	Name of report	Purpose	Conducted by	Date completed	Cost of engagement excl. GST
1	2023 General Election post-election survey of voters and non-voters	Benchmark and post-campaign surveys to measure voter satisfaction with the services the Electoral Commission provides and to understand the level of engagement with the voting process, barriers to voting, and how to address these barriers for each identified population group.	Verian (Kantar Public)	May 2024	$192,339.58
2	Electoral Management System (EMS) controls assessment	An assessment of the financial controls in place for the Commission's Election Management System, which is used by field staff during elections.	PWC	March 2024	$96,169
3	Data platform systems assurance: Te Kauhangaroa review	A review of the efficacy of the system of controls in place on data quality in Te Kauhangaroa, the Commission's data analytics platform. This system is not used for the production of official election results. Initiated due to an incident in May 2023 when the data platform created approximately 5,000 duplicate records over a nine-day period which led to inaccurate data being shared with the media.	KPMG	August 2023	$24,997.50
4	2023 GE Cyber, Privacy and Resilience Readiness audit	A review of the Commission's cyber, privacy and resilience capability and readiness for the 2023 General Election.	Deloitte	July 2023	$99,170

5	Māori Electoral Option campaign surveys and post-campaign report	Benchmark and post-campaign surveys to measure the effectiveness of the Māori Electoral Option information and awareness campaign.	Kantar Public	September 2023	$91,196.94
6	Independent Quality Assurance Review of General Election 2023 Programme	A review of programme management and governance to assess readiness to plan, deliver, guide, and control the programme.	Caravel Group	May 2023	$32,850
7	Māori Electoral Option Qualitative Report	2023 General Election and Māori Electoral Option audience insights research.	Kantar Public	December 2022	$63,751.20
8	2022 Local Elections Post-campaign evaluation	Benchmark and post-campaign surveys to measure the campaign effectiveness on awareness and engagement.	Kantar Public	September 2022	$37,774
9	Capability review	A review of the capabilities and funding that the Commission needs to successfully administer the general election in 2023.	PWC	September 2021	$665,928
10	2020 General Election post-election survey of voters and non-voters	Benchmark and post-campaign surveys to measure voter satisfaction with the services the Electoral Commission provides and to understand the level of engagement with the voting process, barriers to voting, and how to address these barriers for each identified population group.	Kantar Public	December 2020	$207,000

Report into the 2023 General Election

Prepared for the Electoral Commission
by Verian

May 2024

Contents

Tables

Background

The Electoral Commission is responsible for running New Zealand's parliamentary elections and keeping the electoral rolls up to date.

The Commission undertakes a survey of voters and non-voters following each general election. The primary objectives of the survey are to:

- measure voter satisfaction with the services the Electoral Commission provides
- understand the level of engagement with the voting process, barriers to voting, and how to address these barriers, particularly amongst groups with historically lower levels of engagement.

The Electoral Commission commissioned Verian to conduct a survey with voters and non-voters after the 2023 General Election. Similar surveys have been conducted on behalf of the Commission and its predecessor, the Chief Electoral Office, since 2005. Where possible this report includes comparisons to the 2017 and 2020 General Election survey results.

This report focuses on the survey results at a total population level and on the results of those groups with, historically, lower levels of engagement in the voting process, namely: Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian peoples, younger people (18 to 29 years), people with a disability, and non-voters. Where possible results are compared to the 2017 and 2020 General Election survey results.

Methodology

Questionnaire

One questionnaire was developed to meet the research objectives covering both voters and non-voters. The questionnaire was largely based on that used in 2014, 2017 and 2020.

The final average interview length (via telephone) was 20 minutes.

Sample design / quotas

The survey was conducted in two phases – a core phase to achieve a nationally representative sample of people eligible to vote, and a booster phase to increase the sample sizes of the groups with, historically, lower levels of engagement in the voting process. The methods used in each phase were selected to provide a high-quality, representative sample of the population cost effectively. The key details of each phase follow:

- Core phase: CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) of 750 people eligible to vote. The people were identified through random digit dialling to mobile phones (82%) and landlines (18%). The ratio of mobile to landline calls was set based on the incidence of access to mobile and landline phones in the population and to minimise design error.

- Booster phase:

  o CATI interviewing of 170 Māori and Pacific peoples eligible to vote.

  o Face-to-face intercept interviews with 169 Pacific peoples, Asian peoples, and non-voters. The intercept interviews were conducted in Auckland.

  o Online interviewing of 53 people with a disability. The sample was sourced from an online research panel.

