moving target, much more rapidly moving than the US, the US has been important to NZ for quiet a long period of time, stable relationship, same with Australia, but the EU is a recent creation, a new creature on the political landscape, and as the EU expands, evolves, changes its powers and structures then it's emerging as a coherent entity to the extent that it's going to open its office here in NZ shortly, I would expect the Europeans' importance to NZ would strengthen and grow.

Economic importance

The EU is predominantly conceptualized as a world economic power, and perceived in terms of trade/agricultural trade/ agricultural protectionism. Those characteristics are remarkably close to the dominant public perceptions identified in the national survey. The most important issues in present day EU-NZ interaction are seen in the following way:

That would be still economic issues.

Economics is the overriding issue

Progress or lack of progress towards further global trade liberalization is the most important questions with regard to Europe.

Trade issues are the big ones

Trade is the most important

Trade subsidies, trade protection are very important

The questions of trade and access would be the most important aspects

Trade issues, we are always really concerned about trade, particularly agricultural trade, we are the country which depends on agricultural products. And we constantly get into some point of difference with our European colleagues on these issues for a range of issues that are well known, but this is certainly the biggest issue.

The role of the EU in the future of NZ was clearly perceived in economic terms:

That always has to be economic, that always has to be around the trade issues.

For the foreseeable future, our trade and economic relationship with Europe are being underpinned by strong cultural familiarity.

I see the EU emerging as an important base, because if we can crack that market, if we can get access into that market it presents a very real economic gain for NZ.

Because there is a formal structure, because the rules of engagement are clear and transparent, I think the EU will be an important part of NZ economic future.

The EU probably presents more economic opportunities.

As a common export market it has merit

Trade, has to be trade, and tourism too, but it's a part of trade, but I think there is a lot of tourism between NZ and trade.

Tourism approaches with the EU has become an important part of our engagement.

Many interviewed stressed NZ's commitment to the "on-going battle for free trade regulations" that might define the EU-NZ relationships in the future. Although some elites are aware of the EU reforms in the field of trade barriers, the overall awareness of

EU moves towards reducing the subsidies remains low. The overriding perception is that Europe is the “*last bastion of protectionism*” for a long time in the future. The major concern voiced was about the threat of further restrictions to market access which could be extended if new EU member states adopt similar practices. Having noticed that, the elites’ views were realistic in terms that trading with the US has no less trading obstacles.

We have to keep on pushing for removing the subsidies to farmers in Europe

I am alarmed with their continuing protectionism in trade, particularly, in agricultural products, as all NZers should be and all in the developing world for that matter, they say they champion free trade, but only in manufacturing goods where they have a comparative advantage

I shouldn’t underplay the importance of the Europe’s commitment to democracy, civil liberties, in general to a free enterprise, just wish their commitment to free enterprise systems extended past the boundaries of Europe

EU market is given a huge importance to NZ. It was described in terms of its growing size, high purchasing ability of the consumers and sophisticated demands toward the quality of products that NZ producers can satisfy. The loss of this market is considered to be irreplaceable.

Because they [Europeans] are sophisticated, they have sophisticated technologies, people are educated and presumably reasonably sophisticated, these are the markets we aspire to sell into, products and markets that we would like to have .

It’s a powerful trading block, no something we can afford ignore or give a fence to.

if export market were to close up tomorrow, that would see us losing 20-25% of our export market. It would be like losing one of your biggest customers without any obvious replacement.’

However, a high cost of business retrenchment in Europe is perceived to be a potential issues for NZ business trying to establish or maintain their offices there.

Trade access, Major issue are looming -- in Europe the cost of social services, the cost of doing business within Europe, the cost of retrenchment for business, the cost of hiring the staff.

The introduction of the Euro as international currency is mostly perceived in positive terms, although some respondent voiced more cautious attitudes. The US dollar is still seen by the interviewed as a benchmark for international currencies. However, the numerous perceptions of the Euro are of the currency on par with the US dollar which is predicted to have a growing influence worldwide as a counterbalance to the US dollar. Most of respondent noticed that Euro has been establishing itself very well, and some

business respondent expressed their enthusiasm as for moving their trade into the Euro, taking into account recent instability of the US dollar:

From NZ's perspective at this particular point of time we judge where our economy is in relation to the US dollar, I think in the future it will Euro, it is used to be a British pound, it became a US dollar, it's because of the whole strength those economic are going to be it's a fairly big zone.

