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Draft of Diploma Thesis

**Economic and environmental impacts of
nickel production in New Caledonia**

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Introduction

Author writes this Diploma thesis on the topic: Economical and environmental impacts of nickel production in New Caledonia. New Caledonia is very interesting uncommon country, not only within French overseas territories, but also within Pacific countries. New Caledonia since the late 80s of the 20th century undergoing a broad of political transformation. Despite of a number of significant features of exclusive powers, New Caledonia is still part of French overseas territories. Already now the situation may change. In New Caledonia will be a referendum on self-determination of New Caledonia, in which its residents can choose between independence or remain in the framework of the French overseas territories. New Caledonia is a very unique country, not only in the political grouping of the French Republic, but also throughout Oceania.

New Caledonia has the largest degree of autonomy of all French overseas territories. It belongs to the community *sui generis*-and has a special head in the French Constitution. We can say that New Caledonia is on the third stage in the process of autonomy. The question is, if exiting whether the degree of autonomy of New Caledonia is already sufficient, and whether it has real meaning to become a fully independent state.

It is necessary to mention the economic situation and the economic potential of the country, which is the area of the Pacific Ocean very above average. New Caledonia is one of the richest countries in the Pacific because of its mineral resources. Nickel is the only one major pillar of Caledonian economy and the economical results of nickel mining industry influence a lot a course of Caledonian well-being.

In New Caledonia, there are up to 25% of the world's known reserves of nickel, which give the country great economic potential in the coming decades. On the other hand, it's a one-way economic focus is entirely dependent on the evolution of nickel prices on the world markets. Nowadays the nickel price is on very low level and it can influence the whole economy. This thesis explains the relationship between economy of New Caledonia and nickel mining and processing sector.

Survey

Research question: **Do you support the complete independence of New Caledonia?**

2012: Total: 139 respondents: 82 women and 57 men

AGE	WOMEN	MEN
to 30	38 (yes - 16 no - 22) NO 57.9%	30 (yes - 17 no - 13) YES 56.7%
25 - 55	27 (yes - 10 no - 17) NO 63%	22 (yes - 11 no - 11) X
from 55	17 (yes - 7 no - 10) NO 58.8%	5 (yes - 2 no - 3) NO 60%

NATIONALITY	WOMEN	MEN
Kanak	24 (yes - 16 no - 8) YES 66.7%	24 (yes- 19 no - 5) YES 79.2%
Frenchman	35 (yes - 7 no - 28) NO 80%	18 (yes - 5 no - 13) NO 72.2%
Other	22 (yes - 10 no - 12) NO 54.5%	15 (yes - 6 no - 9) NO 60%

EDUCATION	WOMEN	MEN
Basic	31 (yes - 19, no - 12) YES 61.3%	29 (yes- 19 no - 10) YES 65.5%
Secondary	40 (yes - 12 no - 28) NO 70%	31 (yes - 9 no - 22) NO 71%
University	11 (yes - 2 no - 9) NO 81.9%	7 (yes - 2 no - 5) NO 71.4%

MEN: YES - 30 = 52.6%

WOMEN: NO - 49 = 59.8%

Total: NO - 76 = 54.7%

2016: Total: 107 respondents: 61 women and 46 men

AGE	WOMEN	MEN
to 30	29 (yes - 16 no - 13) YES 55.2%	22 (yes - 15 no - 7) YES 68.2%
25 - 55	20 (yes - 8 no - 12) NO 60%	18 (yes - 10 no - 8) YES 55.6%
from 55	12 (yes - 3 no - 9) NO 75%	6 (yes - 3 no - 3) X

NATIONALITY	WOMEN	MEN
Kanak	23 (yes - 15 no - 8) YES 65.2%	21 (yes- 16 no - 5) YES 76.2%
Frenchman	28 (yes - 6 no - 22) NO 78.6%	16 (yes - 6 no - 10) NO 62.5%
Other	10 (yes - 6 no - 4) YES 60%	9 (yes - 6 no - 3) YES 66.6%

EDUCATION	WOMEN	MEN
Basic	20 (yes - 11, no - 9) YES 55%	15 (yes - 9 no - 6) YES 60%
Secondary	33 (yes - 13 no - 20) NO 60.6%	27 (yes -19 no - 8) YES 70.4%
University	8 (yes - 3 no - 5) NO 62.5%	4 (yes - 0 no - 4) NO 100%

PROVINCE	WOMEN	MEN
South	41 (yes - 9 no - 32) NO 78%	32 (yes- 15 no - 17) NO 53.1%
North	15 (yes - 13 no - 2) YES 86.7%	10 (yes -10 no - 0) YES 100%
Loyauté	5 (yes - 5 no - 0) YES 100%	4 (yes - 3 no - 1) YES 75%

MEN: YES - 28 = 60.9%

WOMEN: NO - 34 = 55.7%

Total: YES - 76 = 51.4%

Conclusion

The author determined the aim of this Diploma thesis to identify possible further political developments in New Caledonia, which is still part of the French overseas territories. The hypothesis, that New Caledonia and after 2014 will remain part of the French overseas territories and the majority of the population in a referendum will vote against independence, has not been proved. The research carried out showed that the majority of the inhabitants of New Caledonia would vote for the independence (51.4%). It's a change of minds in comparison with the research in 2012, when the majority (54.7%) would vote against the independence of New Caledonia.

In this case, there will established transitional period for gradual transfer of powers from metropolitan France to institutions of New Caledonia. If New Caledonian inhabitants decide to stay as a part of French overseas territories, it will be probably followed by further transfer of powers to New Caledonia. However, this also seems problematic. France holds some significant powers, such as defense, public security or foreign policy. However after the referendum there will be the reallocation of powers between France and New Caledonia, whether outcome of referendum is.

The answer to the research question that may happen in New Caledonia totally independent country, is yes. The author believes that although New Caledonia has already

done so for the past twenty five years, a major shift towards its independence, will go a long way to become a sovereign country. It is necessary to educate their own political elite that represented New Caledonia both at home and abroad. New Caledonia has political representatives in domestic institutions, institutions in France or in the European Parliament. Even though there is still a lack of qualified political elites, therefore New Caledonia is not ready yet for independence. It remains a fact, that if New Caledonia is not ready now for the independence, won't be ready anytime. In the past, once the referendum about the independence of the country was settled, at that time, despite the escalation of the situation, the majority of the population voted against independence.

Remaining within the French overseas territories also brings positive aspects. The main benefits are public security and national defense. In this case France is a guarantor of protection Caledonian territory. Another positive aspect is a protection of social security Kanak population and positive discrimination on the labor guaranteed by France. Kanaks are preferred over other nations on the labor market. They have also a precedence over the Frenchmen.

On the other hand there is a shortage of skilled labor in fields with high qualifications in New Caledonia, and therefore it is necessary to call in experts from France and other foreign countries. University of New Caledonia offers only a limited number of fields of study. Moreover, most of the fields are only for bachelor's degree and master's degree is necessary to be studied abroad. The University doesn't offer studies in essential fields as medicine, it requires the arrival of foreign professional staff.

New Caledonia is in many aspects very unique country, it is therefore only on citizens of New Caledonia, what will be the future direction of the country. Let's hope that whatever the outcome of the referendum on independence will be, New Caledonia will remain prosperous country in all key areas.