The following sample sizes were achieved:

Group	Sample size
Māori	203
Pacific peoples	174
Asian peoples	155
Younger people (18 to 29 years)	199
People with a disability	160
Non-voters	160
Total	**1,165**

Weighting

All data was post-weighted to ensure it was representative of the New Zealand population (based on Statistics New Zealand population projections for 2023) by:

- Age group (18-29 years, 30-49 years, 50 years plus).

- Gender.

- Region (Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Other North Island, Other South Island).

- Ethnicity (Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian) peoples) allowing for multiple ethnicities.

- Voters and non-voters.

- Disability status.

CATI response rate

In total the CATI survey received a response rate of 15%. The main reason for non-response was refusal to participate.

Fieldwork period

The surveying was conducted between the 24th of October to the 18th of December 2023. Most of the interviews were completed by the end of November.

Margin of error

The table below shows the sample sizes and accompanying maximum margins of error for the key groups. These margins of error are shown to give an indication of the robustness of the results for each group. The margins of error are calculated at the 95% confidence interval and assume 50%/50% test proportions.

Quota group	Sample size	Margin of error
Māori	203	+/- 6.9%
Pacific peoples	174	+/- 7.4%
Asian peoples	155	+/- 7.9%
Younger people (18 to 29 years)	199	+/- 6.9%
People with a disability	160	+/- 7.7%
Non-voters	160	+/- 7.7%
Total	**1,165**	**+/- 2.9%**

Notes on reading this report

Arrows (↓ ↑) are used in tables to indicate results that are significantly higher or lower than the previous election. Significance is calculated using a columns proportion test (t-test) at the 95% confidence interval.

The results for the 2023 survey have been compared to the 2017 and 2020 results where possible. When a comparison with earlier years isn't possible it is indicated by a dash (-) in the relevant table.

Situations which result in data being unavailable for 2020 and/or 2017 include:

- the question has been added in 2023

- the question wording/code frame has changed significantly enough to make results incomparable.

Not all columns in this report add to 100% due to rounding or questions with multiple response categories.

Enrolment status and behaviour

This section of the study focused on understanding enrolment status and behaviour.

Enrolled to vote in the 2023 New Zealand General Election

In total 90% of eligible voters surveyed said they were enrolled to vote in the 2023 General Election which is a little lower than the actual enrolment rate of 94.7%.

This year, fewer survey respondents say they were enrolled to vote, compared to 2020 findings (90% in 2023, down from 94% in 2020).

Table 1: Enrolled to vote in the New Zealand 2023 General Election

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	92%	94%	90%↓	77%↓	86%↑	85%	91%	93%	86%↓	78%	88%	75%↓
No	6%	4%	8%↑	17%↑	10%↓	11%	7%	5%	10%	15%	8%	18%↑
Not sure (but I know what enrolment is)	1%	1%	2%	4%	3%	2%	1%	3%	2%	5%	3%	5%
Not sure what enrolment is	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%	2%	1%
n =	*1,164*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*284*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*179*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	92%	94%	90%↓	91%	92%	78%↓	95%	96%	93%	64%	69%	56%↓
No	6%	4%	8%↑	8%	6%	18%↑	4%	3%	7%	29%	24%	35%↑
Not sure (but I know what enrolment is)	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%	0%	1%	0%	4%	5%	7%
Not sure what enrolment is	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	3%	2%	2%
n =	*1,164*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*186*	*155*	*155*	*184*	*241*	*160*	*163*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to report being enrolled (85%).

Māori:
- Have seen a downturn in enrolment (down to 86% in 2023, from 93% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to report being enrolled (75%).
- Have seen a downturn in enrolment (down to 75% in 2023, from 88% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to report being enrolled (78%).
- Have seen a downturn in enrolment (down to 78% in 2023, from 92% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to report being enrolled (56%).
- Have seen a downturn in enrolment (down to 56% in 2023, from 69% in 2020).

Reasons for initially enrolling to vote

Forty-one percent of eligible voters said they enrolled to vote because they wanted their opinion to count, 18% said they did so because they wanted to make a difference, and 16% said they did so because it's the law. Compared to 2020, more people now say they enrolled because they wanted to make a difference (up to 18% in 2023, from 9% in 2020) and fewer people enrolled because its compulsory (down to 16% in 2023, from 33% in 2020).

