

Māori Electoral Participation

A Report Produced for the Electoral Commission

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Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa
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1.0 Executive Summary

Sixty-nine respondents from *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa* household survey were specifically interviewed for this research. In addition the voting patterns of 400 kaumātua/older Māori are also reported.

The profile of Māori who do not vote:

- Age and standard of living were the two main variables affecting voting: i.e. younger Māori with a less comfortable living standard were least likely to vote.
- Cultural identity i.e. the level of involvement in Te Ao Māori had less effect on participants' propensity to vote than their age, level of education and standard of living.

Participation in the electoral system

- For Māori, participation in the electoral system involves two steps: choosing an electoral roll and then voting in a general election;
- Cultural identity appears to influence voting behaviour and participants' views of politics. Particularly, cultural identity was significant in the selection of electoral roll and may explain lower levels of faith and trust in government and politicians;

Māori attitudes towards politics, elections and representation

- Māori participants had relatively greater trust in democracy and voting than they did in the actions of government and MPs.
- Māori participants had high expectations of Māori MPs, and were likely to be more familiar with their Māori electorate MP than either their general electorate or local list MP.
- Māori participants expressed a preference to approach their Māori electorate MP rather than other local MPs in some instances;
- Despite having comparatively low levels of confidence and trust in government and MPs, participants in this study were more politically active than respondents in the New Zealand Elections Study 2005.
- Across a range of "Māori" policy areas, participants were strongly of the view that the status of the Treaty of Waitangi should not be weakened by suggested amendments to current constitutional arrangements.
- A strong preference for the retention of the Māori seats in parliament was consistent with other electoral studies.

Māori Attitudes Towards Policy Issues

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Older Māori

- A study of 406 older Māori undertaken in 2006¹ confirmed the findings of this study

¹ Oranga Kaumātua, Research Centre for Māori Health & Development, Massey University

- 79% of these respondents preferred the Māori electoral roll, 20% general, and 1% reported they were not enrolled;
- 92% of these respondents reported they had voted in the last general election.

1.1 Introduction

This report has been prepared for the Electoral Commission. It focuses on three specific features of Māori voting and electoral participation;

- (1) The profile of Māori who do not vote;
- (2) The reasons why Māori participation in the electoral system is lower than for non-Māori;
- (3) Māori attitudes towards politics, elections and representation.

Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa is a longitudinal study of 600 Māori households. A sub-sample of respondents have been specifically interviewed on electoral participation issues. In addition, an overall analysis of the main sample (adults 18 years of age and over) has provided comparison data.

1.2 Contemporary Māori Participation – the Broader Picture

Contemporary Māori exist in a diverse range of realities and settings. The incorporation of Māori perspectives and the growing recognition of the need for an integrated approach to enhancing Māori levels of wellbeing have also been recognised by government, albeit unevenly over time.

Māori participation in the electoral system and politics in general is reflective of Māori participation in the broad institutions of society generally. As Mason Durie states:

The level of participation that an individual or group enjoys within society can be broadly measured against the nature of their involvement in education, the economy and their overall standard of living.... Full participation is not achieved simply through social transfers or employment; it requires a capacity to make a contribution to society through whatever potential an individual or group possesses (Durie, 2003: 291).

Most datasets regarding social participation and wellbeing are derived from indicators that measure lack of participation (ibid). Indicators across social policy areas highlight that Māori participation, whether in the area of health, education, rates of incarceration or levels of employment show disproportionate Māori underachievement. It is unsurprising therefore that the same trend is reflected in Māori participation levels in elections and politics.

The reasons for lower levels of Māori participation are numerous and varied. Historically, Crown breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi, social dislocation, mass urbanisation, policies of assimilation, deculturation and an unclear constitutional position have contributed to the lifestyles and socioeconomic status of contemporary Māori (Walker, 2004; Durie 2003).

Voting statistics for Māori indicate a consistently lower level of voter participation in general elections since 1935 (Vowles and Aimer, 1993). Vowles and Aimer identified some key reasons:

- New Zealand's political institutions are European in their origins and people from other cultures may find electoral participation less meaningful;
- the Labour party monopoly over the four Māori seats may have acted as a disincentive to vote;
- Māori on the Māori roll may have particular qualities, such as greater identification with their culture, which increase their propensity **not** to vote.
- Lower voting levels may be a result of **characteristics concentrated** amongst Māori but **not culturally specific** to being Māori - such as education or income levels, or being younger on average than Pākehā (Vowles and Aimer, 1993: 52).

The introduction of the proportional representation based mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral system has brought about increased participation by Māori in the political system and increased competition for the Māori vote, but the gap between Māori and non-Māori voting levels remains. In 2007 it is reasonable to suggest that many Māori now feel a greater sense of franchise due to the larger number of Māori electorate seats, the two vote system (electorate and party vote), together with the closeness of elections held under MMP where the Māori seats might carry the balance of power and a vote is seen as 'worthwhile'.

A consultation hui administered by the Electoral Commission in 2004 posited a number of hypotheses examining the reasons for the persistent levels of lower Māori participation. These are discussed in this report and broadly consider the effect of cultural identity on voting. More specifically, this study includes a focus on the degree to which being active in te Ao Māori (the Māori world) might effect participation in elections and politics in wider society.

The research team has taken a two pronged approach to addressing these hypotheses. The research draws on data from the *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa* longitudinal main sample study (the main sample) to examine participant voting behaviour and roll selection. A smaller sub-sample study (the sub-sample) was also undertaken from which participant attitudes towards politics were drawn. It is anticipated that this report will contribute to Māori development in its broadest sense by assisting the Electoral Commission in its goal of addressing lower levels of Māori participation.

2.0 Methodology

This section describes the sampling and statistical assumptions and analytical decisions which were made in respect of this survey. In part the collective data of *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa* have been used.

2.1 Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa Longitudinal Study

The dataset used for this report on Māori electoral behaviour and attitudes was drawn from the *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa* longitudinal study of Māori households, currently being undertaken by a team of Māori researchers from the Research Centre for Māori Health and Development at Massey University.

The *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa Study* sample (the Main Sample) was developed in conjunction with Statistics New Zealand to measure a range of geographic, economic, cultural and social circumstances representing the diverse realities of contemporary Māori (Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1996). The initial survey was begun late in 1995, with participants generously consenting to being re-surveyed at three year intervals.

The survey has recently completed its fourth wave of interviews with participants. Initially, six hundred and fifty-five (655) Māori households (956 adults and 618 children) in the Manawatū-Whanganui, Gisborne, Wellington, and Auckland regional council areas were sampled. The sample from each region was selected using a differential sampling approach based on information from past censuses, Household Labour Force Surveys (HLFS) and Household Economic Surveys (HES) conducted by Statistics New Zealand. Based on stratifications within each region (strata are geographically related areas with similar attributes), and in relation to Māori population density, certain Primary Sampling Units (PSU) were chosen to be surveyed (PSUs consist of 18,800 geographically defined areas which make up the country). An enumeration phase involving a door-to-door survey within each PSU was undertaken to establish which households were eligible for inclusion in the study (i.e. which households said they had at least one Māori resident). For consistency, each PSU was surveyed three times or until each dwelling had been contacted and an interview time arranged. Repeat surveys were conducted at different times of the day and on different days of the week to increase the success of contacting households. Eligible households were then selected at random to achieve predetermined totals (allowing for non participation and no-contact) in line with the population stratum proportions.

As at the fourth wave, additional samples were drawn from Northland and Southland using the same methodology to further improve representivity and the statistical power of the study.

2.1.1 Utilising the Main Sample Data

For this study only adults aged 18 years and over were included. Adults aged 15-18 years were removed from the analysis. If they became eligible voters over time (between waves) they have been included in later waves.

The data from each of the four waves of interviews have been utilised to identify the profile of Māori who do not vote. Participants in the main sample were asked three questions;

- 1) *Are you on an electoral roll?*
- 2) *Which roll are you on?*
- 3) *Did you vote in the last general election?*

The responses to these questions relate to the general elections of 1996, 1999, 2002 and 2005 respectively.

2.1.2 Representivity and Weighting

To allow for unequal sampling of the populations present in the main sample, a weighting variable was calculated, which is related to the probability of selecting that particular individual from the survey population. The weighting variable accounts for unequal sampling of the populations and adjusts the resulting dataset so that it better resembles the regions from which the sample was drawn. Post-stratification was also carried out to ensure the final sample reflected the gender and age distribution of the region as assessed by the most recent census results.

2.1.3 Data Screening

Before conducting any analyses, the data was screened firstly for accuracy of data entry and missing values. Secondly, extreme weights (above 1000) were scaled back to 1000 to prevent these values 'dominating' the weighting distribution.

