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Christopher Luxon:
Bending the Truth, Jeopardising our Future?

An analysis of factually misleading statements from Christopher Luxon and the National Party

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Introduction and Summary

Honesty is important in governance: it is difficult to trust the statements or promises of dishonest politicians; dishonest politicians might lie to themselves about how good their decisions are, and this might result in immoral, ineffective or uncorrected policies; and dishonest politicians could selfishly focus more on their power and on deceptively maintaining it than on serving the public in a principled way.

In this respect, it is concerning that Christopher Luxon frequently makes statements that are false or misleading—and to potentially dishonest levels. As a result, he may jeopardise New Zealand's future if re-elected. However, it takes some research and fact-finding to see this.

Here, I do the research for you—going one-by-one and showing time and again how he misrepresents the truth and cannot be trusted for that reason. In particular, I argue that he or his party:

- Misrepresented the previous Labour government as having been obsessed with co-governance in healthcare when this was debatable and when Labour enacted changes aiming to improve healthcare for all—not just Māori
- Misrepresented the previous Labour government as neglecting medicines and doctors when Labour funded new medicines and reported an increase in doctors
- Misrepresented his government as being responsible for 2,100 additional nurses when many of those nurses resulted from Labour's efforts and when nurse numbers plateaued for two years of Luxon's government
- Misrepresented the previous Labour government as giving money to the "Mongrel mob" when Labour never approved funds for any gang and instead implemented legislation and operations to counter gang activity
- Misrepresented particular criminal activity as occurring during (or because of) the previous Labour government when that activity occurred during the current National-led government
- Misrepresented the Labour Party as currently lacking a plan with only a slogan when Labour, by Luxon's own admission, arguably has some plans and when National also has a slogan
- Misrepresented the Labour party as proposing a tax that would "hit" Kiwisaver when the Advertising Standards Authority found that this was inaccurate and that Labour's proposed tax did not apply to Kiwisaver
- Misrepresented the National Party caucus as "united" and fully supporting Luxon's leadership even though Luxon later ejected Chris Penk from Cabinet for challenging his leadership
- Misrepresented New Zealanders as having "no desire for new taxes" in one poll when an AAP fact-checking organisation noted that the same poll showed more New Zealanders supported the capital gains tax than opposed it (45% support versus 40% oppose)

- Misrepresented the favourability of New Zealand's economy and his plan to fix it in various ways, including the fact that unemployment rose during Luxon's prime ministership and his government does not appear on track to achieve some of its own economic goals based on its own reported statistics
- Misrepresented the National government as increasing the minimum wage at the rate of inflation when this is contradicted by its own official statistics

And these are only some of Luxon's or National's statements that are arguably misleading.[2]

But you do not need to take my word about these misrepresentations; instead, I provide many footnote references—both for his statements and for the facts that undermine them—so that you yourself can do the fact-finding and see any untrustworthiness firsthand.

I conclude that New Zealand deserves a government that earns its vote through integrity and competence—not through lies and trickery.

Without further ado, then, let us analyse Luxon's statements—starting with healthcare.

Luxon's Statements about Healthcare

> **Luxon's statement:** *"Our health system fell apart [in the previous Labour government], and instead of fixing the basics for everyone, Chris Hipkins and Willie Jackson prioritised putting co-governance into the health system through a separate Māori Health Authority." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch*[3]

Facts: The previous Labour government enacted changes aimed at improving healthcare "for everyone", not merely Māori. These include:

- providing almost 3 million scripts free of charge for approximately 900,000 New Zealanders after removing co-payment requirements;[4]
- increasing funding to make treatments accessible for New Zealanders;[5]
- improving healthcare infrastructure—such as hospitals—to deliver better care for New Zealanders;[6]

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[2] Marc Daalder et al., "Fact-Checking the Leaders' Debate after Luxon and Hipkins Said They Never Lie," *Newsroom.*, October 15, 2026, https://newsroom.co.nz/2026/10/15/fact-checking-the-leaders-debate-after-luxon-and-hipkins-said-they-never-lie/.

[3] Chris Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch," National Party, September 27, 2026, https://www.national.org.nz/news/260927-christopherluxon.

[4] Minister of Health, "3 Million Free Prescriptions Help Kiwi Families with Cost of Living," Pharmacy Today, accessed October 1, 2026, https://www.pharmacytoday.co.nz/article/3-million-free-prescriptions-help-kiwi-families-cost-living.

[5] Minister for Health, "More Medicines for New Zealanders, Thanks to Govt's Budget Boost," The National Tribune, September 28, 2022, https://www.nationaltribune.com.au/more-medicines-for-new-zealanders-thanks-to-govt-s-budget-boost/.

- the establishment of the Suicide Prevention Office to address high suicide rates;[7]

And these are only some of the measures Labour took to improve healthcare for all New Zealanders—not only the Māori population. Of course, a separate and important question is about what effect these changes had, but it is nevertheless clear that Labour enacted many changes aside from those focused solely on Māori.

However, it is true that Te Aka Whai Ora (the Māori Health Authority) was established under the previous Labour government. However, there is debate about whether it involved "co-governance" because—to use the words of the Human Rights Commisssion—the authority "still reports to and is funded by the Crown"—that is, it sat formally under the governance of the then Minister and Ministry of Health.[8] Additionally, the Authority was just one of numerous reforms collectively aimed at improving healthcare "for all", although the Authority focused specifically on addressing unequal rates of illness and life expectancy for the Māori population.[9]

Of course, what Labour might do in the future arguably matters more than what Labour has done in the past. But nevertheless, we should not estimate what a future Labour government would deliver based on untrustworthy misrepresentations of a Labour government in the past.

> **Luxon's statement:** *"And we needed a Minister of Health with the guts to end Labour's obsession with co-governance, and prioritise what really matters: more medicines, more surgeries, and more doctors." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch*[10]

Facts: As mentioned, it is debatable that Labour enacted co-governance since the Māori Health Authority reported to the then Minister and Ministry of Health.[11] And as mentioned, the previous Labour government funded new medicines and also reduced financial barriers to accessing treatments.[12] The Labour government also enacted changes to increase the number of doctors in New Zealand—including funding processes to recognise qualified international doctors—and the

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[6] Warren Gamble, "$1 Billion Nelson Hospital Redevelopment Will Have Bigger ED, More Beds," Stuff, July 28, 2023, https://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/300937917/1-billion-nelson-hospital-redevelopment-will-have-bigger-ed-more-beds; "Bigger ED, More Theatres and More Beds in New Whangārei Hospital," Beehive, November 24, 2022, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/bigger-ed-more-theatres-and-more-beds-new-whang%C4%81rei-hospital.