Table 2: Reasons for initially enrolling to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Wanted my opinion to count	44%	42%	41%	37%	37%	36%	44%	40%	43%	51%	46%	39%
Wanted to make a difference	19%↑	9%↓	18%↑	12%	12%	23%↑	19%	12%	22%↑	40%↑	17%↓	20%
You have to, it's the law	16%↓	33%↑	16%↓	12%↓	20%↑	8%↓	18%	21%	14%↓	24%	27%	12%↓
Someone I know encouraged me to	6%	6%	5%	18%	17%	15%	3%	8%	9%	13%	8%	13%
I saw an ad that encouraged me to enrol	0%	1%	2%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Someone from the Electoral Commission talked to me about enrolling	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%	4%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Another reason	29%	17%	37%	28%	20%	35%↑	22%	20%	25%	10%	17%	24%
Not sure	3%	3%	6%	5%	1%	8%↑	3%	4%	10%↑	4%	3%	7%
n =	*1,092*	*983*	*1,096*	*236*	*132*	*176*	*180*	*150*	*187*	*149*	*136*	*148*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Wanted my opinion to count	44%	42%	41%	52%	45%	45%	44%	36%	54%↑	24%	30%	25%
Wanted to make a difference	19%↑	9%↓	18%↑	36%↑	18%↓	40%↑	21%↑	8%↓	24%↑	9%	4%	22%↑
You have to, it's the law	16%↓	33%↑	16%↓	21%	27%	25%	13%↓	36%↑	22%↓	22%↓	34%↑	26%
Someone I know encouraged me to	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	11%	4%	7%	2%↓	16%	17%	8%↓
I saw an ad that encouraged me to enrol	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	8%↑	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	6%
Someone from the Electoral Commission talked to me about enrolling	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Another reason	29%	17%	37%	22%	17%	18%	28%↑	15%↓	17%	29%↑	15%↓	26%
Not sure	3%	3%	6%	3%	5%	8%	4%	3%	7%	8%	6%	10%
n =	*1,092*	*983*	*1,096*	*177*	*141*	*135*	*175*	*233*	*154*	*94*	*110*	*91*

Of the 37% who gave another reason for enrolling, the majority were:

– Wanted to have a say.
– It's the right thing to do.
– It's a duty or obligation.
– It's a democratic right.

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to enrol because it's the law (8%), and more likely than average to enrol because someone encouraged them to (15%).
- Are now more likely to enrol because they want to make a difference (up to 23% in 2023, from 12% in 2020) and less likely to do so because it's the law (down to 8% in 2023, from 20% in 2020).

Māori:
- Are now more likely to enrol because they want to make a difference (up to 22% in 2023, from 12% in 2020).
- Are now less likely to enrol because it's the law (down to 14% in 2023, from 21% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are more likely than average to enrol because someone encouraged them to (13%).
- Are now less likely to enrol because it's the law (down to 12% in 2023, from 27% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are more likely than average to enrol because they wanted to make a difference (40%), it's the law (25%), someone encouraged them to (11%), or because they saw an ad that encouraged them to (8%).
- Are now more likely to enrol because they want to make a difference (up to 40% in 2023, from 18% in 2020) and more likely to do so because they saw an ad that encouraged them (up to 8% in 2023, from 0% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Are more likely than average to enrol because they wanted their opinion to count (54%).
- Are now more likely to enrol because they want their opinion to count (up to 54% in 2023, from 36% in 2020) and they want to make a difference (up to 24% in 2023, from 8% in 2020).
- Are now less likely to do so because it's the law (down to 22% in 2023, from 36% in 2020) and because of encouragement from others (down to 2% in 2023, from 7% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are more likely than average to enrol because it's the law (26%), and because they want to make a difference (up to 22% in 2023, from 4% in 2020).
- Are less likely to enrol because they wanted their opinion to count (25%), and because of encouragement from others (down to 8% in 2023, from 17% in 2020).

Intention to enrol

[% who have not enrolled but are eligible to do so].

Among those who are not enrolled but are eligible to do so (10% of the sample), more than half say they intended to enrol. There are no statistically significant differences between intention to enrol compared to the 2020 General Election.