The Euro is something that we have to accept. It seems it's gone particularly well. It will be in competition with the EU dollar, or equal to the American dollar.

Intuitively I feel that the dollar will remain the yardstick of comparative value in the foreseeable future.

I'll probably vote for the US dollar

Currently I'd quiet happily move our trading in US dollars to trading in Euro. If NZ dollar and the Euro are going to move sort of together up and down, than we are much more better off to trading directly in Euro. I see the US dollar power being eroded in the future just because of the instability of their dollar.

It's been interesting to observe the relative strength of the Euro for the last year or so. How important is it going to be in international trade vis-à-vis the US dollar, looking forward it is difficult to say, but so much of the trade of the world is done in dollars, I think it will be a while before Euro becomes a significant force in that sense.

The greenback throughout out the century has always been the currency of last resort or of first resort, the yardstick against which other currencies stand or fall, and I don't see that changing enormously. And it all depends who are trading with. If you are trading with a country or business and their payments are denominated in Euro, and all of a sudden Euro is a matter of great importance.

Still. USD is an important currency in term of global trade. I think they are on par in terms of global importance.

It's part of that check and balance, a strong Euro is good for that same reason, instead of having single dollar dominance, you have the balance and a critical mass,

it's just the matter of wait for the time and once that happens, the Euro will be a strong international currency.

Political importance

Political/security issues in NZ-EU interactions are subservient to the vision of the EU as an economic power, although the role of the EU as a political force has been stressed by many respondents. The gradually growing importance of the EU was frequently framed in terms of its commitment to the creation of the "united" Europe:

As the Union expands, some of the political issues will become more important.

Now when the world is moving much more into regional blocks rather than individual states, how the blocks interact is going to be important. Obviously that would be on the trade front. But increasingly political, it will be important.

First, the EU is a number of individual states. It is important to NZ to recognize tensions that exist between the member state and to come between them.

The EU is looking to exert more influence on the world stage as an entity rather than its small constituent parts such as Germany, or France, or Britain. The recent war in Iraq is an exception. The EU is increasingly getting around as "the EU" around the world rather than individual countries.

Representatives of NZ political, business and media circles explicated a great degree of ***awareness and knowledge about the EU Enlargement***. A finding that ***this is different from the general public's awareness***, which according to the national survey is very low. EU enlargement in terms of its consequences for NZ got mixed reviews. It is seen both in terms of risks and opportunities for NZ, but voiced concerns so far outweighed the list of foreseen opportunities.

Risks are associated with possible challenges for NZ trade, e.g., NZ being cut off the traditional Western European markets by new member states, or NZ losses if new EU countries adopt protectionist policies. Further insulation of Europe and dreaded loss of interest towards the outside partners are also repeatedly mentioned.

The risks of Enlargement are that we are fading even further from the radar screens

The existing members of the EU are trying to build their relationships with these new member state countries. Just in terms of time, EU governments and the EU Parliament have to focus on such countries as NZ will be more restricted

NZers and NZ trade organization are not reacting as quick as they should. I am not even sure if they are aware of the connotations of the Enlargement of the EU. There are also enormous risks, particularly if introduction of those countries further will cut it out our access to our traditional Western European partners.

We see them as risks because countries that have come out of the communist block as it were have huge untapped potential, they will be going for getting themselves up the speed, they will be producing things that of competition to us. Disadvantages are untapped potentials that could be in competition with our products at probably a very competitive rates because they are right there.

The risk is as Europe grows and community expands, if regional trade blocks become even stronger, then the insularity, 25 of us can do it among ourselves, we do not really need to worry about too many the outsiders, that's the downside we need to worry of.