[7] Yvette McCullough, "Suicide Prevention Office Opens Its Doors," RNZ, November 27, 2019, https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/404265/suicide-prevention-office-opens-its-doors.

[8] Te Kāhui Tika Tangata Human Rights Commission, "Co-Governance, Human Rights and Te Tiriti o Waitangi," Tika Tangata, November 6, 2023, https://tikatangata.org.nz/our-work/co-governance-resource?token=03f66278f1accf53688cff9e86f396f748e70e3e35f4c5f9c6e566b118699f59.

[9] "About - Te Aka Whai Ora - Maori Health Authority - Organisations," Data.Govt.Nz, accessed October 1, 2026, https://catalogue.data.govt.nz/organization/about/te-aka-whai-ora-maori-health-authority.

[10] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."

[11] Te Kāhui Tika Tangata Human Rights Commission, "Co-Governance, Human Rights and Te Tiriti o Waitangi."

[12] Minister for Health, "More Medicines for New Zealanders, Thanks to Govt's Budget Boost"; Minister of Health, "3 Million Free Prescriptions Help Kiwi Families with Cost of Living."

Labour government reported an increase of 1,765 more doctors working for Health New Zealand in 2022 compared to 2017 levels.[13]

> **Luxon's statement:** *"But I'm very proud over the time since I came here on day one to where I sit today, we have 2,100 extra nurses in our system." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch*[14]

Facts: Luxon claims the healthcare system has 2,100 additional nurses since he came into office. His government arrived at this figure by calculating the change in the total number of employed nurses reported as of March 31st, 2026 (which was 35,342 nurses) compared to September 30th, 2023 (which was 33,180 nurses).[15] And importantly, this September date was two weeks before the election and two months before National formed its current government. This calculation yields a total of 2,162 nurses.

However, this statistic has at least two limitations with it.

First, it reports the total number of nurses, rather than the "FTE" or full-time equivalent amount of nurses. Here, one FTE means that about 40 hours are being worked, regardless of how many employees are doing that work. For example, if we have two nurses working part-time at 20 hours per week, then we have two employees, but this amounts to only one FTE—or one full-time equivalent—since there are only 40 hours being worked between the two nurses per week.

In many cases, it is more appropriate to measure staff shortages by the FTEs required, rather than by total number of employees, because what matters is how much work needs to be done and whether people are working enough hours to get that work done.

So that is the first limitation with Luxon's statistic: it only measures nurses employed rather than FTEs.

The second limitation with Luxon's statistic is that undoubtedly some of the additional nurses during his government were the fruits of Labour's successes. This is because Labour began a recruitment drive for nurses in 2022, and it can take months for those nurses to go through the hiring process, meaning some of the new nurses in National's current government resulted from Labour's recruitment drive.[16] The AAP fact checking organisation further affirms that both an

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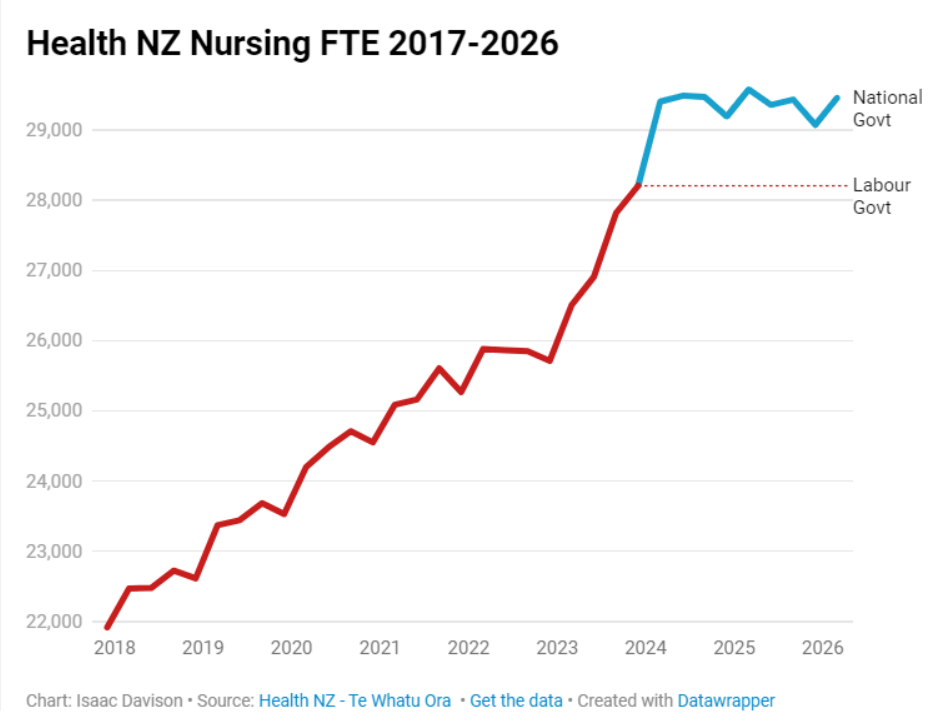
[13] "Government Plan to Boost Health Workers," Beehive, August 1, 2022, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-plan-boost-health-workers.
[14] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."
[15] Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora, *Health New Zealand Employed Workforce Quarterly Report: Quarter Three 2025/26* (Wellington, 2026), https://static.info.content.health.nz/docs/publications/healthnz-employed-workforce-quarterly-report-q3-2025-26-updated.pdf; Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora, *Districts Employed Workforce Quarterly Report: 1 July to 30 September 2023* (Wellington, 2023), https://static.info.content.health.nz/docs/publications/Workforce-Quarterly-Report-Sep-2023-2.pdf; Isaac Davison, "Fact-Check: Have We Really Got 2100 Extra Nurses under This Government?," Stuff, September 16, 2026, https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/361028225/fact-check-have-we-really-got-2100-extra-nurses-under-government.
[16] Davison, "Fact-Check."

expert and government reports indicate that many of the 2,162 nurses came from Labour's efforts.[17]

Because of these two limitations, some analysts think that a more accurate measure of National's success is to plot the changes in FTEs over both the Labour and National governments. When we do this, as *Stuff* reports, this is the result we get using official government data:[18]



As we can see above, nurse FTEs increased markedly in both Labour's government and in the early stages of the National government which was still yielding the fruits of Labour's recruitment efforts.