Table 3: Intention to enrol

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**
Yes, definitely	18%	15%	27%	14%	15%	23%	14%	46%	28%	16%	27%	33%
Yes, I intend to	18%	31%	21%	24%	32%	13%	19%	32%	26%	34%	27%	13%
Not sure	25%	29%	21%	24%	34%	31%	38%	23%	9%	34%	26%	20%
Probably not	18%	11%	14%	24%	14%	27%	19%	0%	7%	12%	6%	13%
Definitely not	21%	14%	18%	14%	6%	7%	10%	0%	31%	4%	14%	20%
n =	*71*	*53*	*69*	*48*	*23*	*23*	*16*	*8*	*16*	*29*	*17*	*26*
	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**
Yes, definitely	18%	15%	27%	28%	0%	32%	4%	33%	15%	18%	13%	27%
Yes, I intend to	18%	31%	21%	25%	40%	29%	26%	26%	33%	18%	32%	21%
Not sure	25%	29%	21%	47%	35%	29%	21%	14%	10%	25%	29%	21%
Probably not	18%	11%	14%	0%	20%	7%	36%	12%	0%	18%	11%	14%
Definitely not	21%	14%	18%	0%	6%	3%	14%	14%	42%	21%	15%	18%
n =	*71*	*53*	*69*	*9*	*12*	*20*	*9*	*8*	*6*	*70*	*50*	*69*

Base size is too small to look at differences between groups.

Attrition voting rate

Eighty percent of people who were eligible to vote in both 2020 and 2023, did vote in both elections. This is an improvement from the 76% seen across 2017 and 2020.

However, the voting attrition rate has also risen since 2020. Ten percent of eligible voters in 2020 and 2023 voted in the 2020 General Election but not the 2023 General Election.

Table 4: Voting behaviour of those eligible in the most recent and last election

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Did not vote in the most recent election but did vote in the election three years prior (attrition rate)	5%	7%	10%↑	11%	12%	9%	4%↓	11%↑	16%	15%	6%	21%↑
Voted in both the most recent election and in the election three years prior	77%	76%	80%↑	48%	50%	76%↑	73%	64%	63%	63%	73%	61%↓
Voted in the most recent election but did not vote in the election three years prior (acquisition rate)	5%	7%	3%↓	13%	15%	8%	8%	10%	4%↓	5%	13%	5%↓
Did not vote in either the most recent election or the election three years prior	12%	10%	7%↓	28%	23%	8%	16%	14%	16%	18%	8%	13%
n =	1,015	960	1,027	161	107	133	162	152	177	151	126	130

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Did not vote in the most recent election but did vote in the election three years prior (attrition rate)	5%	7%	10%↑	6%	10%	20%↑	7%	8%	5%
Voted in both the most recent election and in the election three years prior	77%	76%	80%↑	80%	70%	58%	76%	79%	86%
Voted in the most recent election but did not vote in the election three years prior (acquisition rate)	5%	7%	3%↓	7%	8%	9%	4%	7%	0%↓
Did not vote in either the most recent election or the election three years prior	12%	10%	7%↓	7%	12%	13%	13%↑	6%↓	9%
n =	1,015	960	1,027	145	133	111	166	229	151

Demographic analysis

Younger people:

- Are more likely than average to have voted in the 2023 General Election but not the 2020 General Election (8%).
- Have seen an increase in consistent (voted in the two most recent elections) voting (up to 76% in 2023, from 50% in 2020).

Māori:

- Are more likely than average to have voted in the 2020 General Election but not the 2023 General Election (16%) and less likely than average to have voted in both the 2020 and the 2023 elections (63%).

- Have seen a decrease in the acquisition rate (down to 4% in 2023, from 10% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:

- Are more likely than average to have voted in the 2020 General Election but not the 2023 General Election (21%) and less likely than average to have voted in both the 2020 and the 2023 elections (61%).
- Have seen an increase in attrition (up to 21% in 2023, from 6% in 2020), a decrease in consistent voting (down to 61% in 2023, from 73% in 2020), and a decrease in the acquisition rate (down to 5% in 2023, from 13% in 2020).

Asian peoples:

- Are more likely than average to have voted in the 2020 General Election but not the 2023 General Election (20%), are less likely than average to have voted in both the 2020 and the 2023 elections (58%) and more likely than average to have voted in the 2023 General Election but not the 2020 General Election (9%).
- Have seen an increase in attrition (up to 20% in 2023, from 10% in 2020),

People with a disability:

- Are less likely than average to have voted in the 2020 General Election but not the 2023 General Election (5%) and are less likely than average to have voted in the 2023 General Election but not the 2020 General Election (0%).
- Have seen a decrease in the acquisition rate (down to 0% in 2023, from 7% in 2020).

Awareness and knowledge of general elections

Understanding of the voting process

This research tracks understanding of the enrolling and voting process overall as well as key aspects in the process. The chart below summarises these results over time and the following sections provide more information. At a total population level, understanding is high and has remained so over time. Understanding around what to do if you cannot get to a voting place remains the one area with noticeably lower levels of understanding than other aspects of the voting system.