2.2 The Māori Electoral Behaviour Sub-Sample Study

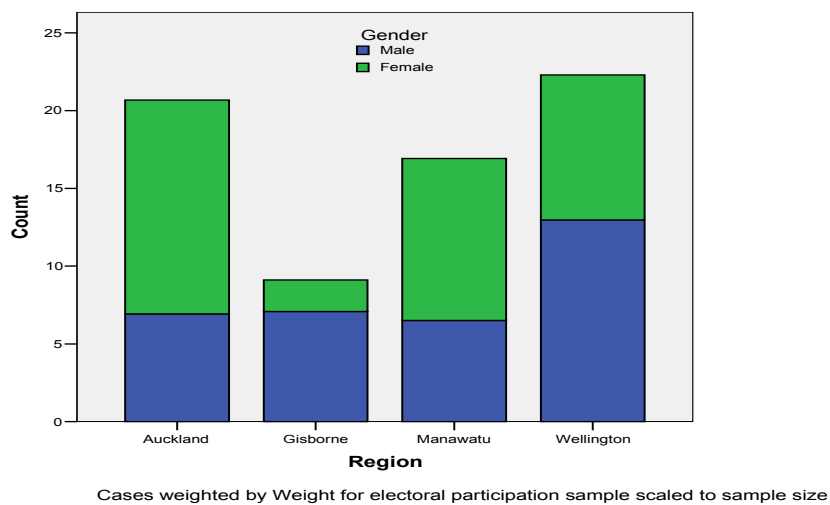
A sample of 77 participants from the *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa* study was drawn and invited to take part in the sub-study concerning Māori Electoral Participation (the sub-sample). The sub-sample was selected on the basis of previous analyses of participants' responses to questions concerning Māori culture and identity. Equal numbers of participants who were analysed as belonging to one of three calculated Māori cultural profiles (see 3.1) were selected for recruitment into the sub sample study. In addition, and to avoid any bias towards either an urban or rural population, participants were drawn for selection from four regions of the North Island comprising a mix of major cities, provincial towns, semi-rural and rural settings.

2.2.1 Sub-Sample Study Description

After cleaning of the dataset, and discounting those who declined to participate, useable information for 69 participants remained. These were spread across four regions; Auckland (21), Gisborne (9), Manawatū / Whanganui (17) and Wellington (22).

The gender profile by region of the sub-sample is illustrated in graph 1. There were fewer female respondents in Gisborne and relatively more male respondents in Wellington, but overall the numbers by gender were fairly even.

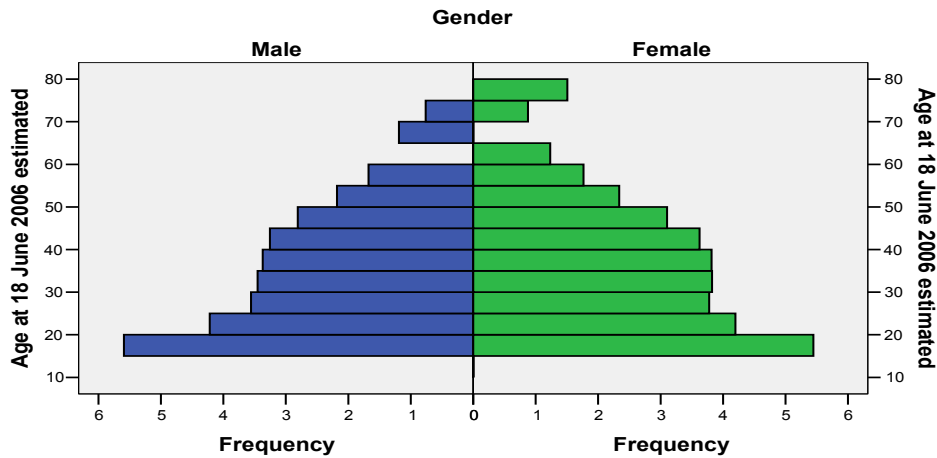
Graph 1: Sub Sample Demographic Profile (Gender/Region)



The Age and Gender profile is illustrated in graph 2. This profile shows the familiar Māori pattern of a broad (young) base to the pyramid with a narrow apex, with very small numbers in the oldest age ranges.

As with all such studies, the relatively small size of the sub-sample requires that a degree of caution be exercised in applying these research findings to a wider grouping.

Graph 2: Sub Sample Demographic Profile (Gender/Age)



Case weight by Weight for electoral participation sample scaled to sample size

2.2.2 Sub-Sample Survey Method

In order to preserve the consistency of surveying that participants of the *Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa* study have become accustomed to, face-to-face survey interviews were conducted. Trained and experienced interviewers made contact with the selected study participants to arrange a convenient time and place to conduct the survey interview. All interviews were administered kano ki te kano (face-to-face) in the participant's home. The interviews were carried out during September and October 2006 (after the conclusion of the Māori Electoral Option).

A questionnaire comprising 58 items, and based on the key areas of research, was specifically designed for the purposes of this study (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was developed in collaboration with the Electoral Commission drawing from other electoral surveys² and including 21 items focussing on specific aspects of the research brief. The questions investigated various factors contained in the questionnaire and were classified under general headings: efficacy, democracy, the electoral system, voting, participation, Māori representation, local representation, Māori policy and the Māori Electoral Option.

2.2.4 Data Validation and Discrepancies

In order to test the reliability of the data a validation exercise was undertaken to check the responses to specific questions about participants' registration on the electoral rolls and their involvement in the 2005 election.

² NZES 2005, NZES Māori Survey 1999

Responses to the following questions from the survey questionnaire were matched to participants' details on the Master Rolls for 2005 held at each regional Electoral Centre.

Question I2 *Which electoral roll are you on?*
 Māori
 General

Question D4 *Did you vote in the 2005 general election?*
 Yes
 No
 Not applicable

Researchers visited each of the relevant Electoral Centres to view the Master rolls and to verify that the answers survey participants recorded for the present study were identical to the records held on the Master rolls. All 69 survey participants' answers to these two questions were validated in this way.

Across the sample 22 discrepancies were found with 15 of these related to question I2 (*Which electoral roll are you on?*) and the other seven related to voting in 2005.

In one instance a participant recorded as being on the *General roll* for the 2005 election was found to have been on the *Māori roll*. In the other 14 instances participants recorded as being on the *Māori roll* were found to have been on the *General roll*.

Seven discrepancies between the study responses and the Master roll records were found in relation to question D4 (*Did you vote in the 2005 general election?*). There were seven instances where study participants recorded that they had voted in the 2005 elections but were found not to have voted when checked against the Master roll.

These discrepancies relate to a high proportion of respondents (22 out of 69 respondents or over 30%). Partly these can be attributed to recall bias, but it is also plausible to suggest that for many Māori their **memory** of their roll selection and voting behaviour is not strong partly due to a sense of apathy with politics in general.

3.0 Data Analysis Instruments

3.1 Cultural Identity Measurement

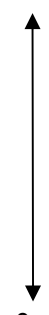
The Best Outcomes for Māori: Te Hoe Nuku Roa study utilises seven cultural indicators to form a single measure of cultural identity (CI). The Māori CI measure used below (Stevenson, 2004) incorporates seven key indicators of a Māori cultural identity:

- self identification,
- Māori language ability,
- involvement with the family group (whānau),
- knowledge of personal ancestry,
- day to day contact with Māori,
- marae participation, and
- Māori land interests.

These seven indicators were chosen because they were both quantifiable and particularly germane to a Māori cultural identity (Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1996). The cultural identity measure is not a measure of “Māoriness”, which is subject to a range of factors that can easily change, but rather is a gauge of the level of participant engagement with key features of Te Ao Māori.

From these indicators, three CI profiles were constructed: “secure identity”, “positive identity” and “notional identity” (see table 1 below). (Another profile – compromised identity – exists below the notional profile, but no participants in this study fell into that category.) The features of each are described in the second column. The CI profile allows for a single figure to be allocated to individuals, ranging from 18 at the highest score to zero at the lowest (see column three).

Table 1: Cultural Identity Profile Descriptions

Cultural Identity Profile Category	Features	CI Score
Secure	Good access to Māori language, Māori land, whānau and other elements of te Ao Māori (the Māori world). Tend to send their children to kohanga reo and subscribe to Māori values.	18  0
Positive	Possess a strong sense of being Māori. Do not have good access to Māori cultural and social resources. Have a positive cultural identity but have been relatively estranged from te Ao Māori.	
Notional	Describe themselves as Māori but have little contact with te Ao Māori.	

3.1.1 Cultural Identity (CI) Measure and Electoral Participation

Studies into Māori voting behaviour have typically utilised self identification as the criteria for classification as Māori (the New Zealand Elections Studies are the most obvious example of this). Studies of actual Māori voting behaviour in general elections compare the voting patterns of those on the Māori roll to voters on the general roll. It is presumed that Māori on the Māori roll are more actively involved in te Ao Māori which may go some way towards explaining the differences in voting behaviour.

Self identification is only one of seven cultural indicators used in the CI measure. Research has highlighted the significance of CI to Māori wellbeing (Howden-Chapman and Cram, 1998). The use of the CI measure is likely to better elucidate the interface between participation in te Ao Māori and participation in politics and elections than other electoral studies.

In this study, it is assumed that participants with a higher CI profile are more likely to associate with other Māori and in Māori environments, and so are more likely to be actively engaged in te Ao Māori. They are therefore presumed to be more actively engaged in Māori politics. It follows, therefore, that participants with a lower CI profile are presumed to be less active in Māori politics.

3.2 Economic Living Standard Index (ELSI)

In recent years, researchers have increasingly utilised the Economic Living Standard Index (ELSI) as a measurement tool in social statistics reporting. The ELSI scale consolidates a large amount of information about different aspects of individual economic well-being into a single score (Jensen et al, 2006). The score has been shown to be a valid and reliable measure of an individual's standard of living, and is readily interpretable within the context of familiar ideas about living standards and the language commonly used to express those ideas. The ELSI description and associated scores are shown

in Table 2 below. The scale has six different descriptions ranging from a score of zero at one extreme (severe hardship) to 31 at the other (very good).

Table 2: Economic Living Standard Index (ELSI) Scale

ELSI Descriptions	Minimum	Maximum
Severe hardship	0	8
Significant hardship	9	12
Some hardship	13	16
Fairly comfortable	17	20
Comfortable	21	24
Good	25	28
Very good	29	31

4.0 The Profile of Māori Who Do Not Vote

Previous research into voting behaviour has identified age, income levels, education and ethnicity as significant variables that affect voting. Data from the main sample were analysed to identify the relevance of these variables to voting, with the obvious exception of ethnicity in this sample who were all Māori. In particular there has been a view that “the more Maori you are the less likely you are to vote” or restated “the more connected with te Ao Māori the less likely your propensity to vote”. We have some ability to test this assumption.