However, the number of nurse FTEs plateaued soon after National came into power. For that reason, the government's official data reports only an increase of 54 FTEs from March 2024 (which was 29,404 FTEs) to March 2026 (which was 29,458 FTEs).[19]

On this note, Hipkins said in the October 6th debate this year: "Simeon Brown admitted in Parliament that this government the last two years have hired just 54 new nurses".[20] In response to Hipkins, Christopher Luxon said, "Chris, that is not true. There is 2,100 extra nurses".[21]

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[17] George Driver, "Nursing Workforce Debate Obscures Health NZ Budget Debacle," AAP News, October 7, 2026, https://aapnews.aap.com.au/.
[18] Isaac Davison, "'That's a Lie': We Fact-Check the Fiercest Claims from the Stuff Leaders' Debate," Stuff, October 21, 2026, https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/361049184/thats-lie-we-fact-check-fiercest-claims-stuff-leaders-debate.
[19] Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora, *Districts Employed Workforce Quarterly Report: 1 January to 31 March 2024* (Wellington, 2024), https://static.info.content.health.nz/docs/publications/District-Employed-Workforce-Quarterly-Report-March-2024.pdf; Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora, *Health New Zealand Employed Workforce Quarterly Report: Quarter Three 2025/26*.

However, as video recordings show, Labour's Health Spokesperson, Dr Ayesha Verrall, asked Simeon Brown the question, "Is it correct that the net increase in Health New Zealand full-time equivalent nursing staff between the quarters ending March 2024 and March 2026 is 54 full-time equivalents?" After repeated pressing for an answer by Verrall and Gerry Brownlee, Simeon Brown eventually said, "Yes".[22]

It is facts like these that led the AAP to say that Luxon's 2,100 figure was "Misleading", explaining that "Many of the nurses were recruited under the previous Labour government and the number has flatlined over the past two years".[23]

Luxon's Statements about Crime

> **Luxon's statements:** *"Instead of cracking down on gang offending, Jacinda Ardern and Chris Hipkins were literally handing out millions of dollars to the Mongrel Mob... We needed a Minister of Justice and a Minister of Police with the guts to end Labour's appalling track record of lawlessness and smash the gangs." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch*[24]

Facts: The Labour government never approved any money specifically for the Mongrel Mob nor any other criminal organisation. Instead, it approved $2.75 million for a methamphetamine rehabilitation pilot programme called Kahukura—one that consisted of reintegration and support aiming to reduce criminal activity and drug addiction.[25] Because of the programme's focus on reducing drug use among challenged segments of society, participants and organisers of the programme were sometimes affiliated with gangs like the Mongrel Mob. However, the programme was approved by a panel of officials, was planned for external evaluation and oversight, and was reportedly supported by some police (although admittedly not without opposition from the Police Association, the union for police officers).[26]

To verify Luxon's claims, I looked for evidence that public funds had inappropriately gone to the Mongrel Mob through the programme. However, I could not find any. On the contrary, the Auditor-General John Ryan investigated the programme and stated that "[i]t appears in this case that there are appropriate controls for monitoring and ensuring delivery of the programme".[27]

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[20] 1News, *Election 2026: TVNZ 1News Leaders Debate October 6 2026*, 2026, 01:31:02, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gNEyySgIXQ.
[21] 1News, *Election 2026*.
[22] Phil Smith, "The 54 Nurses: Dodgy Stats and the Real Health Workforce Data," RNZ, August 22, 2026, https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/1079849/the-54-nurses-dodgy-stats-and-the-real-health-workforce-data.
[23] Driver, "Nursing Workforce Debate Obscures Health NZ Budget Debacle."
[24] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."
[25] RNZ, "Is Labour Funding the Mongrel Mob? What You Need to Know," RNZ, July 15, 2021, https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/446977/is-labour-funding-the-mongrel-mob-what-you-need-to-know.
[26] RNZ, "Is Labour Funding the Mongrel Mob?"
[27] John Ryan, "Decision to Fund Kahukura Rehabilitation Programme from the Proceeds of Crime Fund," The Audit Office, Wellington, September 2, 2021, https://ao.parliament.nz/2021/kahukura-rehabilitation.

The 2017-2023 Labour government also targeted gangs in different ways. As one example, it executed *Operation Cobalt*—an operation which by mid-2023 had seized over 400 firearms and arrested over 8,300 people, including many gang members.[28] The Labour government also enacted the Criminal Activity Intervention Legislation Act 2023 which explicitly aimed to target and reduce gang-related activity.

In contrast, it is unclear whether or how National's Minister of Justice and Minister of Police "smash[ed] the gangs" when *1News* reported that there have been 1,208 more gang members and only 264 extra police staff since 2023—implying that gang member numbers have increased more than three times the rate of police staff numbers since National took office.[29] Additionally, for the first time, in 2026, *1News* reported that "there were 10,475 police officers and 10,478 gang members"—more gang members than police officers.[30] This is particularly problematic since, during a 2023 election debate, Luxon said he would "absolutely" commit to New Zealand having more "sworn police officers than gang members".[31]

> **National's statement:** A National Party ad displayed the below footage of an armed robbery, alongside clips of Jacinda Ardern and Chris Hipkins and the text "We can't go back. Party Vote National" and "never forget how they gaslighted you".[32]

[28] "Exclusive: 8300 Arrests Made in First Year of Major Gang Crackdown," 1News, accessed October 2, 2026, https://www.1news.co.nz/2023/06/23/exclusive-8300-arrests-made-in-first-year-of-major-gang-crackdown/.
[29] Benedict Collins, "Gang Members Now Officially Outnumber Police Officers," 1News, February 26, 2026, https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/02/26/gang-members-now-officially-outnumber-police-officers/.
[30] Collins, "Gang Members Now Officially Outnumber Police Officers."
[31] Collins, "Gang Members Now Officially Outnumber Police Officers."
[32] Stuff, "Crime Footage in Ad Accusing Labour of 'gaslighting' Happened under National's Watch," Stuff, September 22, 2026, https://www.stuff.co.nz/politics/361036584/crime-footage-ad-accusing-labour-gaslighting-happened-under-nationals-watch; "National's Anti-Labour Crime Ad Uses Footage from Government's Own Term," 1News, accessed October 2, 2026, https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/09/22/nationals-anti-labour-crime-ad-uses-footage-from-governments-own-term/; "National Attack Ads against Labour Use Crime Footage from Government's Own Term," NZ Herald, accessed October 2, 2026, https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/election-2026-national-attack-ads-against-labour-use-crime-footage-from-governments-own-term/SHGS7O3WQVHX3EF76IAXS4YNQI/.