Figure 5: Aspects of understanding of the voting process (total sample)

		Excellent / very good	Good	Poor	Little or no	Not sure
Overall enrolment process	2017	48%	42%	7%		
	2020	46%	46%	6%		
	2023	47%	43%	6%		
Overall voting process	2017	54%	35%	8%		
	2020	52%	37%	8%		
	2023	51%	39%	7%		
How to enrol	2017	47%	42%	6%		
	2020	43%	46%	5%		
	2023	46%	44%	5%		
How to update enrolment details	2017	46%	39%	9%		
	2020	42%	44%	7%		
	2023	44%	41%	9%		
How to vote	2017	62%	31%	5%		
	2020	58%	38%	2%		
	2023	57%	36%	4%		
Where to vote	2017	63%	31%	4%		
	2020	55%	39%	3%		
	2023	55%	39%	4%		
What to do if can't get to voting place	2017	35%	33%	20%	9%	
	2020	27%	42%	17%	10%	
	2023	32%	36%	16%	11%	

Overall understanding of the voting process

Most people (90%) feel they have good or very good understanding of the voting process, including how to vote, where to vote, when to vote etc.

Table 6: Overall understanding of the voting process

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very good understanding	54%	52%	51%	31%	31%	39%	51%	47%	47%	44%	47%	36%↓
Good understanding	35%	37%	39%	44%	47%	47%	30%↓	42%↑	39%	45%	41%	47%
Poor understanding	8%	8%	7%	21%	17%	8%↓	12%	9%	9%	9%	7%	5%
Very poor understanding	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%	5%↑	1%↓	2%	2%	4%	4%
Not sure	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	6%↑
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very good understanding	54%	52%	51%	38%	50%	35%↓	51%	47%	56%	20%	20%	25%
Good understanding	35%	37%	39%	43%	33%	51%↑	39%	45%	31%↓	45%	47%	49%
Poor understanding	8%	8%	7%	11%	13%	9%	7%	7%	7%	26%	23%	15%
Very poor understanding	2%	2%	2%	6%	3%	2%	2%	0%	1%	8%	9%	4%
Not sure	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	3%	1%	1%	4%	0%	2%	5%
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (39%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (47%).
- Have seen an improvement in the proportion who have a poor understanding (down to 8% in 2023, from 17% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (36%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have a very good understanding (down to 36% in 2023, from 47% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (35%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (51%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have a very good understanding (down to 35% in 2023, from 50% in 2020) and an increase in the proportion who have a good understanding (up to 51% in 2023, from 33% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have a good understanding (down to 31% in 2023, from 45% in 2020).

Non-voters:

- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (25%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (49%), or a poor understanding (15%).

Overall understanding of the enrolling process

Most people (90%) feel they have a good or very good understanding of the process for enrolling, including how to enrol, and when and how to update your details.

Table 7: Overall understanding of the enrolment process

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very good understanding	48%	46%	47%	23%	27%	35%	51%	42%	41%	40%	48%	36%↓
Good understanding	42%	46%	43%	48%	55%	49%	34%↓	49%↑	47%	46%	39%	44%
Poor understanding	7%	6%	6%	23%↑	14%↓	9%	8%	7%	8%	11%	8%	10%
Very poor understanding	3%	2%	2%	6%	3%	4%	6%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*
	Total			**Asian peoples**			**People with a disability**			**Non-voters**		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very good understanding	48%	46%	47%	34%	43%	32%↓	44%	47%	53%	21%	25%	28%
Good understanding	42%	46%	43%	46%	45%	48%	45%	45%	40%	50%	54%	48%
Poor understanding	7%	6%	6%	13%	8%	11%	6%	6%	3%	20%↑	13%↓	13%
Very poor understanding	3%	2%	2%	5%	3%	5%	4%↑	1%↓	1%	8%	8%	7%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (35%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (36%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have a very good understanding (down to 36% in 2023, from 48% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (32%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (11%), or a very poor understanding (5%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have a very good understanding (down to 32% in 2023, from 43% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to have a very good understanding (28%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (13%), or a very poor understanding (7%).

Understanding of how to enrol

The large majority (89%) of people feel they have good or very good understanding of how to enrol. Only nine percent feel they have poor, or little or no understanding.