There could be a risk or a threat to NZ, but I think there would be more of a risk to the EU itself taking in these countries. There not large countries. Poland is probably the largest, around 40 mln. Turkey, it would interesting to see what happens, taking those countries into the EU, are they going to drag other

countries down to their level, or are they going to be lifted up, you know money taken from each according to its ability and given to each according to its need. Although I don't want this country to be a dumping ground for the risky refugees which are not allowed into any other country in the world. There are 7 bln people who would love to come and live here, and they don't have the right to live here. There could be an overflow there.

Risks with all business, you calculate the risks, and you try to limit the risks.

Definitely risks. If ten countries who are predominantly from the former Eastern block pick up the EU's bad habits of the CAP, high level of agricultural protectionism, high level of subsidy for farmers,

I would be very concerned if the exceeding EU states took on board the protectionist structure that CAP is founded on. Other threats that we in NZ, and Australia, and Asia-Pacific generally have always been concerned with "Fortress Europe", the concept that Europeans would turn upon themselves and would have a little connection with the rest of the in short term though we see large risks associated with the costs associated with the members joining

First, it could be more challenging in terms of trade. A lot will depend on what kind of relations NZ has with those new countries, if any. We may have some. This is a new area of competition for NZ, especially if NZ was not there previously, and if some of those states have a strong production base. We need to develop trade policies with them.

Enlargement is unsettling for the EU. Dealing with new states will be big procedural issues. Disruptions will be there. They may be not major, but they may impact our trade relations.

The issue is going to be the access. And the other issue is knowledge about those countries. We really don't have it.

The more countries go into the EU, the greater the level or potential for more trade constraints. NZ can do the trade deals with any countries it wishes, a free trade agreement, for example, with Cyprus. Once they go into the EU, the opportunity for that to occur is gone, I would see the expansion of the EU as the threat to trade rather an opportunity. No, I don't see any benefits for us.

Opportunities are seen mostly in terms of potential markets, movement towards reducing agricultural protectionism, emergence of united politically stable Europe.

Enlargement presents opportunities because some of the issues that some of the poorer countries coming into the EU will be facing are similar to NZ in terms of getting access to those bigger markets.

With the Enlargement my hope is that those countries that are coming in will be able to say "We want to be able compete, and have our share"

So of course there are risks, but they are balanced with the opportunities

The benefit is that we don't the situation of worrying about even from this far distance, communism as a threat. The benefits are looking into more united block, or more united Europe.

There are opportunities in terms of our ability to especially with the Eastern European countries, through the Union to expand our political and trade relations. I think the opportunity for us is to expand.

Huge opportunities,

Hopefully, increasing wealth in those new member over time, we see potential for those new member countries as market themselves,

It would a huge advantage to NZ if we took more immigrants from the European countries, skilled immigrant, qualified immigrants, and I know there are number of such people coming to NZ.

With the steady expansion of more countries joining, it's very good not only economically but also for global security, Europe plays key role there,

A lot of opportunities, an expanded Europe is good, from a general security point of view, but also from a trade point of view. I think with this expansion they can't sustain their common agricultural policies, and their massive subsidies scheme. I just don't see how they can do that. So there is a wake up call for France particularly, and Germany, and Britain, for that matter, I think its good.

The perceptions of the possible impacts of other EU 2004 events NZ was less articulated (Constitutional convention, IGC, EU Parliament elections, appointment of new EU commissioners).

I guess we'll be new at that sense and that's an opportunity for us to meet new players

I haven't examined those events that I can form a judgement on them.

Parliamentary elections are important if there is a dramatic change. But most of our relations are governance to governance. We have good relations with the government of individual EU countries. Irrespective of the regime, the EU won't treat NZ with less respect.

It will be dependent who those personalities are, what exposure or contact they have with NZ, and what their status might be. I am sure our Foreign Minister, our Trade Minister will be there. New commissioners are being appointed just recently. Have them coming out here.

I don't think that constitutional convention will have impact on NZ. I think Europe itself has a huge problem with a growing bureaucracy. How it affects NZ, I do not know

I am not sufficiently close to make any statements on that. Almost certainly that the change within the governments, or with the EU can have effect on NZ one way or another.

In reality, who is calling the shots policy wise in Brussels and Washington is vitally important to NZ.