Facts: Multiple news sources confirmed that the above displayed footage, and four other clips in the ad, depicted crimes committed during the National government's *current term*—not during the previous Labour government's term.[33]

Luxon's Statements about the Labour Party

> **Luxon's statement:** *"Because this country needs more than a slogan, it needs a plan. And Labour doesn't have one… Chris Hipkins has a slogan. National has a plan." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch*[34]

Facts: Labour has a set of policies aimed improving New Zealand. Below is a list of 24 components of Labour's intended reforms. Evaluating or endorsing these reforms is beyond the scope of this paper, but the point is that it is questionable how, given these policies, Labour only has a slogan and does not have a plan. Furthermore, there are indications that even Luxon considers some of these policies as plans: for example, Luxon states "On education, [Labour's] only plan is a new working group", before later saying "Because this country needs more than a slogan, it needs a plan. And Labour doesn't have one".[35]

Furthermore, while Luxon somehow criticises Labour for having a slogan, it is clear that National also has a slogan: "Fixing the basics. Building the future." And in fact, as you can see

[33] Stuff, "Crime Footage in Ad Accusing Labour of 'gaslighting' Happened under National's Watch"; 1News, "National's Anti-Labour Crime Ad Uses Footage from Government's Own Term"; NZ Herald, "National Attack Ads against Labour Use Crime Footage from Government's Own Term."
[34] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."
[35] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."

below, this slogan is apparent in three different places at the exact moment Luxon claims that "Chris Hipkins has a slogan. I'm telling you, National has a plan":[36]

Labour's proposed reforms:

Below is a list of some of Labour's proposed aims and reforms, closely resembling the wording used on Labour's website.[37]

For fiscal policy, Labour intends to:

1. Return to surplus by 2029/30, using a measure for the surplus called the original indicator Operating Balance Before Gains and Losses (OBEGAL) rather than a variant called OBEGALx
2. Reduce net debt to around 20% of GDP
3. Keep core Crown expenditure and revenue at around 33% of GDP in the medium term
4. Establish a Parliamentary Budget Office for independent fiscal transparency
5. Restore the Reserve Bank's dual mandate of price stability and maximum sustainable employment
6. Restore wellbeing reporting to the Public Finance Act

For the cost of living, Labour intends to:

7. Place a cap of $20 on weekly public transport fares
8. Ban price gouging on essential goods and services
9. Break "open the supermarket duopoly's grip" on the grocery market, and enable other grocery businesses to enter the market

[36] NZ National Party, *LIVE: National Party Campaign Launch 2026*, 2026, https://www.youtube.com/live/7S9UQCuHYlQ?t=5168s.
[37] New Zealand Labour Party, "Our Policies - New Zealand Labour Party 2026," New Zealand Labour Party, 2026, https://www.labour.org.nz/our-policies/.

Many healthcare measures aim to address the cost of living too.

For healthcare, Labour intends to:

10. Provide three doctor's visits each year free of charge for every New Zealander
11. Provide prescriptions free of charge for recipients from July 2027
12. Provide maternity scans free of charge for recipients from July 2028
13. Provide cervical screening for free of charge for recipients aged 25 to 69 from October 1st, 2027
14. Enact the Family Doctor Loan Scheme to enable 4.5 million new GP visits for New Zealanders
15. Provide a job guarantee for every eligible graduate nurse

For the economy, Labour intends to:

16. Establish the New Zealand Future Fund to invest in Kiwi businesses
17. Expand the Apprenticeship Boost to support more tradies and young people
18. Execute a Small Business Action Plan covering payment times, an asset write-off and a higher GST threshold
19. Put Small Business first with a fair shot at work and less time dealing with the government
20. Back Māori into skilled work with Māori-led training
21. Execute the Start Work Now plan that will create good jobs and build more homes, fix local schools and repair hospitals

Labour's proposed policies also cover areas aside from the above, including the following:

22. Supporting solar energy without the upfront cost for homeowners, renters and communities
23. Executing an AI Action Plan to protect what matters, unlock the benefits of AI, and lead on New Zealand's own terms
24. Enact a targeted capital gains tax on investment property profits to fund health

> **Luxon's statement:** *"You can't afford a Labour Government. You can't afford nine new taxes." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch*[38]
>
> The National Party has also presented billboards representing a Labour coalition as involving "9 New Taxes", as reposted by Christopher Luxon and others on social media:[39]

[38] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."

Additionally, the National Party has said online (and echoed elsewhere) the claim that "The tax choice this election is clear: no new taxes under National, or more taxes under Labour that will worsen Kiwis' cost of living".[40]

Facts: In the above messages from Luxon and National, they consistently associate a "Labour coalition" with ""9 new taxes" which they elsewhere claim would "worsen Kiwis' cost of living". In a PDF posted by National online, they detail precisely what these alleged "9 confirmed taxes" are.[41] I reproduce these allegations, along with a para-phrased description, in the table below:

According to National:
"*LABOUR AND THEIR MATES' 9 CONFIRMED TAXES*"

Party Proposing the "Tax"	**Tax Description:**
Labour and TPM	1. **Capital gains tax:** 28% tax on capital gains
Labour	2. **Digital services tax:** 3% tax on digital services like Facebook or Google
Labour	3. **Business tax:** Removing National's "Investment Boost" tax cuts

[39] Shayne Currie, "'Blatant Lie': National Billboard Draws 15 Formal Complaints – Why Advertising Watchdog Says It's OK," Media Insider, Business, *NZ Herald*, September 29, 2026, https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/media-insider/media-insider-this-national-party-billboard-has-drawn-more-than-a-dozen-formal-complaints-why-advertising-watchdog-says-its-ok/premium/ANBU4X6ZNRDGJBFJOSXRIDP76M/; Chris Luxon, "Christopher Luxon (@christopherluxon)," Instagram, October 25, 2026, https://www.instagram.com/p/De72FUeSvW3/.
[40] The National Party, "No New Taxes under National, If Re-Elected on November 7," National, accessed October 29, 2026, https://www.national.org.nz/policies/no-new-taxes.
[41] The National Party, "Labour and Their Mates' 9 Confirmed Taxes," National, October 29, 2026, https://assets.national.org.nz/web/prod/Labour's%20new%20taxes.pdf?v=1786913740.

Greens	4. **45% top rate:** 45% income tax for earners above $160k
Greens	5. **Inheritance tax:** 33% tax on inheritance after someone passes
Greens	6. **Gift tax:** 33% tax on gifts from others who are alive
Greens and TPM	7. **Rentals tax:** Removing a tax cut for landlords
Greens and TPM	8. **Asset tax:** 2.5% tax on all assets over $10 million, including businesses
Opportunity Party	9. **Land tax:** A tax on the value of your land or farm

A detailed explanation of all of these allegations is beyond the scope of this analysis.