Table 8: Understanding of how to enrol to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	47%	43%	46%	27%	31%	36%	53%↑	42%↓	39%	36%	49%	31%↓
Good understanding	42%	46%	44%	49%	55%	51%	30%↓	51%↑	48%	54%↑	36%↓	50%↑
Poor understanding	6%	5%	5%	14%	8%	5%	7%	5%	5%	5%	9%	9%
Little or no understanding	4%	3%	4%	9%↑	4%↓	4%	10%↑	1%↓	6%↑	5%	5%	4%
Not sure	1%↓	2%↑	0%↓	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Rather not say	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	7%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	47%	43%	46%	35%	46%	34%↓	41%	45%	56%↑	20%↓	28%↑	26%
Good understanding	42%	46%	44%	50%	45%	49%	45%	44%	37%	51%	51%	47%
Poor understanding	6%	5%	5%	10%	5%	8%	9%	5%	3%	15%	11%	11%
Little or no understanding	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	6%	4%	3%	3%	13%↑	7%↓	11%
Not sure	1%↓	2%↑	0%↓	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%↓	3%↑	1%
Rather not say	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (36%).

Māori:
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have little or no understanding (up to 6% in 2023, from 1% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (31%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (9%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 31% in 2023, from 49% in 2020) and an increase in the proportion who have a good understanding (up to 50% in 2023, from 36% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (34%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 34% in 2023, from 46% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Are more likely than average to have an excellent understanding (56%).
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (up to 56% in 2023, from 45% in 2020).

Non-voters:

- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (26%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (11%), or little or no understanding (11%).

Understanding of how to update enrolment details

Eighty-four percent of those surveyed feel they have a good or very good understanding of how to update their enrolment details. Fourteen percent feel they have poor, or little or no understanding.

Table 9: Understanding of how to update your enrolment details

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	46%	42%	44%	24%	28%	37%	49%	41%	37%	39%	46%	30%↓
Good understanding	39%↓	44%↑	41%	40%	46%	37%	32%↓	46%↑	42%	36%	37%	44%
Poor understanding	9%	7%	9%	21%	14%	14%	10%	9%	14%	16%	10%	11%
Little or no understanding	5%	4%	4%	13%	9%	7%	9%↑	2%↓	5%	9%	6%	7%
Not sure	1%↓	2%↑	0%↓	2%	3%	0%↓	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Rather not say	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	5%↑	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	7%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	46%	42%	44%	39%	44%	31%↓	41%	42%	54%↑	22%	26%	20%
Good understanding	39%↓	44%↑	41%	35%	41%	42%	40%	44%	34%↓	37%	44%	38%
Poor understanding	9%	7%	9%	13%	9%	18%↑	14%↑	5%↓	6%	24%↑	14%↓	25%↑
Little or no understanding	5%	4%	4%	8%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	15%	11%	9%
Not sure	1%↓	2%↑	0%↓	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%↓	5%↑	0%↓
Rather not say	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	3%↑	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	8%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (30%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 30% in 2023, from 46% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (31%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (18%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 31% in 2023, from 44% in 2020) and an upward shift in the proportion who have a poor understanding (up to 18% in 2023, from 9% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Are more likely than average to have an excellent understanding (54%).
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (up to 54% in 2023, from 42% in 2020) and a downward shift in the proportion who have a good understanding (down to 34% in 2023, from 44% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (20%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (25%), or little or no understanding (9%).
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have a poor understanding (up to 25% in 2023, from 14% in 2020).

Understanding of how to vote

Almost all people (94%) feel they have a good or very good understanding of how to vote. Just five percent feel they have poor, or little or no understanding.

Table 10: Understanding of how to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	62%	58%	57%	42%	40%	51%↑	58%	51%	43%	41%	57%	40%↓
Good understanding	31%↓	38%↑	36%	39%↓	52%↑	39%↓	25%↓	40%↑	50%	50%	33%	43%
Poor understanding	5%↑	2%↓	4%↑	13%↑	6%↓	6%	10%	9%	3%↓	6%	5%	8%
Little or no understanding	3%	2%	1%	5%	2%	3%	7%	0%↓	3%↑	3%	3%	3%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	5%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	62%	58%	57%	47%	56%	43%↓	57%	58%	65%	24%	30%	23%
Good understanding	31%↓	38%↑	36%	43%	38%	41%	35%	40%	31%	47%	51%	52%
Poor understanding	5%↑	2%↓	4%↑	8%↑	1%↓	13%↑	5%↑	1%↓	3%	19%↑	10%↓	16%
Little or no understanding	3%	2%	1%	2%	4%	4%	3%	1%	1%	10%	8%	5%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (up to 51% in 2023, from 40% in 2020) and a downward shift in the proportion who have a good understanding (down to 39% in 2023, from 52% in 2020).