4.1 Findings from the Main Sample Data

In order to test the key variables above across the main sample, the research team generated voter profiles based on whether or not each participant voted in the general elections at each of the four sampling waves. This provides a longitudinal profile of participant voting behaviour since the first MMP election in 1996. This resulted in five categories of voters:

- voted each time (always);
- did vote, then ceased (decreasing);
- did not vote then voted (increasing);
- never voted while with the study (never); or,
- no clear voting pattern (occasional).

Several examples of the categories are outlined in Table 3 below. (At least two valid responses were required across the four waves to be included in the profiles.)

Table 3: Longitudinal Voter Profiles

Wave				Profile
1	2	3	4	
Voted	Voted	Did not vote	Did not vote	Decreasing
Did not vote	Did not vote	Voted	Voted	Increasing
Did not vote	Voted	Did not vote	Voted	Occasional
Did not vote	-	Did not vote	Voted	Increasing
Voted	Voted	Voted	Voted	Always
Did not vote	Did not vote	Did not vote	Did not vote	Never

For example, in the top row of figures, if a participant reported as having voted in wave 1 and wave 2, and not voted in wave 3 and wave 4, they would be classified with a “decreasing” profile. That participant is then grouped with all others of the same (decreasing) profile. The mean CI score for that profile at each of the four interview waves has then been calculated (see table 4 below).

A degree of caution should be exercised with these profiles in that it is the **mean** CI scores that are identified. A single profile will contain individuals who might be very engaged with te Ao Māori (a secure CI profile) and those who

might have little engagement with te Ao Māori (a notional CI profile). Further, engagement with te Ao Māori is not static and can change over time i.e. an individual's CI score in wave 1 might be different than in wave 4. This will depend on the specific experiences of that individual and their whānau e.g. if a participant attended a whānau bereavement or celebration in the 12 months prior to interview wave 1, but did not subsequently attend other similar gatherings, it can be expected that their CI score would be higher in wave 1 than in subsequent interview waves. Also, not all of the participants are the same across each sample wave which might affect results. Nevertheless, the results do offer insight into the relationship between voting and cultural identity over time.

4.2 Main Sample Data; Cultural Identity - longitudinal trends

The results of the cultural identity cross tabulations across the four waves of interviews are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Main Sample Voting Behaviour; Cultural Identity

Voting Behaviour	Mean Māori Cultural Identity			
	Wave 1 (n=549)	Wave 2 (n=661)	Wave 3 (n=493)	Wave 4 (n=296)
always	11.8	12	10.7	11.1
decreasing	10.8	11.9	10.8	10.1
improving	11.4	12	11.2	10.7
never	11.3	11.3	11.4	11.1
occasional	12	12.1	10.8	11.4

An examination of Table 4 shows no significant voting difference between the groupings over time. From the small differences that do exist, a comparison of the voting behaviour in waves 1 and 2 highlights that the “occasional” and “always” voters had the highest mean CI scores. Wave 3 results differed in that the “improving” and “never” groupings had the highest CI rating. In wave 4 there is no difference between those who always voted and those who never voted.

There are a number of different factors that may explain participants' responses. Māori voter turnout was comparatively higher in the 1996 and 2005 elections than in 1999 and 2002. Increased competition for the Māori vote from the New Zealand First party in 1996 (which saw them win all of the then 5 Māori electorates) and the Māori Party in 2005 (which won 4 out of the then 7 Māori electorates) were significant. After the 1996 election, the actions of some Māori MPs who left their political parties (specifically, New Zealand First and the Alliance) but remained in parliament may have dampened Māori enthusiasm at the polls in 1999 and saw Labour victorious in each of the Māori electorates. The lack of close competition for the Māori vote did little to rekindle Māori enthusiasm in 2002.

From this data, two trends emerge. First, on average, the profile with the consistently higher CI rating over time is the “occasional” grouping. This

suggests a small grouping of Māori who are, on average, most active in te Ao Māori but are intermittent voters. A speculative reason for this is that those politically engaged Māori are selective about their participation in general elections.

Second, on average, CI has remained most constant for participants who have never voted. This, combined with the significance of the age and income variables (see 4.3 below), suggests that engagement in Te Ao Māori has little if any effect. Thus, although they are as similarly active in Te Ao Māori as most other participants, they are disengaged from voting.

In summary, Table 4 suggests that cultural identity over time and cross sectionally did not primarily account for participants' propensity to vote.

4.3 Wave Four Voting Behaviour: Gender, Age, Education, CI, and ELSI

The wave 4 sample data was used to test voting behaviour of participants against the independent variables of gender, age, secondary qualification, CI and ELSI.³ The results are illustrated in the following tables.

Regression analysis reveals little difference based on gender (see table 6) but some apparent differences based on age. Participants who voted were, on average, much older than those who had never voted. Participants who had never voted, or who had only voted recently, were likely to be younger than the other groupings.

Using the ELSI measure, participants with the lowest mean score were most likely to have never voted at all, or not voted recently. The "occasional" voting category had the highest mean ELSI score, whilst the "always" voted grouping had the second highest rating. In combining the findings for Age and ELSI, both variables are significant when it comes to voting. (The regression had 468 participants.)

³ This analysis was done using the Complex Samples Logistic Regression procedure in SPSS 13. The Complex Samples Logistic Regression procedure performs logistic regression analysis on a binary or multinomial dependent variable for samples drawn by complex sampling methods. Tables were generated by the Complex Samples Frequencies or Descriptives procedure and graphs prepared in Microsoft Excel using the summaries contained in these tables.

Table 5: Voting Behaviour: Categorical Variable Information – Wave 4

		Weighted Count	Weighted Percent
Wave 4 Voted(b)	Yes	2291.493	66.8%
	No(a)	1140.806	33.2%
Gender	Male	1837.062	53.5%
	Female	1595.237	46.5%
Wave 4 Have secondary school qualification	Yes	1558.223	45.4%
	No	1874.076	54.6%
Wave 4 Qualification taking at least 3 months	Yes	1425.046	41.5%
	No	2007.253	58.5%
Population Size		3432.299	100.0%

a Reference category

b Dependent Variable

Table 6: Covariate Information: CI, Age and ELSI – Wave 4

	Mean
Wave 4 CI	10.78
Wave 4 Age	36.16
Wave 4 ELSI Score MVA	19.86

The first logistic regression (see Table 7 below) shows that the main effects model explained between 18% and 28% of variance, while the addition of the 2-way interactions (controlling for cohort effects) explained an additional 3% approximately of variance.

The main effects only regression found “having a qualification taking 3 months or more” and ELSI as significant initially, however, once cohort effects were added, only ELSI remained significant with Age x ELSI also significant (see Figs 1 - 2; see Tables 8 - 9).

This finding parallels that of other studies and indicates that age and living standards are important. Education (qualification of more than three months learning) being less important and not different to ELSI which, of course, is likely to be correlated with education.

Table 7. Binary Logistic Regressions on Vote by Gender, Age, Education, MCI, and ELSI - Wave 4 (n=468).

Predictors	Wald F	
	1	2
Gender	3.027	3.467
ed_2q4	3.865	.392
ed_3q4	9.804**	.035
MCI4	.875	.020
age4	18.713***	.244
ELSI4	4.976*	4.853*
ed_2q4 * age4		.000
ed_3q4 * age4		.788
MCI4 * age4		.315
age4 * ELSI4		10.171**
Pseudo R²		
Cox and Snell	.204	.232
Nagelkerke	.283	.323
McFadden	.179	.208

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

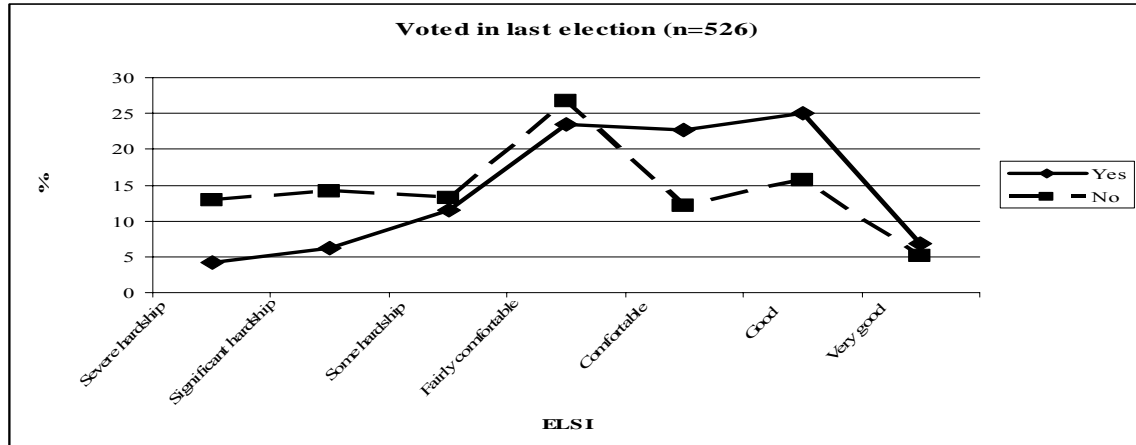
Table 8 shows that those who had voted in Wave 4 tended to have a more comfortable standard of living (20.7) than those who had not voted (17.6).