The first thing to note about National's allegations is that most of the supposedly "confirmed" taxes (specifically taxes 4 to 9) actually originate from other parties aside from Labour. Regarding tax proposals from other parties, Chris Hipkins has said:

> "They can put them forward, but they can't demand. They can't force us to vote for them… If we've said that we won't support them, we won't support them… That's it, end of story… That's the bottom line in terms of what we will support. Absolutely."[42]

As the above quote indicates, the suggestion that a Labour coalition would support all the aforementioned taxes of the other parties is one which appears to be ruled out by Labour and one which is itself highly speculative, if not certainly false.

Furthermore, the National Party might form a coalition with the Opportunity Party to form a government, in which case the Opportunity Party might also advocate for its land tax with a Labour government. To be fair, Luxon has ruled out a coalition for the Opportunity Party, so some might argue it is unfair to associate Luxon with the Opportunity Party's tax.[43] But if this is unfair as such, a question arises as to why it would somehow be fair for Luxon to associate Labour with the Opportunity Party's tax proposals, or with those of any party, if Labour has also ruled these proposals out.

In any case, if we consider only the tax allegations concerning Labour (rather than the other parties, we are left with three which are discussed below:

[42] Neil Sands, "Hipkins Gives Hard 'No' to Tax Demands from Potential Coalition Partners, Rules out Raising Current Tax Rates," The Law Association Inc, October 1, 2026, https://lawnews.nz/politics/hipkins-gives-hard-no-to-tax-demands-from-potential-coalition-partners-rules-out-raising-current-tax-rates/.
[43] James Ball, "Your Guide to the Election's Coalition Red Lines - Who's Ruled out Who?," 1News, October 29, 2026, https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/10/29/your-guide-to-the-elections-coalition-red-lines-whos-ruled-out-who/.

1. **Capital gains tax:** This tax is unquestioningly advocated by Labour and forms an important part of their legislative agenda, and so this tax allegation from the National Party is true.[44]
2. **Digital services tax:** This was tax proposal put forward by Labour in 2023. It would have applied a tax on revenue generated by tech companies (like Facebook and Google) but would not necessarily be paid by the consumers themselves. However, while it was a tax which Labour advocated in 2023, Labour has claimed they have no plans to implement the tax in their next government, in which case they deny this tax allegation as misrepresenting an old proposal as a current one.[45]
3. **Replacing National's "Investment Boost":** The third tax allegation from National is that Labour is proposing a "business tax" since they are "Scrapping National's Investment Boost which provided tax cuts to businesses who invested in new equipment".[46] Exactly what the Investment Boost involves is a complicated topic, and it is to some extent a matter of debate, with even one economist saying "he could not make head nor tail of the argument", according to *RNZ*.[47] Nevertheless, Labour argues that this is not a new tax since it is a reversal or replacement of National's Investment Boost policy, not a completely new tax.[48]

For the above reasons, two of National's three allegations are denied by Labour, with Labour insisting that the only new tax it supports is the capital gains tax.

But does the capital gains tax really "worsen Kiwis' cost of living", as National claims in regards to Labour's "confirmed" new taxes?[49] This is a matter of debate. The capital gains tax is a tax of 28% on the profit from the sale of particular properties—like holiday baches—but not others—like family homes. For example, if someone buys a holiday bach in July 2027 for $900,000 but sells it later for $1,000,000, then they have made $100,000 profit and will have to pay 28% tax on that profit, so $28,000 in total. National would presumably argue that this tax would worsen Kiwis cost of living because it takes money away from those selling the houses. On the other hand, Labour would argue that the tax improves the cost of living because Labour plans to use the revenue generated from the capital gains tax to fund, for example, three free GP visits for people who need healthcare but would otherwise be too poor to afford it.[50]

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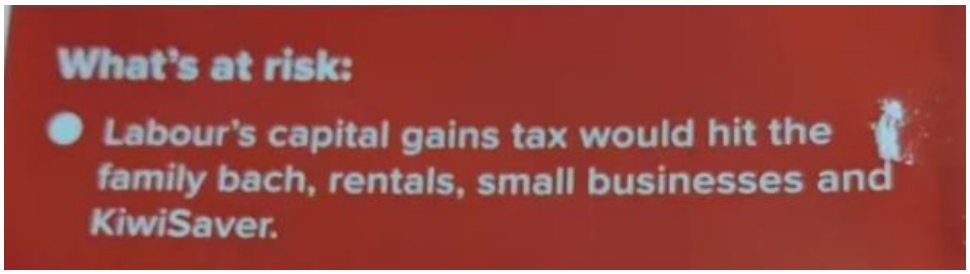
[44] Party, "Our Policies - New Zealand Labour Party 2026."
[45] Justin Hu, "'Nine New Taxes': What to Make of National's Claims about Labour," 1News, September 17, 2026, https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/09/17/nine-new-taxes-what-to-make-of-nationals-claims-about-labour/.
[46] The National Party, "Labour and Their Mates' 9 Confirmed Taxes."
[47] Susan Edmunds, "Who Is Right about Investment Boost? We're Still Not Sure," RNZ, October 8, 2026, https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics_election-2026/1792519/who-is-right-about-investment-boost-we-re-still-not-sure.
[48] Hu, "'Nine New Taxes'"; Edmunds, "Who Is Right about Investment Boost? We're Still Not Sure."
[49] The National Party, "No New Taxes under National, If Re-Elected on November 7."
[50] New Zealand Labour Party, "Growing the Economy and Funding Free Doctor's Visits - NZ Labour," New Zealand Labour Party, accessed October 29, 2026, https://www.labour.org.nz/medicard.