Māori:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (43%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (50%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (40%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 40% in 2023, from 57% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (43%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (13%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 43% in 2023, from 56% in 2020) and an increase in the proportion who have a poor understanding (up to 13% in 2023, from 1% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (23%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (52%), a poor understanding (16%), or little or no understanding (5%).

Understanding of where to vote

The large majority of people (94%) also feel they have a good or very good understanding of where to vote. Only five percent feel they have poor, or little or no understanding.

Table 11: Understanding of where you can vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	63%↑	55%↓	55%	41%	37%	46%	60%↑	48%↓	44%	51%	58%	42%↓
Good understanding	31%↓	39%↑	39%	42%	51%	47%	29%↓	47%↑	50%	41%	32%	44%↑
Poor understanding	4%	3%	4%	12%	6%	4%	7%↑	2%↓	4%	6%	4%	6%
Little or no understanding	2%	2%	1%	5%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Not sure	0%↓	1%↑	0%↓	0%	2%	0%	1%	3%	0%↓	0%	2%	1%
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%↑	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%↓
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	63%↑	55%↓	55%	52%	52%	40%↓	62%↑	49%↓	62%↑	29%	30%	24%
Good understanding	31%↓	39%↑	39%	42%	42%	48%	31%↓	41%↑	32%	49%	51%	58%
Poor understanding	4%	3%	4%	2%	3%	9%	6%	6%	2%↓	14%↑	6%↓	12%
Little or no understanding	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	3%	0%	1%	1%	7%	9%	4%
Not sure	0%↓	1%↑	0%↓	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%↓	1%↓	4%↑	0%↓
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%↑	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	2%
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (46%).

Māori:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (44%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (50%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (42%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 42% in 2023, from 58% in 2020) and an increase in the proportion who have a good understanding (up to 44% in 2023, from 32% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (40%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (48%), or a poor understanding (9%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 40% in 2023, from 52% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen an upwards shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (up to 62% in 2023, from 49% in 2020) and a decrease in the proportion who have a poor understanding (down to 2% in 2023, from 6% in 2020).

Non-voters:

- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (24%) and more likely than average to have a good understanding (58%), or a poor understanding (12%).

Understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place

Two thirds (68%) of people feel they have a good or very good understanding of what to do if you can't get to a voting place. Just over a quarter (27%) have poor, or little or no understanding.

Table 12: Understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	35%↑	27%↓	32%↑	12%	12%	23%↑	38%↑	25%↓	28%	29%	38%	26%↓
Good understanding	33%↓	42%↑	36%↓	30%↓	39%↑	37%	27%↓	43%↑	37%	42%	33%	42%
Poor understanding	20%	17%	16%	35%	29%	21%	19%	24%	18%	18%	14%	14%
Little or no understanding	9%	10%	11%	21%	19%	16%	12%↑	5%↓	12%↑	9%	13%	7%
Not sure	3%	4%	0%↓	3%	1%	0%	3%	2%	0%	2%	2%	1%
Rather not say	0%	0%	4%↑	0%	0%	4%↑	0%	0%	6%↑	0%	0%	9%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*251*	*155*	*199*	*196*	*158*	*203*	*102*	*153*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent understanding	35%↑	27%↓	32%↑	25%	31%	27%	35%	30%	35%	11%	9%	18%↑
Good understanding	33%↓	42%↑	36%↓	45%	41%	36%	29%↓	44%↑	36%	29%	38%	33%
Poor understanding	20%	17%	16%	20%	16%	21%	24%↑	14%↓	14%	37%	31%	26%
Little or no understanding	9%	10%	11%	6%	10%	10%	7%	9%	9%	20%	18%	16%
Not sure	3%	4%	0%↓	3%	2%	1%	5%	4%	1%↓	3%	5%	0%↓
Rather not say	0%	0%	4%↑	0%	0%	6%↑	0%	0%	5%↑	0%	0%	7%↑
n =	*1,005*	*1,038*	*1,165*	*107*	*155*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*160*	*149*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (23%).
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (up to 23% in 2023, from 12% in 2020).

Māori:
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have little or no understanding (up to 12% in 2023, from 5% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (down to 26% in 2023, from 38% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to have an excellent understanding (18%) and more likely than average to have a poor understanding (26%).
- Have seen an upward shift in the proportion who have an excellent understanding (up to 18% in 2023, from 9% in 2020).