Table 8: Mean ELSI score by Voting - Wave 4

Wave 4 Voted	Mean ELSI Score	Unweighted Count
Yes	20.69 (Comfortable)	408
No	17.56 (Fairly Comfortable)	118
Total	19.65 (Fairly Comfortable)	526

Examining Figure 1, it appears that the majority of those who voted in Wave 4 had a fairly comfortable or better standard of living (78%), with a minority experiencing some to severe economic hardship (22%). Conversely, those who had not voted were more likely to have experienced economic hardship (38%), with fewer experiencing a fairly comfortable or better standard of living (62%),

Figure 1: Line graph showing how Voting varied by ELSI score - Wave 4

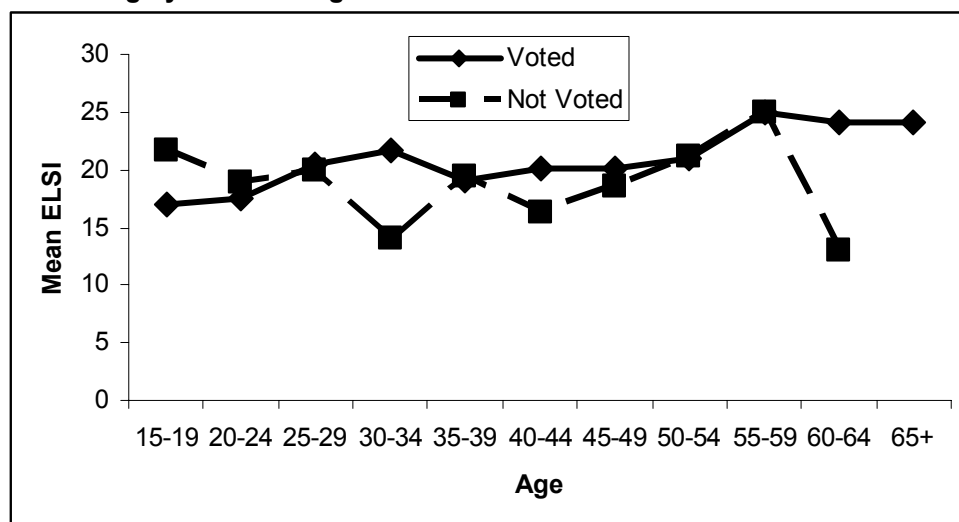


From Table 9 and Figure 2, it can be seen that for those who had voted, living standards increased with age (from significant hardship to some hardship); while for those who did not vote, there was no clear pattern.

Table 9: Table showing mean ELSI by Voting and Age - Wave 4

Wave 4 ELSI Score	Mean ELSI	
	Voted	Didn't Vote
15-19	17	22
20-24	18	19
25-29	21	20
30-34	22	14
35-39	19	20
40-44	20	16
45-49	20	19
50-54	21	21
55-59	25	25
60-64	24	13
65+	24	

Figure 2: Voting by ELSI and Age - Wave 4



4.4 Findings and Discussion

Living standards and age were the two most significant variables affecting participants' propensity to vote:

- Older Māori, with fairly comfortable living standards were most likely to vote;
- Those who were younger and less well off were least likely to vote.
- The level of cultural identity made little if any difference to voting.
- However, the research identifies a relatively small grouping of Māori who are both better off and younger than those that always vote. This grouping is, on average, most actively engaged in Te Ao Māori, and is likely to vote occasionally.
- For those participants who have never voted, the cultural identity is comparatively static and of little significance to voting.

This analysis suggests that within the Māori ethnic group, cultural identity differences do not primarily account for voting pattern differences. Youth – which is a characteristic of the Māori population – and poorer living standards – another characteristic – do account for the apparent variation *within* the Māori ethnic group.

5.0 Māori Voting

Reasons why Māori participation in the electoral system is lower than for non-Māori

The Electoral Commission posited a number of hypotheses in the research brief in order to ascertain the reasons for the comparatively lower level of Māori voting. These are listed below together with the relevant findings from the research data.

Low levels of Māori participation are not about being Māori. They are about poverty and education levels and the different age profile

Analysis of the voting trends from the main study sample partly support this hypothesis (refer sections 4.1 and 4.2 above). The most significant contributors to low voting participation were being young and having poorer living standards. These circumstances are characteristic of the Māori population rather than being culturally determined.

Māori are strongly engaged in iwi and Māori politics just not in national elections

The results from the main study did not support this hypothesis (refer 4.2). The hypothesis presumes that active engagement in Te Ao Māori might precludes or replace active engagement in national elections. Although the hypothesis may apply to some Māori who are exclusively engaged in te Ao Māori, it is unlikely to apply to all. For example, Māori who are actively engaged in Te Ao Māori might choose not to engage in national elections as a sign of dissatisfaction. Alternatively, they might choose to engage in voting in an attempt to bring about change. The research findings identify a grouping of participants who are actively engaged in te Ao Māori that vote *occasionally* in elections. Whether this occasional behaviour is an active or passive choice is unclear.

Turnout in the Māori Electorates is lower because Māori on the Māori roll have strong Māori identity and so are more involved in iwi politics and not involved in national politics.

This hypothesis has two component parts relating to: a) roll selection and cultural identity, and b) involvement in iwi politics and voter turnout. Hypothesis b) (relating to voting) was discussed in section 4.2.

To test hypothesis a) we compared the CI profiles of participants registered on the General and Māori rolls across each of the four sampling waves (see table 10 below).

Table 10: Main Sample; Electoral Roll and Cultural Identity

Interview Wave	Electoral Roll	Mean CI	Standard Error	Unweighted Count
One	General	11.87	.183	345
	Māori	11.27	.259	317
Two	General	10.30	.228	186
	Māori	12.44	.155	388
Three	General	10.27	.258	162
	Māori	10.87	.243	402
Four	General	9.83	.435	163
	Māori	11.34	.234	368

Table 10 shows that with the exception of Wave 1 interviews, participants on the Māori roll tended to be more engaged with Te Ao Māori. The table also highlights the trend that participants who are more actively engaged with Te Ao Māori are increasingly choosing to be on the Māori roll. However, there may be a number of external factors independent of cultural identity such as peer pressure, social groupings or historical family voting behaviours that influence roll selection.

Further, contrary to the assumption of this hypothesis, participants had a similar if not better knowledge of the electoral system than respondents in the 2005 New Zealand Electoral Study (see tables 24, 27 and 28). This finding should be treated with some caution, however, because of the comparatively smaller size of the sub-sample.

Māori are interested in politics but do not take part because they think their voice is not heard or of value

The sub-sample study results tend to support this hypothesis. Participants showed a high level of interest in politics and a sound knowledge of political processes. There was disenchantment, however, with the actions of government, MPs and parliament. Simply put, participants considered that there was greater value in voting than there was faith in the actions of government. This can be viewed positively in that there was a more positive attitude towards the electoral and democratic system than there was confidence in the individuals that are active within it. It is also indicative of proportional electoral systems where the make up of government is not confirmed until well after the closing of the ballot box.

Further, participants were asked what they considered was the main reason that Māori didn't vote. Nearly half (44%) considered that non-voting Māori felt disempowered and nearly a quarter (23%) cited apathy and/or disinterest as the main reason. A key reason given by the small proportion of participants who didn't vote was that people they associated with also didn't vote.

Candidates are more important than party to Māori voters

The sub sample questionnaire did not directly address this hypothesis so the results are unclear. However, participants were asked about their attitudes towards, and expectations of, Māori MPs (as opposed to candidates). The research findings highlighted that participants were more familiar with Māori MPs and had high (and seemingly unrealistic) expectations of them. There was the aspiration that Māori MPs would act as advocates for Māori as opposed to being Māori proponents of party policy. Participants were of the view that Māori MPs should put the priorities of Māori before those of the party.

The 2005 general election, however, was an interesting test of this hypothesis with the competition over the Māori seats between the Māori party and the Labour party. The success of the Māori Party in 4 of the 7 Māori electorates and the relative newness of the party (with only 1 sitting MP), the success of the victorious candidates was both a result of their standing in Te Ao Māori as well as the political message of the party. The greater support for the electorate vote rather than the party vote for the successful Māori party candidates tends to support this hypothesis.

6.0 Sub-sample Survey Responses

The sub-sample interviews were conducted a year after the September 2005 general election and provide a snapshot of participants' views at that time. The 2005 election was unique because of the high Māori voter turnout compared to the previous two elections (Electoral Commission, 2005). There were two principal reasons for this. First, the close contest between the Labour and National parties to secure victory saw Labour secure 50 seats in the new parliament, 2 ahead of National. And second, the competition between Labour and the Māori party for the Māori electorates. The circumstances that led to the formation of the Māori party, particularly those surrounding the foreshore and seabed heightened Māori interest. These factors resulted in the increased Māori participation at the polls in 2005.

A number of questions in this survey were drawn from previous New Zealand Electoral Survey questionnaires. Results from those surveys provide useful comparative data to assess participants' responses from this study regarding attitudes towards elections and politics generally.

A range of questions were also included to examine participants' attitudes towards Māori representation and participation. In particular, questions assessing attitudes towards Māori MPs, the Māori Electoral Option and the influence of whānau on voting behaviour were included. Cross tabulations of CI scores are included with the tables where the differences are considered significant and the responses are spread.

6.1 Efficacy

The two questions in this section focussed on participant understanding of, and interest in, politics.

Table 11: A1. Politics is too complicated ⁴

Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree /disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / N.a.
30.0%	26.8%	20.9%	8.4%	13%	1.0%

Most participants (56.8%) agreed that politics seemed too complicated whilst 21.4% disagreed (see table 11). Most participants were interested in politics; comparatively few were disinterested.

When these responses were cross tabulated with CI, the “not at all interested” grouping had the highest mean score (see table 13). This partly supports the hypothesis that Māori who are more engaged in te Ao Māori are less interested in national politics.