National's statement: This year, National distributed a flyer stating "Labour's capital gains tax would hit the family bach, rentals, small businesses and KiwiSaver", as depicted below:[51]

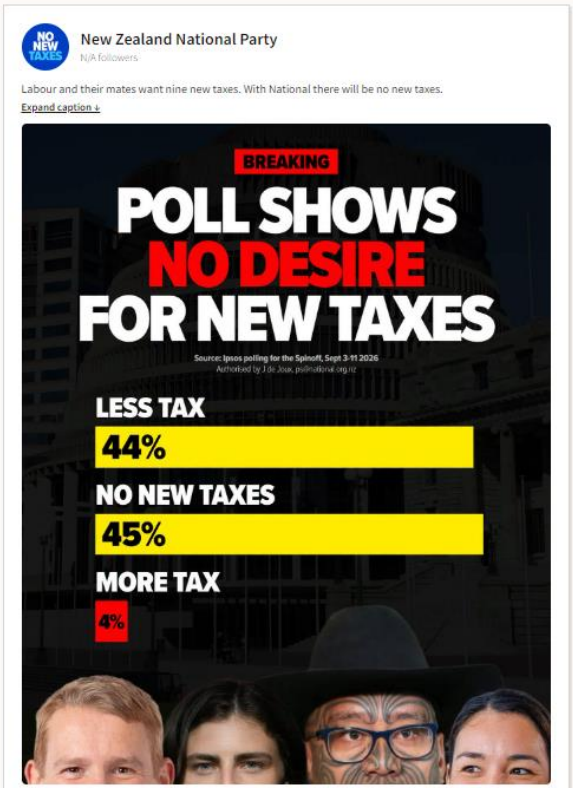


Facts: The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) found that this statement was inaccurate and told National to stop using it. As journalist Giles Dexter writes, "in a majority ruling, the ASA found the claim that KiwiSaver would be "hit" by the CGT to be in breach of the principle of truthful presentation, that advertisements must be truthful, balanced and not misleading".[52]

National's Statement about New Zealanders

National's statement: The following post, reposted by National MP Simeon Brown, alleges that "Poll shows no desire for new taxes":

[51] Giles Dexter, "ASA Partly Upholds Complaint against 'misleading' National Attack Ad," RNZ, September 9, 2026, https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics_election-2026/1311337/asa-partly-upholds-complaint-against-misleading-national-attack-ad.
[52] Dexter, "ASA Partly Upholds Complaint against 'misleading' National Attack Ad."



Facts: As pointed out by AAP FactCheck, an accredited member of the International Fact-Checking Network, the above poll did not ask whether respondents wanted "no new taxes".[53] Instead, it found 44% believed they should "pay less tax", 45% believed they paid "about the right amount of tax" and 4% believed they should "pay more tax". However, this does not address whether *other* New Zealanders in specific circumstances should pay more or new taxes, such as the capital gains tax for particular property owners. That said, when New Zealanders were asked explicitly about the capital gains tax, 45% supported it while 40% opposed it. It is unclear in what sense it is accurate to say "Polls show no desire for new taxes" when more people supported this tax than opposed it.

Luxon's Statement about the National Party

Luxon's statement: *"There was a confidence vote in my leadership this morning at our caucus meeting, and I have the full support of our caucus, and our caucus is united, and*

[53] George Driver, "National Party Misrepresents NZ Tax Poll," Aap, September 25, 2026, https://www.aap.com.au/factcheck/national-party-misrepresents-nz-tax-poll/.

> *it is determined to win this election." – Press conference on August 12th, 2026, in Wellington*[54]

Facts: Luxon claimed he had the "full support*"* of his caucus which he claimed was *"*united*"*. However, that same day, he confirmed that Chris Penk had earlier "launched a leadership challenge" which "resulted in today's confidence vote" and Luxon dismissed Penk from Cabinet and from his Ministerial roles as a result. Luxon's dismissal and statement stood in tension with Penk's earlier claim when Penk also said "I do support Christopher Luxon".[55] As a result, some have speculated that the National Party has merely maintained a dishonest façade of unity and stability.

Luxon's Statement about Foreign Affairs

> **Luxon's statement:** During a debate about the Iran war, Hipkins stated "You supported it when it happened", to which Luxon replied *"*No, that's not true".[56]

Facts: Winston Peters' office released emails to the *NZ Herald* showing that Chris Luxon initially wanted to show "explicit public support" for the US-led war in Iran, even though his government's public statements neither condemned nor supported the war.[57]

Luxon's Statements about the Economy

> **Luxon's statement:** *"Nicola Willis. Our country is more prosperous, more secure, and more confident because you've been willing to make the tough choices – thank you… We needed a Minister of Trade with the guts to go out in the world and secure new trade deals to make all of us wealthier…. Our plan, to Fix the Basics and Build the Future, is working… Our economy as a whole is growing, faster in the last year than the UK, the US,*

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[54] Isaac Davison, "Gone in 76 Seconds: A Frame-by-Frame Analysis of Luxon's Rapid Press Conference," Stuff, August 12, 2026, https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/361019290/gone-76-seconds-frame-frame-analysis-luxons-rapid-press-conference.
[55] Justin Hu, "PM Wins Leadership Vote after Challenge Fails, Penk Won't Seek Re-Election," 1News, August 12, 2026, https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/08/12/pm-wins-leadership-vote-after-challenge-fails-penk-wont-seek-re-election/.
[56] Stuff, *LIVE: Luxon v Hipkins - Stuff's Leaders' Debate | Stuff.Co.Nz*, 2026, 00:00, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHvdHghZAY0.
[57] Jo Moir, "Luxon, Peters Hold Talks after Emails Reveal Clash over NZ's Iran War Stance," RNZ, April 30, 2026, https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/593795/luxon-peters-hold-talks-after-emails-reveal-clash-over-nz-s-iran-war-stance; Adam Pearse, "Nicola Willis Lashes out at 'Confused' Winston Peters, Suggests Coalition Breach after Iran War Emails Released," Politics, New Zealand, *NZ Herald*, April 30, 2026, https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/politics/foreign-minister-winston-peters-denies-he-made-a-mistake-releasing-emails-showing-pm-wanted-explicit-iran-war-backing/Q6JUDTOUXREGLDFQYUP7ANISJI/.

Australia, Canada, the EU, and Japan." – Speech at the National Party 2026 Campaign Launch[58]

Facts: Luxon speaks of the National party leadership which made New Zealand "more prosperous", made "all of us wealthier" and made the economy as a whole grow "faster in the last year than the UK, the US, Australia, Canada, the EU, and Japan"—ultimately stating that "Our plan, to Fix the Basics and Build the Future, is working".

