Palmerston North is the main city of the Manawatū-Wanganui region of the North Island of New Zealand.

The Manawatu Region is bordered by mountain ranges but Palmerston North is mainly flat.

New Zealand’s indigenous people, the Māori, called the area Papaioea, believed to mean “How beautiful it is”.

Palmerston North is a university city, with strong links to agriculture. About 40 per cent of the city’s people study or work in education.

About 85,000 people live in Palmerston North.

The city is inland and about 140 kilometres north of Wellington.

Average daily temperatures in degrees Celsius are:
- February (summer) 22 high, 14 low;
- July (winter) 12 high, 2 low.

Palmerston North is the main city of the Manawatū-Wanganui region of the North Island of New Zealand.
People
The Manawatū region has people from many cultures. Nearly 20% of the people were born outside New Zealand. About 14% of the people are Māori.

The Manawatū region has been home to refugees from Africa and Asia since 2006. Refugees have come from Republic of Congo, Burma and Bhutan. About 700 former refugees live in Palmerston North and the nearby town of Feilding, which is around 20 kilometres away.

There are services to help refugees in Manawatū. You will be supported through your initial settlement by Red Cross Refugee Services who will be responsible for settling you into your housing and linking you to services in the community. For more information see: [www.redcross.org.nz/what-we-do/in-new-zealand/refugee-services/](http://www.redcross.org.nz/what-we-do/in-new-zealand/refugee-services/)

For information on other services for refugees in Manawatu see: [www.mmcnz.org.nz](http://www.mmcnz.org.nz)

Recreation and leisure
The Manawatu area has lots of parks and places for walking, cycling, sports and events. There are some community gardens run by volunteers. Refugee groups celebrate cultural and religious occasions and join football tournaments and festivals.

For information see: [www.pncc.govt.nz/leisure](http://www.pncc.govt.nz/leisure)

Industry and employment
Most employment in the Manawatu area is in education and research, government, health and community services and the retail trade industry. Jobs can depend on skills and ability to speak English. Government funded English lessons are available. People still learning English work in jobs such as cleaning, recycling, warehouses, supermarkets and caring for elderly people.

Public facilities
Council-provided facilities include libraries, parks, playgrounds, theatres, museums, art galleries, places for sports and events, walking and cycle tracks. Manawatu has three public swimming pools. Palmerston North’s museum, Te Manawa, tells the stories of the region’s history, art, science and Māori people.

For information see: [www.temanawa.co.nz](http://www.temanawa.co.nz)
Libraries
Palmerston North has five libraries plus a mobile library. Membership is free and there is free internet. Feilding also has a library.

Public transport
There are buses throughout the area. For information see: www.horizons.govt.nz

Hospitals and health
Palmerston North Hospital includes a 24-hour emergency department. Interpreters are available free to help during visits to hospitals and family doctors.

Schools
There are about 40 schools in Palmerston North and more in Feilding and other nearby towns. There are many types but most are state-run. Most children start school when they turn five. The school year goes from January till December and is divided into four terms. Most children go to the school nearest to their house. You can apply for them to go to other schools. For government reports on schools see: www.ero.govt.nz

The Ministry of Education has refugee education co-ordinators to help refugee families with the New Zealand education system.

Universities and polytechnics
Palmerston North has more than 70 education and research institutions, including Massey University www.massey.ac.nz, Massey University Sport and Recreation Institute and the Universal College of Learning (UCOL), www.ucol.ac.nz

Palmerston North has many places that teach English as a second language (ESOL).

Places of worship
There are many Churches in the region and an Islamic Centre in Palmerston North. There is no Hindu temple but the Bhutanese community worship at community houses in Palmerston North and Feilding and travel to the Hindu temple in Wellington for significant religious occasions.

Shopping
There are many supermarkets in Palmerston North and Feilding. Outdoor markets are held mostly at weekends. Food from Asia and the Middle East is also available.
For information on Palmerston North, Feilding and the Manawatū region see:
www.settlementsupportpalmerstonnorth.co.nz  www.visionmanawatu.org.nz
www.manawatunz.co.nz  www.feilding.co.nz