Not an immediate effect for our industry. If those new things have an impact on economies, have an impact on confidence, have an impact on consumer spending, if people feel comfortable enough to dine out, then those events will have an impact on our industry

It depends on the influence of the individuals. When a new commissioner comes, especially in the agricultural area. Depending on who gets the top job they will use their influence to drive the agenda which they think is important

EU role in the Pacific was mentioned by just a few respondents. NZ role in this interaction was perceived as “valued by the EU”, however perceived high bureaucratic demands on part of the EU that accompany the aid initiatives in the Pacific were assessed in negative terms:

when I was looking at the EU aid being offered in the Pacific it was clear that over half of the aid was not taken in, and the reason for that – too expensive, for the Pacific nations to build their Brussels..., adding extra bureaucrats in third world countries destabilizes them, because the capital becomes too big for the country, I sort of wonder what the logic is going on

The list of the other issues in NZ-EU dialogue that were perceived as impacting NZ includes such comments as:

there is not unified voice in terms of foreign policy

issues of environment, animal welfare, social policy.

general humanitarian rights

welfare state, high taxes, increasingly go away from free markets,

Sporting interactions

There is a lot of technological development, technological change, technological development side. On the other hand you also got, NZ this clean disease free agriculture, it's quiet important for NZ, it gives the market differentiation. And also European who travel to NZ as backpackers, we need to go some back country.

Trade, welfare, environment, social welfare. I do not know enough about the policy issues, but I imagine differences and similarities in policy on multilateral actions are consider to be important.

On the scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is not important and 5 is very important), the average rate of importance of the EU to NZ at the present moment was identified by **political elites as 4.2, by business elites as 4, and by media elites as 3.2.**

On the scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is not important and 5 is very important), the average rate of importance of the EU to NZ in the future was identified by political elites as **4.1**, **by business elites as 4, and by media elites as 3.2.**

The most frequently mentioned “snapshot” images of the EU (starting with the most frequent):

- Brussels
- Culture and history
- Trade constraints
- Euro
- Countries that used to fight each other now are together
- Bureaucracy
- Economic development
- Britain, France, Germany

Appendix 1:

1.a. Questionnaire / Interview Guide for Interviews with Political and Business Elites

1. Could you describe the nature of the involvement your organization and/or you personally have with the EU?
2. How would you compare the importance of the EU to NZ in relation to the US, Asia, Australia, China, Japan, Latin America?
3. How would you characterize the state of the relationship between New Zealand and Europe/the European Union (EU)?
4. In your opinion, which issues in NZ-EU present day interactions have the most impact on NZ?
5. What issues should be kept in mind when New Zealand is developing trade or government policy relating to the EU in the future?
6. What kind of risks and/or opportunities do you see for NZ when 10 new countries join the EU in 2004?
7. Do you see any relevant impact on NZ of the EU 2004 Inter-Governmental Conference and Constitutional Convention?
8. How do you see the Euro as an international currency vis-à-vis the US dollar?
9. Which sources provides you with news about the EU?
10. What media outlets do you prefer to access to learn more about the EU?
11. Do you have personal contacts with the EU? Which countries?
12. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important, how would you rate the importance of the EU to New Zealand in the present?
13. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important, how would you rate the importance of the EU to New Zealand in the future?
14. When thinking about the term 'the European Union', what three thoughts come to your mind?
15. The EU has opened its Delegation in Wellington. Which mutually beneficial ways of interaction with the Delegation do you envision?

1.b. Questionnaire/Interview guide for interviews with Media Elites

EU coverage:

1. How is the coverage of the EU issues organized? Where do you get the news?
2. Are special preparations made in advance?
3. Is a special budget allocated?
- 4.

Editorial Approach:

5. What is the officially formulated policy on covering the foreign news? The news on the EU?
6. Does the news organization assume a reactive role or proactive, initiating role? (stories initiated on their own, actively set the agenda)
7. What is the policy regarding the coverage of issues brought forward by the organizations involved with the EU?

News selection criteria:

8. Are standards criteria for the evaluation of the newsworthiness of an event/issues applied to are special criteria applied? How difficult is it to sell an EU story?
9. Are special news segments implemented or does news about the EU compete equally against the other news?