⁴ All percentages in the tables are weighted by case weight for the electoral participation sample scaled to sample size unless otherwise stated

Table 12: A2 Interest in politics

Very interested	Fairly interested	Slightly interested	Not at all interested
24.2%	29.9%	31%	14.9%

Table 13: A2 Interest in politics - CI Cross tabulation (in actual figures)

		Last known CI		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Total N (69)
Generally speaking how interested are you in what's going on in politics?	Very interested	11	2	17
	Fairly interested	11	3	21
	Slightly interested	11	3	21
	Not at all interested	14	4	10
	Don't know/NA	.	.	0

6.2 Democracy

This section focuses on trust and confidence in the political process; trust in politicians and their ability to make decisions that reflect public opinion; and their trust in the operations of parliament.

Table 14: B2. Who is in power makes a difference

	makes a big difference				doesn't make any difference	Don't know /N.a.
Sub sample	39.6%	8.1%	9.6%	4.1%	31.2%	7.5%
NZES 2005	29.7%	33.2%	21.4%	6.8%	5.4%	3.4%

Almost 40% of participants considered that 'who' was in power made a big difference whilst 31.2% considered that it made no difference (see table 14). When compared with the New Zealand Election Study 2005 results, the significant differences of views are illustrated. Although participants in the sub-sample were more likely to feel that who was in power made a difference (39.6% compared to 29.7%) overall, they also far more likely to feel that the result of voting (placing a 'who' in power) made little difference.

Despite the previous response, most participants generally considered that voting can make a difference (see table 15). The difference between the sub sample and NZES results in the previous question decreases significantly when it comes to considering the value of voting (see table 17 also).

Whilst participants from the sub sample are far less likely to consider that who is in power makes a difference, they are almost as likely to consider that voting makes a difference.

Table 15: B3. Voting makes a difference

	<i>Makes a big difference</i>				<i>Doesn't make any difference</i>	<i>Don't know /N.a.</i>
Sub sample	38.8%	18.4%	26.9%	1.3%	12.7%	1.9%
NZES 2005	41.3%	32.1%	15.9%	5.2%	3.4%	2.1%

Table 16: B4. Elections ensure that the views of voters are represented by MPs

<i>Very well</i>	<i>Quite well</i>	<i>Not very well</i>	<i>Not well at all</i>	<i>Don't know /N.a.</i>
10.8%	27.4%	36.7%	16.3%	8.8%

Most participants (53%) considered that elections did not ensure the views of voters were represented by MPs. This view relates to all MPs and not just Māori MPs who form the minority of representatives.

Table 17: B5. Attitudes to Politicians, Government and Democracy

	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
Most Members of Parliament are out of touch with the rest of the country	20%	47.8%	23%	9.3%
I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the issues facing New Zealand	24.1%	54.2%	15.3%	6.4%
People like me don't have any say about what the government does	32.5%	23.7%	36.6%	7.2%
The New Zealand government is largely run by a few big interests	29.9%	24.6%	18.2%	25.2%
You can trust the government to do what is right most of the time	0.8%	22.5%	62.2%	13.5%
My vote really counts in elections	27.7%	41.4%	20.8%	7.9%

Almost 68% of participants considered that MPs were out of touch. There was an even range of responses to whether participants considered that they had a say about what the government does; 32.5% strongly agreed and 36.8% disagreed. Over three-quarters felt that they had a good understanding of the issues facing the country. 29.9% considered that the government was largely run by a few big interests.

One of the most interesting responses was that a high proportion of participants (62.2%) didn't trust government while a correspondingly very low proportion (0.8%) did. This seems somewhat inconsistent with participants' attitude to voting; over a quarter strongly agreed and 41.4% agreed that their vote really counted.

These results suggest that participants have a higher level of trust in political processes (democracy and voting) than they do in government and MPs. This appears quite an important finding and might explain the slightly different behaviours in choosing an electoral roll versus actually voting in an election.

Table 18 shows NZES responses to these questions over time utilising the results from their main studies and Māori sub sample studies.

Table 18: Attitudes to Politicians, Government and Democracy 1999-2007 (percent in agreement)

	All New Zealand				Māori Electors ⁵			Sub sample
	1999	2001	2002	2005	1996	1999	2002	2006
MPs out of touch	52	56	49	44	60	75	57	67.8
People like me have no say	55		46	48	60	60	60	56.2
Govt run by a few big interests	50		42	39	63	66	56	54.5
Satisfaction with democracy	57	60	67	65	53		57	62.4
Trust govt to do what's right	36	47	44	45	17	34	42	23.3
My vote really counts	77		69	72	81	81	65	69.1
N	5601	729	4500	2806	485	491	500	68

Source: NZES, 2005 and Vowles and Aimer, 2002: 174.

Table 18 shows that Māori electors have had a consistently lower level of confidence and trust than other New Zealanders over time. The trend has seen a general improvement in attitude across both sets of NZES sample groupings. The sub-sample data shows that participants consider that they have a greater say, have a greater level of satisfaction with democracy and consider that their vote counts more than Māori electors did in 2002. However, they had significantly less trust in government and MPs.

Qualitative discussions with respondents suggests that the lower levels of trust in government and MPs might be explained by:

- dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the foreshore and seabed issue in 2004;
- the emergence and growing support for the Māori party that successfully competed in the 2005 election;
- the "playing of the race card" by the National Party in the last election

When the CI cross tabulations are taken into account, cultural identity may explain some of the differences in attitude (see table 19). Participants who agreed that MPs were out of touch had a slightly higher CI rating than those who disagreed. With a single exception, participants who didn't trust government to do what was right had a higher CI rating than those who did. However, there was little difference in cultural identity across the other response areas.

⁵ Voters registered on the Māori roll.

Table 19: Attitudes to Politicians, Government and Democracy: CI Crosstabulation

		Last known CI		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Total N
Most Members of Parliament are out of touch with the rest of the country	Strongly agree	11	3	14
	Agree	12	3	33
	Disagree	10	3	16
	Don't know	12	1	6
People like me don't have any say about what the government does	Strongly agree	12	4	22
	Agree	11	3	16
	Disagree	12	2	25
	Don't know	11	4	5
The New Zealand government is largely run by a few big interests	Strongly agree	11	3	21
	Agree	11	3	17
	Disagree	12	2	13
	Don't know	13	4	17
You can trust the government to do what is right most of the time	Strongly agree	14	.	1
	Agree	10	2	16
	Disagree	12	3	43
	Don't know	11	3	9
My vote really counts in elections	Strongly agree	12	2	19
	Agree	11	3	29
	Disagree	12	4	14
	Don't know	11	4	5

The low level of trust and confidence in government is reflected in participants' attitudes towards parliament (see tables 20-22). Nearly all thought that parliament needed to consult more; most (64.2%) thought that the level of consultation didn't work; and 76.1% thought that parliament didn't listen to the views of the people.

Table 20: B6. Parliament should consult more

Yes	No	Don't Know
95.5%	3.1%	1.3%

Table 21: B7. Parliamentary consultation works

Yes	No	Don't Know
20.7%	64.2%	15.2%

Table 22: B8. Parliament listens

Yes	No	Don't Know
11.8%	76.1%	11.2%

Qualitative discussions with respondents suggests that the parliament, and the structures and protocols around it, are seen as non-Māori friendly, and Māori Members of Parliament and both inexperienced with the parliament and have a minority influence.

6.3 The Electoral System

The questions in this section investigated participant knowledge of the electoral system.

Over half of the participants correctly considered that the party vote was the most significant in deciding the number of seats in parliament (see Table 23). When compared to other electoral studies (see Table 24) the level of participant knowledge is very good. However, it is still of some concern that after 10 years of MMP almost half of the participant's did not know the correct answer.

Most participants (51.4%) didn't know the minimum threshold to win a seat in parliament (see Table 25) even though almost half considered that MMP was easy to understand (see Table 26). The significance of proportionality seems to be understood by most participants (see Table 27). When compared to the results of the 2005 NZES findings, participants had better knowledge of the electoral system (see table 28)

Table 23: C1 The most important vote;

Party vote most important	53.4%
Electorate vote most important	11.2%
Both equally important	27.7%
Don't know	7.7%

Table 24: C1 The most important vote; 1996-2007 by percentage

	All New Zealand				Sub sample
	1996		1999	2002	2006
Which vote most important	Post	pre	post	pre	
Party vote	57	50	64	52	53.4
Electorate vote	8	10	7	39	11.2
Both equally important	26	35	25	8	27.7
Don't know	9	5	4	2	7.7
N	5015	3370	2035	3741	69

Source: Banducci and Karp, 2004:156, NZES 2005.

Table 25: C2. What is the minimum required percentage (threshold) to win a seat in parliament?

Correct answer (5 percent)	38.2%
Wrong answer	10.4%
Don't know	51.4%

Table 26: C3. Understanding MMP

Easy	45.2%
Hard	34.5%
Don't know	20.3%

Table 27: C4. A party wins about 40% of the votes. They should get;

	NZES 2005	Sub Sample 2006
About 40% of the seats in parliament	50%	49.5%
More than half of the seats in parliament so it can govern on its own	14.5%	26.2%
Somewhere between 40 and half the seats	15.9%	13.6%
Don't know	19.5%	10.7%

Table 28: C5 A party wins about 15% of the votes. They should get;

	NZES 2005	Sub Sample 2006
About 15% of the seats in parliament	56.9%	70.5%
Less than 15% of the seats in parliament	15.9%	15.6%
No seats at all	6.0%	3.0%
Don't know	21.3%	10.9%

6.4 Voting

The questions in this section focussed on voting behaviour.

