USING EVIDENCE BASED RESEARCH FOR BUILDING PEACEFUL NATIONS: THE CASE OF NEW ZEALAND

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The Global Peace Index is a bold and innovative attempt to conceptualise peace and to map its sources at national, regional and global levels. Having run for three years now it is possible to identify some of the key drivers of peacefulness at all levels of analysis. The Index itself, therefore, fulfills a number of functions. The first is to provide an empirically grounded overview of where states are relatively located on different indicators of peacefulness. The second is to provide states with some sense of what internal and external policies could be adjusted, amended and implemented in order to improve relative rankings on the GPI. The third function is to generate evidence for driving economic, social and political policies aimed at boosting peacefulness alongside other policy objectives. New Zealand currently ranks number one on the GPI. This paper, therefore, will assess why NZ came out in this position, identify what dynamics might topple it from top spot and what sorts of internal and external policies need to be implemented to keep New Zealand number one.