Future:

10. Where do you see the balance of foreign reporting will shift in the future?
11. Year 2004 is an important year: IGC, Enlargement, and Constitutional Convention. Which of those events do you think have a chance to be prioritized and approached by the news organization?

Personal perceptions

12. How would you compare the importance of the EU to NZ in relation to the US, Asia, Australia, China, Japan, Latin America?
13. How would you characterize the state of the relationship between New Zealand and Europe/the European Union (EU)?
14. In your opinion, which issues in NZ-EU present day interactions have the most impact on NZ?
15. What issues should be kept in mind when New Zealand is developing trade or government policy relating to the EU in the future?
16. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important, how would you rate the importance of the EU to New Zealand in the present?
17. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important, how would you rate the importance of the EU to New Zealand in the future?
18. When thinking about the term 'the European Union', what three thoughts come to your mind?

Appendix 2:

List of the interviewed:

Members of NZ Parliament:

ACT

Richard Prebble , Leader, L Labour, SIS, PM & Cabinet, Immigration, Industrial Relations, Employment, OSH, Ethnic Affairs, Pacific Island Affairs, State Services

Ken Shirley , Deputy Leader, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Trade, Environment, Conservation, Local Government, Civil Defence, Energy, Research, Science & Technology

Gerry Eckhoff, Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Biosecurity, Rural Affairs, Land and Land Information, Tourism

Deborah Coddington, Education, Commerce, Assoc. Justice, Assoc. Finance, Business Development, Industry, Regional Development, I.T., Consumer Affairs, Broadcasting

NZ First

Brian Donnelly, Hon. Brian, Spokesperson on Education; ERO; Pacific Island Affairs; Science & Technology; CRIs; Arts & Culture; Sports
Chairperson of Education and Science Committee

Doug Woolerton, Spokesperson on Rural Affairs; Forestry
Member of Primary Production Committee

Dail Jones, Spokesperson on Customs; Attorney General; Courts; Trade; Associate Spokesperson on Immigration; Foreign Affairs & Trade Member of Justice and Electoral Committee; Member of Regulations Review Committee; Member of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

The New Zealand Labour

Ruth Dyson, Minister, Minister for ACC, Minister of Women's Affairs, Minister for Disability Issues, Minister for Senior Citizens , Associate Minister of Health, Associate Minister of Social Services and Employment (CYFS)

Rick Barker, Minister, Minister for Courts, Minister of Customs, Associate Minister of Justice, Associate Minister of Social Development and Employment, Member of the Social Services Select Committee

Darren Hughes, Minister, Member of the Commerce Select Committee, Member of the Justice and Electoral Select Committee

United Future

Peter Dunne, Leader of United Future, Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs; Defence; SIS; Overseas Trade; Veterans' Affairs, Chairperson of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee, Member of Privileges Committee, Member of Standing Orders Committee

Business:

Rob McLeod, chairman of the New Zealand Business Roundtable, chairman of Ernst & Young New Zealand

Brian Lynch, Chairman of the Board, NZ Trade Liberalization Network

Simon Carlow, Councilor, Business NZ

Philip Turner, Director, Government and Trade Strategy, Fonterra

Alastair Macfarlane, General Manager, Trade and Information, NZ Seafood Industry Council

Anne Berryman, GM Trade and Market Development, NZ Meat Board

Craig Finch, Manager, Market Development, NZ Meat Board

Philip Gregan, New Zealand Winegrowers

Roger Buchanan, Chief Executive, New Zealand Wool Board

Philip Lewin, Chief Executive, Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce

Robert D. Archibald, Manager on Research and Development, ANZCO Foods

Michael-John Loza, Deer Industry New Zealand

Media:

John Rogan, Assistant Editor, *The New Zealand Herald*

Fran O'Sullivan, Assistant Editor, *The New Zealand Herald*

John Gardner, Weekend Review section editor, *The New Zealand Herald*

Deborah Hill Cone, News Editor, *The National Business Review*

Mark Jennings, Director of New and Current Affairs, *TV3*