While it is true that some economic indicators are more favourable since Luxon took office (such as inflation), other economic indicators are not. For example, the below graph reproduced directly from Stats NZ reports that unemployment has increased since Luxon took office—in fact the worst rate in over a decade:[59]

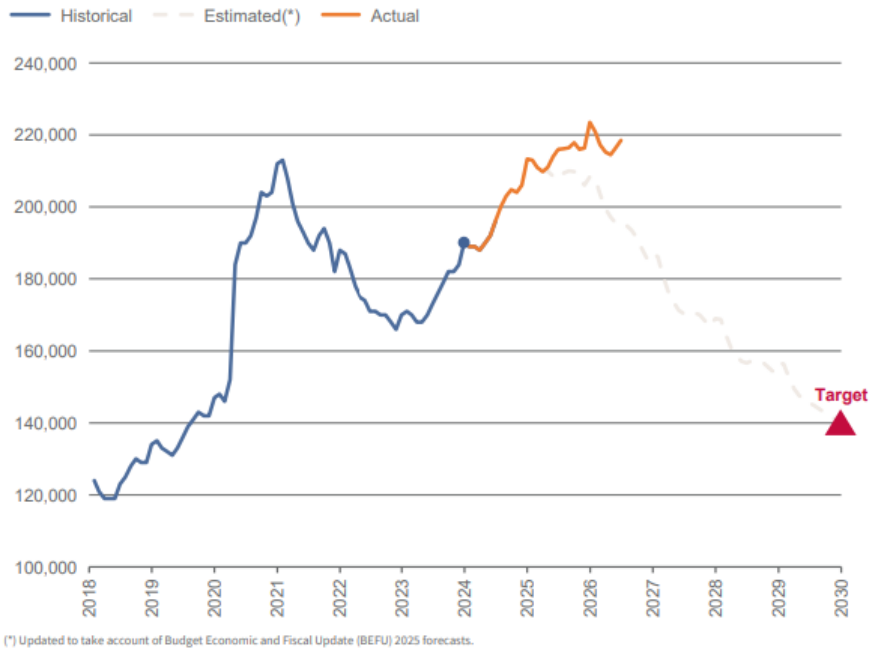
Furthermore, the National-led government had a stated target of *decreasing* the number of people on the benefit by 50,000, but the National-led government's own data as of June 2026 shows that this number has *increased* during the National-led government:[60]

[58] Luxon, "Speech to National Party 2026 Campaign Launch."
[59] Stats NZ, "Unemployment Rate," Stats NZ, August 5, 2026, https://www.stats.govt.nz/indicators/unemployment-rate/.
[60] Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Fewer People on the Jobseeker Support Benefit: 50,000 Fewer People on the Jobseeker Support Benefit* (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2026), https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2026-09/gt-factsheet-target-5-jun26.pdf.

TARGET DELIVERY PERFORMANCE - QUARTER ENDING JUNE 2026

Target	Baseline (December 2023)	Current (June 2026)	Status
50k reduction (140k people)	190,000	218,500	At Risk

PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGET



The above data come from official government sources, not partisan organisations.

However, other organisations have disapproved of National's policies. In particular, the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions argues that "working people are facing a very weak job market, which means rising employment and income insecurity for many and poverty for others".[61] The Council further argues that decisions from the National-led government have worsened the problem:

> "These decisions have included cuts to public services, resulting in job losses and reduced consumer spending in some areas; a failure to intervene proactively to support struggling sectors such as construction; and reduced support for important training initiatives such as the Apprenticeship Boost programme, which help support the hiring of apprentices. At a time when we have needed the Government to be providing support to the economy, it has pulled back.

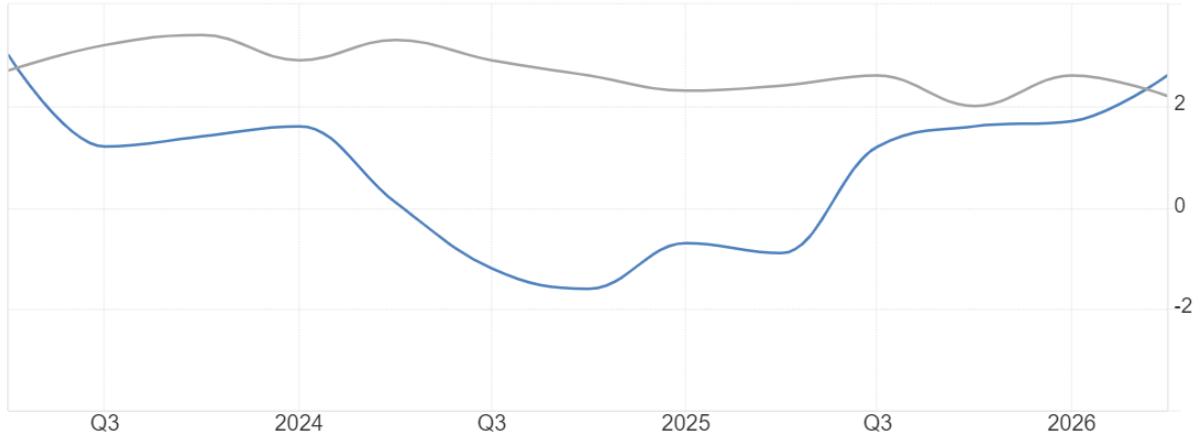
[61] The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, *Three Years of Pain: The State of the Labour Market, 2023–26,* 11.

The coalition Government has also actively legislated to reduce job and income security and the ability to bargain for fair wages during this period."[62]

Regardless of the merits or infirmities of the Union's aforementioned arguments, the rising unemployment rate stands in tension with Luxon's claim that "Our plan, to Fix the Basics and Build the Future, is working".

Additionally, of the favorable economic indicators that Luxon does cite, it is debatable as to whether a fuller picture of the data supports his claims. For example, Luxon states "Our economy as a whole is growing, faster in the last year than… the US".[63] Let us compare the annual GDP growth rates for the United States and New Zealand for past three years, using a graph directly from Trading Economics based on official data from both countries:[64]

Annual GDP Growth Rate: United States of America vs New Zealand



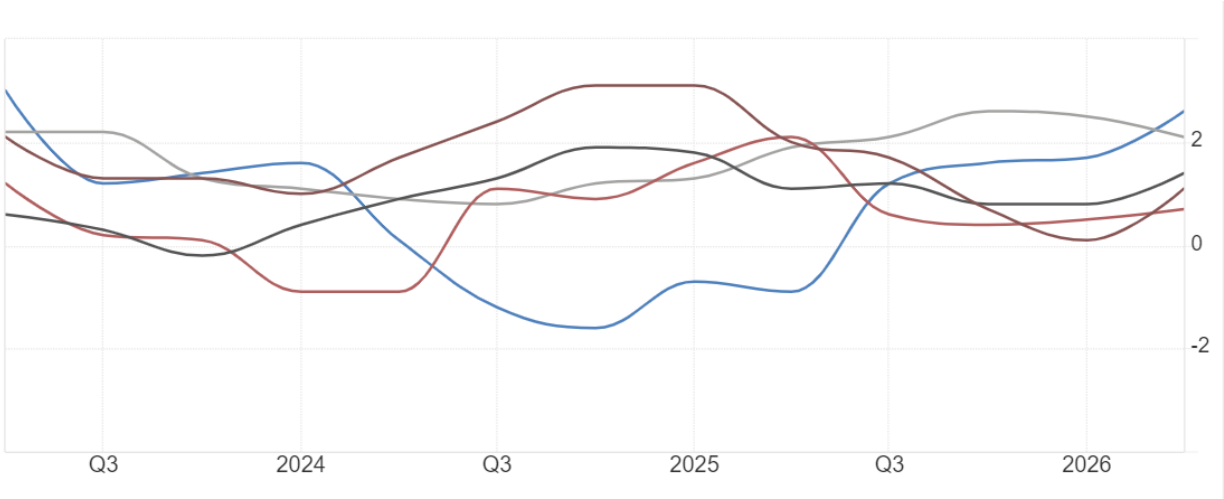
Legend:

[62] The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, *Three Years of Pain: The State of the Labour Market, 2023–26,* 11.
[63] I have focused on the United States because, aside from New Zealand, it is the country I have lived in most recently and know the most about.
[64] "United States GDP Annual Growth Rate," TRADING ECONOMICS, accessed October 6, 2026, https://tradingeconomics.com/united-states/gdp-growth-annual; "New Zealand GDP Annual Growth Rate," TRADING ECONOMICS, accessed October 6, 2026, https://tradingeconomics.com/new-zealand/gdp-growth-annual.

The fuller picture from this graph does not unequivocally support the claim that New Zealand's GDP has grown more than the United States. As one can see from the above graph, New Zealand actually reported *negative* GDP rates for four quarters between 2024, unlike for any quarter in United States during Luxon's government. Additionally, a quarter-by-quarter comparison shows that New Zealand has reported *less* GDP growth *for every quarter of the past 12 quarters except two*. The only two exceptions are the one that Luxon is presumably referring to during his own government and another quarter which was during the Labour government and *which was even higher than the one which Luxon cites in his favor* (3% for Labour's Q2 in 2023 versus 2.6% for National's Q2 in 2026). These facts contrast to Luxon's claim that "Our economy as a whole is growing, faster in the last year than… the US".

A fuller picture of the other countries which Luxon lists also does not support his claim so well, with New Zealand's annual growth rate falling below most the other countries at times during his term, and with New Zealand performing best relative to its own history in Q2 2023 of the previous Labour government:[65]

Annual GDP Growth Rate: New Zealand vs Other Listed Countries



Legend:

[65] TRADING ECONOMICS, "United States GDP Annual Growth Rate"; TRADING ECONOMICS, "New Zealand GDP Annual Growth Rate."

In general, multiple key economic and fiscal indicators are not especially favourable. For example, *1News* reproduced two sets of forecasts for key indicators in 2026, one from the Treasury's so-called *Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Update* (PREFU) in 2023 and another from the Treasury's PREFU in 2026.[66] The table shows that the forecasts for these indicators are worse than was predicted back in 2023 while the Labour government was still in power, including GDP (per capita and overall production), unemployment, inflation and wage growth:[67]

NZ's Economy in 2026	2023 Prefu	2026 Prefu
GDP per capita	2.0	1.0
Unemployment	4.8	5.6
Inflation	2.1	4.1
Wage Growth	4.0	2.8
GDP (production)	3.3	1.6

Of course, a proper evaluation of the whole economy is complicated; for example, some economists believe that policy decisions cannot so quickly impact GDP growth rates and that such decisions should therefore be evaluated based on other evidence.

Nevertheless, this limited snapshot suggests that the true picture is more nuanced than Luxon's statements would have New Zealanders believe.

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[66] The Treasury, *Pre-Election Economic and Fiscal Update 2023* (Wellington, 2023), https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-09/prefu23.pdf; The Treasury, *Pre-Election Economic and Fiscal Update 2026* (Wellington, 2026), https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-09/prefu23.pdf.
[67] Q+A with Jack Tame, *Q+A Finance Debate: Nicola Willis vs Barbara Edmonds*, 2026, 26:39, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1H84HXa5yso.

> **Luxon's statement:** On October 14th, in response to the question, "Will you increase the minimum wage by the rate of inflation?", Luxon said "Yes, and that's what we've more or less been doing".[68]

Facts: For the past three years, from 2023 to 2026, inflation has risen at a rate of 4%, 2.5% and 3.1% respectively (relative to the March quarter before the next wage change is implemented).[69] In contrast, the minimum wage has risen at a rate of 2%, 1.5% and 1.9% respectively--meaning that the minimum wage has obviously risen below the rate of inflation.[70]

Luxon's Statement about Luxon

> **Luxon's statement:** On October 14th, in response to the question, "Have you ever told any porkies in your political career?... You've never lied to the public?", Luxon said "No".[71]

Facts: The statements and facts discussed above could provide helpful context for assessing this statement.[72]

Final Thoughts on Luxon's Statements

Governance is difficult, and so too is evaluating it. Nevertheless, New Zealanders deserve a government that earns their vote through demonstrable integrity and competence—not through lies and trickery. This paper presents an analysis of only some of Luxon's many misleading statements—one which suggests New Zealanders deserve far better. And while there are other factors for voters to consider—such as fact-checks of Labour as well—the preceding analysis may be one helpful consideration for voters this coming election.[73]

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[68] NZ Herald, *The NZ Herald Leaders' Debate Hosted by Ryan Bridge*, 2026, 02:28:44, https://www.youtube.com/live/40hkojdXW_Q?si=X6yrRim5yPRIKeIl&t=1841.
[69] Stats NZ, "Consumers Price Index (CPI)," Stats NZ, July 21, 2026, https://www.stats.govt.nz/indicators/consumers-price-index-cpi/.
[70] Brooke Van Velden, "Minimum Wage Set for Cautious Increase," Beehive, February 1, 2024, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/minimum-wage-set-cautious-increase; "Minimum Wage Set for 2025," Beehive, December 17, 2024, https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/minimum-wage-set-2025; "Minimum Wage Set for 2026," Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, December 12, 2025, https://www.mbie.govt.nz/about/news/minimum-wage-set-for-2026.
[71] NZ Herald, *The NZ Herald Leaders' Debate Hosted by Ryan Bridge*.
[72] Oddly, Luxon himself might have admitted later on in that debate that he lies; when he was asked about what his "guilty pleasure takeaways are", Luxon replied, "Sneaky maccas. A quarter pounder, large fries, chocolate shake. I've just done myself in 'cause Amanda doesn't think I'm going to MacDonalds on a regular. I call them 'campaign stops'." NZ Herald, *The NZ Herald Leaders' Debate Hosted by Ryan Bridge*.
[73] Daalder et al., "Fact-Checking the Leaders' Debate after Luxon and Hipkins Said They Never Lie."

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