Two thirds (65.4%) stated that they voted in most elections (see table 29). While the number was fewer, almost half (48.6%) responded that they voted in the last local body election (see table 30). Very few (3.9%) found the experience of voting negative while most (51.5%) found it neutral (see table 31). Participants noted that voting was an opportunity to exercise individual choice (23%) or an exercise of empowerment (21%) see table 32.

Table 29: D1. Typical voting behaviour

Voted in most elections	65.4%
Voted in some elections	9.8%
Voted in very few elections	11.7%
Never Voted	13.1%

Table 30: D2 Voted in the last local body election

Yes	48.6%
No	35.0%
Not applicable	16.4%

Table 31: D3 Voting a positive experience

Positive	33.1%
Neutral	51.5%
Negative	3.9%
Not Applicable	11.5%

Table 32: D3a Why (have you given the above answer)?

(Responses have been aggregated into response codes and are unweighted)

Civic obligation	11%
Exercising individual choice	23%
An empowering exercise	21%
Voting is easy to understand	11%
Close location to polling booth	2%
Other reason	13%
Negative reasons	15%
Not applicable	4%

Questions focussing on the influence of whānau on participant voting were also included. Parents were the most likely whānau members to have talked about politics as participants were growing up. There was an even spread (44.2%) between those who were encouraged to vote as they were growing up and those who weren't. Parents were the members of the whānau most likely to encourage voting.

Those responses were cross tabulated with voting responses. Participants who grew up in an environment where people around them talked about politics were far more likely to have voted in the 2005 election. Participants who were encouraged to vote when they were growing up were more likely to vote. Those who were not were not any more likely to vote.

Table 33: D4. Voted in the 2005 general election?

Yes	72.6%
No	27.4%

Table 34: Did the people around you talk about politics? (unweighted responses)

Yes	56.6%
No	29.1%
Don't know, can't remember	4.2%

Table 35: D10a. Whānau members talked politics (responses by actual number of participants)

	Yes	No	Don't know, Can't remember
Mother	30	2	1
Father	34	3	1
Grandparents	21	9	1
Other whānau member	24	8	1
A non-whanau member	22	5	3

Table 36: D11 Whānau encouragement to vote (unweighted responses)

Yes	44.2%
No	44.2%
Don't know, Can't remember, Not Applicable	11.5%

Table 37: D11a. Encouragement to vote from whānau....(responses by number of participants)

	Yes	No
Mother	24	1
Father	22	1
Grandparents	8	5
Other whanau member	11	4
non-whanau member	6	5

6.5 Participation

The focus of this section was on participants' engagement in politics.

Most (67.5%) had signed a petition within the last five years. Writing to the paper was the least popular option. Interestingly, 29.4% had spoken to a politician at a hui or tangi within the last five years, probably reflecting a change in behaviour by politicians sensitive to vote-catching opportunities.

Fewer (19.8%) had contacted an MP or government official in writing during that period (see table 38). When these responses are compared to the research findings of the NZES 2005 survey (see table 38a) sub sample participants were generally more politically active.

With the exception of writing to a newspaper, sub-sample participants had been more engaged in the activities listed than participants in the 2005 study.

Table 38: E.1 Political action

	Actually done it during the last 5 years	Done it more than 5 years ago	Might do it	Would never do it	Don't know
Sign a petition	67.5%	10.7%	12.8%	9.1%	0%
Write to a newspaper	4.8%	9.4%	43.8%	41.1%	1.0%
Go on a protest, hikoi, march, or demonstration	24.2%	18.4%	25.6%	28.3%	3.5%
Phone a talkback radio show	12.5%	4.2%	44.1%	39.3%	0%
Talked to a politician at a hui or tangi*	29.4%	10.8%	36.1%	23.7%	0%
Contacted a politician or government official in person, or in writing	19.8%	8.3%	51.9%	19.9%	0%

- A different question to that asked in NZES 2005

Table 38a: E.1 Political action: NZES 2005 results (n=2806)

	Actually done it during the last 5 years	Done it more than 5 years ago	Might do it	Would never do it	Don't know
Sign a petition	63.3	9.9	19.5	3.5	3.8
Write to a newspaper	9.5	4.8	54.9	25.5	5.2
Go on a protest, hikoi, march, or demonstration*	10.4	10.5	40.3	33.1	5.7
Phone a talkback radio show	4.9	2.8	33.6	52.2	6.4
Contacted a politician or government official in person, or in writing	18.6	7.1	55.1	13.4	5.9

* The NZES question did not make reference to hikoi

6.6 Māori Representation

The questions in this section focused on Māori parliamentary representation, particularly attitudes towards Māori MPs. The first set of questions asked about perceptions of the influences on how MPs who are Māori vote on major

new laws, specifically what participants considered should be important in influencing how Māori MPs should vote (see table 49).

The view of the electorate, of relevant iwi and Māori groups and the political party were considered significant in influencing how Māori MPs should vote. Most participants (87.5%) considered that the view of the electorate was important. The view of the political party was considered important by 79.5% of participants. Fewer (60.2%) considered the view of the government or MPs from the same party (58.5%) important. The view of iwi and Māori groups was important to 76%. Non-Māori interest groups were considered least important (35.2%). The personal view of Māori MPs was considered important by 63% of participants. The stated position of the party before the election was considered important by most participants (67.4%).

Table 49: F1. Influences on how MPs who are Māori SHOULD vote

		Extremely	Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Not at all
A	The majority view in their electorate	53.2%	34.3%	8.4%	0.8%	2.2%	1.1%
B	The majority view adopted by their political party	44.7%	31.8%	11.4%	4.9%	6.2%	1.0%
C	The view of the government (Cabinet) when their party is in power	36.4%	23.8%	26.1%	4.0%	6.3%	3.4%
D	The majority view of the MPs in their party	27.3%	31.2%	24.1%	1.2%	7.0%	9.1%
E	The view of relevant iwi and Māori groups	49.3%	26.7%	13.6%	0.4%	2.8%	7.2%
F	The view of relevant interest groups (not iwi and Māori groups)	18.6%	16.6%	38.2%	6.8%	12.0%	7.8%
G	What they personally think would be best for New Zealand	35.7%	27.3%	15.7%	10.5%	3.6%	7.2%
H	The party's stated position before the election	46.5%	20.9%	17.8%	1.9%	5.7%	7.2%

The research findings highlight that the complexity of factors that influence Māori MP voting behaviour is not fully comprehended by participants, at least according to their expectations. For example, the significant influence that political parties exercise over MP voting is not adequately appreciated. The view of Māori and iwi groups might be significant in some circumstances, but typically have less influence than the view of Cabinet or the party caucus. The view of iwi and Māori groups was considered as the most influential factor that affected how Māori MPs vote (see table 50).

Table 50: F2.The key influence on how MPs who are Māori actually vote

	Ranking	N
The view of relevant iwi and Māori groups	1	22
The majority view in their electorate	2	9
The majority view adopted by their political party	3	6
Other	3	6
The view of relevant interest groups (not iwi and Māori groups)	5	4
What they personally think would be best for New Zealand	6	3
The party's stated position before the election	7	2
The view of the government (Cabinet) when their party is in power	8	1
The majority view of the MPs in their party	8	1

The difference between participants' perceptions and the actual key influences may help in explaining the high expectations placed on Māori MPs (particularly those representing the Māori electorates) highlighted by other researchers (Sullivan and Margaritas, 2000). The seemingly unrealistic expectations stem from the need for Māori MPs to be cognisant of party preferences, policies and directives particularly where they might conflict with Māori prerogatives. Most participants (71.7%) considered that Māori MPs should follow Māori wants rather than those of the party should a disagreement occur (see table 51). Most (73.3%) also considered that Māori MPs should put aside party differences and work together in parliament (see table 53). There was also a high level of trust in Māori MPs to make decisions that are good for Māori (see table 54).

Table 51: F3. Disagreement between what Māori and party views, whose view should Māori MPs follow?

Party	21.2%
Māori	71.7%
Don't Know/ don't care	7.1%

Table 52: F4. Number of current MPs who are Māori

0-6	19.09%
7	7.67%
8-14	23.97%
15-20	22.12% (Correct answer)
21+	9.51%
Don't Know	17.64%

Table 53: F5. MPs who are Māori should work together in parliament regardless of their political parties

Yes	73.3%
No	25.7%
Don't Know	1.0%

Table 54: F6. MPs who are Māori can be trusted to make decisions good for Māori

Yes	47.1%
No	33.1%
Don't Know	19.8%

6.7 Local Representation

This section focused on parliamentary representation at the electorate level. In particular, the questions centred on participants' expectations of Māori MPs, and the differing expectations of Māori electorate MPs, General electorate MPs and local list MPs. Participants were most likely to know who their Māori electorate MP was (see table 55).

Table 55: G1-3 Can you name your...

Local Māori electorate MP	Correct answer	56.11%
	Incorrect answer / Don't know	43.89%
General Electorate MP	Correct answer	40.32%
	Incorrect answer / Don't know	59.68%
Local party list MP	Correct answer	35.7%
	Incorrect answer / Don't know	64.3%

Table 56: G4. The MP you would approach for advice regarding.. (responses in actual numbers);

	1 st Preference			2 nd Preference			3 rd Preference		
	Māori	General	Party	Māori	General	Party	Māori	General	Party
A Tax issue	10	14	6	8	13	4	7		6
A problem with the bank	7	10	6	10	9	1	1	6	7
A concern at your local marae	19		2		9	5		4	6
Environmental policy	24	6	4	3	12	8	6	2	7
Tikanga Māori (Māori culture)	29		2		15	5		5	8
An issue at the local school	12	8	3	8	11	2	3	1	9

Participants were also asked to rank in preferential order (1-3) which MP they would approach in various hypothetical scenarios (see table 56). The Māori electorate MP was considered the first preference for: a concern at the local Marae, environmental policy, tikanga Māori and an issue at the local school. The general electorate MP was the first preference for: a tax issue and a

problem at the bank. The scenario is artificial in that it only offered three choices of MP and didn't include other options such as the school principal, the bank manager, or the Inland Revenue for instance. Despite this, the responses suggest that participants were most at ease in approaching their Māori electorate MP regarding the issues.

