



New Zealand House of Representatives
Te Whare Māngai o Aotearoa

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Komiti Whiriwhiri Take Aorere, Take Waonga, Take Tauhoko

54th Parliament
June 2025

**United Arab Emirates Comprehensive
Economic Partnership Agreement Legislation
Amendment Bill**

141—1

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United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement Legislation Amendment Bill

Recommendation

The Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee has examined the United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement Legislation Amendment Bill and recommends that the bill be passed.

Introduction

This bill aims to implement New Zealand's obligations under the New Zealand–United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (the CEPA). It is an omnibus bill that would amend the Overseas Investment Act 2005, the Overseas Investment Regulations 2005, the Customs and Excise Act 2018, the Tariff, and the Customs and Excise Regulations 1996.

The bill would:

- increase the monetary threshold above which consent is required for investments by United Arab Emirates (UAE) non-government investors in significant business assets for specified types of services in New Zealand (from \$100 million to \$200 million)
- allow the chief executive of the New Zealand Customs Service to approve organisations to certify that goods originate in New Zealand for the purposes of the CEPA
- allow the preferential tariff rates under the CEPA to be applied to goods imported from the UAE
- allow lower customs duties on goods sent to the UAE for repair or alterations and then returned to New Zealand
- put into practice the rules for imports from the UAE.

Legislative scrutiny

As part of our consideration of the bill, we have examined its consistency with principles of legislative quality. We have no issues regarding the legislation's design to bring to the attention of the House.

Submissions received on the bill

We received submissions from 25 groups and individuals, and heard two oral submissions on the bill. A full summary of the submissions is available in the departmental report prepared by our advisers. We thank submitters for sharing their views on the bill. The main points raised by submitters on the bill were that it:

- reduces the level of investment screening by setting a monetary threshold that is too high, without the need for consent
- creates a lack of public transparency in investment from the UAE

- fails to establish a mechanism for tracking outcomes of the legislative change
- will result in the sale of New Zealand's land and resources
- offers no clear benefit to New Zealand consumers and small and medium-sized enterprises
- will lead to improved economic development
- will open doors internationally
- will grow exports.

We note that a number of submitters sought policy changes that are not within the scope of the bill. We thank submitters for their contributions; however, we are not convinced that the issues they raised require further consideration. We do not recommend any amendment to the bill.

Monetary threshold

We were interested in who would assess whether the \$200 million investment screening threshold is triggered in the Overseas Investment Act regime, and how this assessment would be made. All screening of foreign investment into New Zealand is undertaken by Land Information New Zealand (LINZ). Under the Overseas Investment Act, LINZ screens proposed foreign investments in sensitive land, fishing quota, and significant business assets. Under that Act, significant business assets are generally defined as assets valued at more than \$100 million.

In the CEPA, the higher threshold of \$200 million has been given to specific types of services-related investment from the UAE. Investments valued at more than this would need to obtain consent from LINZ. The services sectors subject to this higher threshold are listed in the Services Schedule of Specific Commitments (Annex 9-C of the CEPA).¹ LINZ would assess, on a case-by-case basis, whether multiple payments that amount to over \$200 million constitute a single investment or multiple investments.

¹ [Annex 9-C, New Zealand – Schedule of Specific Commitments](#)

Appendix

Committee procedure

The United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement Legislation Amendment Bill was referred to the committee on 10 April 2025. The closing date for submissions was 23 May 2025. We received and considered submissions from 25 interested groups and individuals. We heard oral evidence from two submitters.

We received advice on the bill from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Office of the Clerk provided advice on the bill's legislative quality.

Committee members

Tim van de Molen (Chairperson)
Tim Costley
Hon Peeni Henare (from 14 May 2025)
Dana Kirkpatrick
Laura McClure
Hon Damien O'Connor
Hon David Parker (until 12 May 2025)
Teanau Tuiono

Related resources

The documents that we received as advice and evidence are available on the [Parliament website](#).