6.8 Māori Policy

The questions in this section asked participants' views on a range of "Māori" policy issues.

Table 57: H1 Do you strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with these statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
References to the Treaty of Waitangi should be removed from the law	11.3%	5.2%	1.8%	17.2%	64.4%	0
Māori should be compensated for land confiscated in the past	66.3%	26.3%	3.5%	2.4%	1.5%	0
All Treaty of Waitangi claims should be resolved by 2015	37.6%	18.2%	18.6%	8.0%	17.7%	0
NZ should become a republic with a NZ head of state	4.3%	15.3%	20.6%	16.6%	39.8%	3.5%
The Queen should be retained as head of state	18.3%	17.2%	21.3%	9.0%	31.7%	2.5%
The deadline for filing historical claims to the Waitangi Tribunal should be set at 2008	8.0%	23.7%	2.9%	23.8%	41.6%	0
The Foreshore and Seabed Act 2005 should be repealed	59.0%	14.6%	9.7%	2.6%	10.8%	3.2%

Most (81.6%) disagreed that references to the Treaty of Waitangi should be removed from the law. Most were also of the view that compensation for past land confiscations should occur; strongly agreeing (66.3%) or agreeing (26.3%) that Māori should be compensated for land confiscated in the past.

There was less agreement on whether or not all Treaty of Waitangi claims should be resolved by 2015. Whilst most (55.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed, 18.6% were neutral and 25.7% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Most (56.4%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that New Zealand should become a republic.

35.5% agreed or strongly agreed that the Queen should be retained as head of state. 40.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed, whilst 21.3% were neutral.

While most (65.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the deadline for filing historical claims to the Waitangi Tribunal should be set at the year 2008, 31.7% agreed or strongly agreed.

Almost three quarters (73.6%) agreed or agreed that the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2005 should be repealed. 13.4% disagreed

93.7% considered that the Māori seats should be kept (rather than abolished). The most common reason for this view was that the seats guaranteed a Māori voice.

Taking an overall view, many of these views were shared by the same respondents. For example, maintaining references to the Treaty, settling grievances, and setting the date for filing historical claims in 2008 were largely correlated views for these respondents. Similarly, compensating for grievances and repealing the Foreshore & Seabed legislation were correlated views held by the same group of Māori respondents. Further analysis is required to specify which Māori held these views, this analysis identifies the *inter-dependence* of such views.

6.9 The Māori Electoral Option

The questions in this section focussed on the most recently completed Māori Electoral Option. Almost all of the participants (97.8%) reported being registered on an electoral roll and most (78%) were registered on the Māori roll. The key reason given by those on the Māori roll was that it was an expression of being Māori. The greater number of options available was the key reason identified by those on the General roll.

68.1% of participants were aware of the Electoral Option. Material sent out by the Electoral Commission, radio and television were the most common sources of information (see table 58).

Table 58: 18 How did you know of the Māori Electoral Option?

	Yes	No	N/A
Television	38	14	1
Radio	30	20	
Pamphlet / Mailout	40	10	
From whānau members	29	24	
From Workers from the Electoral Commission	9	38	1
Talking to other people	28	21	

Table 59: 110 In your opinion, what is the purpose of the Māori electoral option?

Encourage Māori to enrol / change rolls	24.6%
Encourage Māori to change to the Māori roll	14.0%

To bring about a stronger Māori voice	38.6%
Other	19.3%
Don't know	3.5%

7.0 Conclusion from this survey

With small numbers in this survey one must always exercise caution, yet this research delivers some clear findings and some indicative findings.

Māori are engaged with the electoral processes in this country. The system requires two steps – first Māori must enrol, but unlike other New Zealanders Māori may choose one of two electoral rolls; second and optionally they may vote in a general election or referendum.

This research identifies that the choice of electoral roll and the option to vote are largely determined by different influences:

- Those Māori who are more engaged with Te Ao Māori tend to choose the Māori roll over the general roll;
- Exercising the option to vote is partly influenced by age and living standard, with older, more comfortably off Māori voting more consistently.

The findings of this study are similar to other studies which highlight that age and economic living standards are more significant than cultural identity when it comes to voting. The key reasons for lower levels of Māori voting are more to do with being younger (with a higher proportion of younger people) and having lower standards of living, on average, than other New Zealanders. These are characteristics of the Māori population rather than culturally determined patterns of voting. The reality of Māori as younger and less comfortably off may largely account for ethnic differentials.

Cultural identity affected participants' views and attitudes towards politics; however, its influence was not completely clear. When it came to the choice of electoral roll over time, for example, participants on the Māori roll were more engaged with te Ao Māori than those on the general roll. Similarly, participants who were more engaged in te Ao Māori were:

- more likely to consider that MPs (in general) were out of touch
- were less likely to trust government, parliament and its processes.

However, there was little difference in cultural identity across other responses relating to politicians, government and democracy. This finding adds some weight against the notion that being Māori (alone) is related to NOT voting.

The research results highlight a greater sense of trust and confidence in voting than there was in MPs, government and parliament. It has been contended that this is a feature of proportional representation electoral systems where the make up of government is not confirmed until after the completion of voting. While that may be true, there is a suggestion that Māori when it comes to the overall system of government Māori have most confidence in the overtly Māori components – the Māori MPs – but less confidence in the longer standing “Pākehā” components of the system (political parties, parliament). These findings have some positivity in that they demonstrate dissatisfaction with the **holders** of office and authority rather

than the **system** that underpins them which could indicate a crisis of legitimacy.

Many participants in the sub-sample were actively engaged in political activities. They had high expectations of Māori MPs generally and appeared to be more engaged with Māori electorate MPs. Participants' views that Māori MPs should act as advocates of Māori interests, as opposed to proponents of party policy, reflect the competition in the Māori electorates between the Labour party and Māori party at the 2005 General election.

Most respondents held strong views on "Māori" political issues. There was a broad consensus that the constitutional status of the Treaty of Waitangi should **not** be weakened. Consistent with this view was the strong support for the repeal of the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

Tēnā koe anō. My name is from the School of Māori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the Electoral Commission which is one of three organisations that administers elections in New Zealand.

The purpose of this study is to investigate Māori attitudes towards politics, parliament and politicians. One of the key outcomes of the study is that the report will be used by electoral agencies to influence policy. As we discussed earlier on the phone, the interview will take about half an hour to complete.

A. EFFICACY

Firstly, I will ask you some general questions about politics.

A1. Sometimes politics seems too complicated for people like me to understand what is going on. Do you

Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree /disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / N.a.
1	2	3	4	5	9

A2. Generally speaking how interested are you in what's going on in politics?

Very interested	Fairly interested	Slightly interested	Not at all interested	Don't know /N.a.
1	2	3	4	9

B. DEMOCRACY

B1. On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in New Zealand?

Please tick one box.

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Don't know /N.a.
1	2	3	4	9

B2. Some people say it makes a big difference who is in power. Others say that it doesn't make any difference who is in power. Where ONE means that it makes a big difference who is in power and FIVE means that it doesn't make any difference who is in power, where would you place yourself?

makes a big difference				doesn't make any	Don't know
------------------------	--	--	--	------------------	------------

				difference	/N.a.
1	2	3	4	5	9

B3. Some people say that no matter who they vote for, it won't make any difference to what happens. Others say that who they vote for can make a big difference to what happens. Where ONE means that voting can make a big difference and FIVE means that voting won't make any difference to what happens, where would you place yourself?

makes a big difference				doesn't make any difference	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	9

B4. Thinking about elections in New Zealand, how well do elections ensure that the views of voters are represented by MPs?

Very well	Quite well	Not very well	Not well at all	Don't know /N.a.
1	2	3	4	9

B5. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree,	Disagree	Don't Know
Most Members of Parliament are out of touch with the rest of the country	1	2	3	9
I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the issues facing New Zealand	1	2	3	9
People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1	2	3	9
The New Zealand government is largely run by a few big interests	1	2	3	9
You can trust the government to do what is right most of the time	1	2	3	9
My vote really counts in elections	1	2	3	9

B6. Do you think that parliament needs to consult the people more?

Yes No Don't know.

B7. Do you think that the consultation parliament currently does works?

Yes No Don't know.

B8. Do you think that parliament listens to the people?

Yes No Don't know.

C. ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Now I will ask you some questions about the electoral system.

Under MMP, the voting system used in general elections, electors have two votes; a party vote and an electorate vote.

C1. Which do you think is the most important in deciding which party will get the largest number of seats in Parliament; the party vote, the electorate vote or both are equally important?

Party vote most important	1
Both equally important	2
Electorate vote most important	3
Don't know	9

C2. Parties that don't win an electorate are required to secure a minimum percentage (threshold) of the overall vote to win a seat in parliament. What is the required percentage (threshold)?

Correct answer (5%);	1
Wrong answer	2
Don't know	9

C3. Do you think the MMP is easy or hard to understand?

Easy	1
Hard	2
don't know	9

C4. Imagine that a party wins the most votes in an election with about 40% of the votes. Regardless of whether or not you liked the party, do you think that party should get;

About 40% of the seats in parliament	1
More than half of the seats in parliament so it can govern on its own	2
Somewhere between 40 and half the seats	3
Don't know	9

C5. Imagine that a party receives 15% of the votes in an election. Regardless of whether or not you liked the party, do you think that party should get;

About 15% of the seats in parliament	1
Less than 15% of the seats in parliament	2
No seats at all	3
Don't know	9

D. VOTING

Now I am going to ask you some questions about voting.

D1. Since you have been eligible to vote, would you say you have...

READ OUT

Voted in most elections	1
Voted in some elections	2
Voted in very few elections	3
Never Voted Go to q24	4

D2. Did you vote in the last local body election?

Yes 1
No 2
Not applicable 9

D3 Generally, have you found the experience of voting...

Positive 1
Neutral 2
Negative 3
Not Applicable 4

D3a. Why (have you given the above answer)?

Note answer:

D4. Did you vote in the 2005 general election?

Yes (Go to D10) 1
No (Go to D5) 2
Not applicable (Go to D10) 9

D5. Thinking about your reasons for not voting...

At any point before last year's election did you think you might vote in the election?

DO NOT READ

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know/Can't Remember	3

D6. How long before Election Day did you decide not to vote?

DO NOT READ OUT.

On election day	1
One week before election day	2
Two weeks before	3
About a month before	4
More than a month ago	5
Don't Know/Can't Remember	9

D7. Would you say you...?

READ OUT

Put a lot of thought into deciding whether or not to vote	1
Put just a little thought into it	2
Didn't think about it at all	3

D8 People have different reasons for not voting. Can you tell me the main reason you decided not to vote in last year's General Election?

CODE FIRST MENTION. SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY.
DO NOT READ.

D8a Any other reasons?

ASK FOR MAIN REASON THEN PROBE FOR OTHER REASONS

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTIPLE RESPONSES OKAY

	Main reason (a)	Other reasons (b)
Can't be bothered with politics or politicians	01	01
My vote doesn't make any difference	02	02
Makes no difference who the government is	03	03
Didn't know how to vote	04	04
Didn't know when to vote	05	05
Didn't know where to vote	06	06
I forgot	07	07
Nearest polling place was too far away	08	08
Didn't get to the polling place on time	09	09
Couldn't work out who to vote for	10	10
Not important	11	11
Health reasons	12	12
Disability	13	13
Away from home but still in New Zealand	14	14
Away from home and overseas	15	15
No particular reason	16	
Other (please specify _____)	97	97
Don't Know/Can't Remember	99	99
Refused	96	96
No other reason		98

D9. I am now going to read you some factors that may influence some people not to vote. On a scale of one to five, five is a lot and one is not at all, to what extent did each of the following factors influence your decision to not vote?

(USE SHOWCARD 1)

READ OUT

ROTATE ORDER

	A lot		Neutral		Not at all	Don't Know
I haven't voted in the past so why start now	5	4	3	2	1	9
I didn't like any of the personalities	5	4	3	2	1	9
I couldn't see a difference between the parties' policies	5	4	3	2	1	9
No one I know well talks about politics	5	4	3	2	1	9
I don't trust politicians	5	4	3	2	1	9
It makes no difference to my life who wins the election	5	4	3	2	1	9
It was obvious who would win so why bother	5	4	3	2	1	9
My vote wouldn't make a difference	5	4	3	2	1	9
I'm too involved in iwi or hapū matters	5	4	3	2	1	9
I'm just not interested in politics	5	4	3	2	1	9
Most of my whānau didn't vote so neither did I	5	4	3	2	1	9
I didn't have enough information to make a choice	5	4	3	2	1	9

Some people think that the attitudes of people around them affect whether or not a person votes.

D10. As you were growing up, can you remember the people around you talking about politics?

Yes	1 Go to D10a
No	2 Go to question D11
Don't know, can't remember,na	9 Go to D11

D10a. Was it your....

	Yes	No	don't know, can't remember,na
Mother	1	2	9
Father	1	2	9
Grandparents	1	2	9
other whānau member	1	2	9
A non-whanau member	1	2	9

D11 As you were growing up did the people around you encourage you to vote?

Yes	1 Go to D11a
No	2 Go to Q D12
don't know, can't remember,na	9 Go to Q D12

D11a. Was it your....

	Yes	No	don't know, can't remember,na
Mother	1	2	9
Father	1	2	9
Grandparents	1	2	9
Other whanau member	1	2	9
non-whanau member	1	2	9

D12. Why is it, do you think, that many Māori do not vote in General elections?

Note reason(s)

D13. Do you think more people would vote if they were able to do so:

	Yes	No	don't know,
On the internet	1	2	9
At the supermarket	1	2	9
By post	1	2	9
At the marae	1	2	9

E. PARTICIPATION

E.1 There are different forms of action that people take to show their views about something the government should or should not be doing. For each one, have you *actually done it during the last five years, or more than five years ago, might you do it, or would you never?*

(USE SHOWCARD 2)

	Actually done it during the last 5 years	Done it more than 5 years ago	Might do it	Would never do it	Don't know / N.a.
Sign a petition	1	2	3	4	9
Write to a newspaper	1	2	3	4	9
Go on a protest, hikoi, march, or demonstration	1	2	3	4	9
Phone a talkback radio show	1	2	3	4	9
Talked to a politician at a hui or tangi	1	2	3	4	9
Contacted a politician or government official in person, or in writing	1	2	3	4	9

E.2 Here is a list of things some people do during elections. During the general election last year did you:
 (USE SHOWCARD 3)

	Yes frequently	Yes occasionally	Yes rarely	No	Na
Discuss politics with others?	1	2	3	4	9
Go to any political meetings or rallies?	1	2	3	4	9
Attend a political hui?	1	2	3	4	9
Talk to other people to persuade them to vote for a particular party or candidate?	1	2	3	4	9
Show your support for a particular party or candidate by attending a meeting or putting up a poster or sign?	1	2	3	4	9
Contribute money to a political party or candidate?	1	2	3	4	9
Wear any clothing promoting a political party?	1	2	3	4	9
Do anything else to support a political party or candidate?	1	2	3	4	9

F. MAORI REPRESENTATION

Now I will ask some questions relating to Māori MPs.

F1. Generally speaking, how important do you think each of the factors listed below SHOULD BE in influencing the way Māori MPs vote on major new laws?

	How important these SHOULD BE in influencing an MP's vote	Extremely	Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	
A	The majority view in their electorate	1	2	3	4	5	9
B	The majority view adopted by their political party	1	2	3	4	5	9
C	The view of the government (Cabinet) when their party is in power	1	2	3	4	5	9
D	The majority view of the MPs in their party	1	2	3	4	5	9
E	The view of relevant iwi and Māori groups	1	2	3	4	5	9
F	The view of relevant interest groups (not iwi and Māori groups)	1	2	3	4	5	9
G	What they personally think would be best for New Zealand	1	2	3	4	5	9
H	The party's stated position before the election	1	2	3	4	5	9

F2. Of the factors listed which do you think is THE MOST important in influencing the way Māori MPs vote on major new laws?

Note the most important influence _____

F3. If there is a disagreement between what Māori want and what their party wants, whose view do you think that Māori MPs should follow?

Party 1
 Māori 2
 Don't Know/ don't care 9

F4. Can you recall how many of the current MPs are Māori?

0-6 1
 7 2
 8-14 3
 15-20 4
 21+ 5
 Don't Know 9

F5. Do you think that all of the MPs who are Māori should work together in parliament regardless of their political parties?

Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't Know/ don't care 9

F6. Do you think that MPs who are Māori can be trusted to make decisions that are good for Māori?

Yes 1
 No 2
 Don't Know/ don't care 9

G. LOCAL REPRESENTATION

G1. Can you name your local Māori electorate MP?

Yes: Note name: _____
 Don't know / n.a. 9

G2. Can you name your local General Electorate MP?

Yes: Note name: _____
 Don't know / n.a. 9

G3. Can you name a local Party List MP?

Yes: Note name: _____
 Don't know / n.a. 9

G4. The previous questions identified three types of MPs; the Māori electorate MP, the General electorate MP and the Party List MP.

In relation to the following examples, please rank in order which of these MPs you would approach for advice regarding the following issues;

	1 st preference	2 nd preference	3 rd preference
A Tax issue			
A problem with the bank			
A concern at your local marae			
Environmental policy			
Tikanga Māori (Māori culture)			
An issue at the local school			

H. MAORI POLICY

H1. I will read out a range of statements. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them.

(USE SHOWCARD 4)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know Na
References to the Treaty of Waitangi should be removed from the law	1	2	3	4	5	9
Maori should be compensated for land confiscated in the past	1	2	3	4	5	9
All Treaty of Waitangi claims should be resolved by 2015	1	2	3	4	5	9
NZ should become a republic with a NZ head of state	1	2	3	4	5	9
The Queen should be retained as head of state	1	2	3	4	5	9
The deadline for filing historical claims to the Waitangi Tribunal should be set at 2008	1	2	3	4	5	9
The Foreshore and Seabed Act 2005 should be repealed	1	2	3	4	5	9

H2. What do you think the future of the Maori seats should be; Do you think the Maori seats should be kept or abolished?

Kept	1	Go to H2a
Abolished	2	Go to H2a
Don't know/ Don't care	9	Go to H3

H2.a) What is the main reason (for your answer)?

Note main reason:

That is the end of the questionnaire. Finally do you have any further comments to make about Maori voting or Maori views of politics.

List any comments:

Conclusion:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. Ka rere atu ngā mihi ki a koutou ko to whānau. Ma te atua koutou e tiaki e manaaki.

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