Information sources people would use to enrol or change enrolment address

Forty-three percent of people would go to the Electoral Commission's website if they needed to enrol or update their enrolment details. Nearly a quarter (23%) would search online (e.g. using Google).

Thirteen percent say they would not know where to go to enrol or update their enrolment details.

Table 13: Information sources would use to enrol or change enrolment address

	Total	18 to 29 years	Māori	Pacific peoples	Asian peoples	People with a disability	Non-voters
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
Visit the Electoral Commission website	43%	50%	35%	33%	52%	53%	34%
Call the Electoral Commission 0800 number	5%	6%	3%	13%	10%	13%	7%
Voting place*	3%	4%	4%	8%	8%	3%	5%
Email the Electoral Commission	3%	5%	2%	3%	13%	7%	7%
Mail (wait for enrolment forms)*	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Other references to the Electoral Commission*	8%	7%	8%	7%	10%	7%	10%
Google/online*	23%	21%	23%	11%	10%	9%	21%
Post Shop*	6%	1%	5%	6%	3%	7%	6%
Library	4%	3%	2%	7%	12%	3%	8%
City council	4%	3%	1%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Don't know	13%	18%	20%	26%	15%	10%	24%
n =	1,165	199	203	174	155	160	160

Note: response categories of 1% or less are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Māori:
- Are more likely than average to say they 'don't know' where to go to enrol or update details (20%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are more likely than average to call the Electoral Commission (13%) or ask at a voting place (8%).
- Are more likely than average to say they 'don't know' where to go to enrol or update details (26%).
- Are less likely than average to know they can use vote.nz to enrol or update details (33%).

Asian peoples:
- Are more likely than average to use vote.nz (52%), call the Electoral Commission (10%), ask at a voting place (8%), email the Electoral Commission (13%), or ask at a library (12%).

People with a disability:
- Are more likely than average to use vote.nz (53%), call the Electoral Commission (13%), or email the Electoral Commission (7%).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to know they can use vote.nz to enrol or update details (34%).
- Are more likely than average to say they 'don't know' where to go to enrol or update details (24%).
- Are more likely than average to email the Electoral Commission (7%) or ask at a library (8%).

Communications

Awareness of advertising about the voting process

Half of people surveyed (49%) say they saw advertising about the 2023 voting process. While this is in line with 2017, it is a significant decrease from the 72% of people who saw advertising about the 2020 General Election.

Table 14: Awareness of electoral advertising

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	52%↓	72%↑	49%↓	43%↓	80%↑	50%↓	49%↓	77%↑	40%↓	42%↓	58%↑	42%↓
No	45%↑	26%↓	47%↑	54%↑	19%↓	46%↑	50%↑	22%↓	53%↑	55%↑	39%↓	52%↑
Don't know	3%	2%	5%↑	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%	7%↑	3%	3%	6%
n =	*1,165*	*845*	*1,165*	*284*	*117*	*199*	*196*	*100*	*203*	*180*	*133*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	52%↓	72%↑	49%↓	37%↓	71%↑	49%↓	48%↓	72%↑	34%↓	35%↓	66%↑	30%↓
No	45%↑	26%↓	47%↑	59%↑	29%↓	43%↑	48%↑	25%↓	58%↑	59%↑	32%↓	60%↑
Don't know	3%	2%	5%↑	3%	1%	8%↑	4%	2%	8%↑	6%	2%	9%↑
n =	*1,165*	*845*	*1,165*	*186*	*120*	*155*	*184*	*189*	*160*	*164*	*46*	*160*

Demographic analysis

All priority groups saw a significant decrease in advertising awareness in 2023 when compared to 2020.

Māori, people with a disability, and non-voters are less likely than average to have seen advertising in 2023 (40%, 49%, and 30% respectively).

Where did people see advertising about the voting process?

[% Among those who recalled advertising]

More than half of those who saw advertising say they saw it on live television (52%). Social media was the second most recalled source of advertising: 19% say they saw Facebook advertising, 12% saw YouTube advertising, and seven percent saw Instagram advertising.

Table 15: Source of electoral advertising awareness

	Total	18 to 29 years	Māori	Pacific peoples	Asian peoples	People with a disability	Non-voters
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
Live television	52%	30%	39%	51%	51%	69%	34%
On demand television	11%	5%	4%	14%	10%	13%	15%
Facebook	19%	26%	27%	47%	22%	26%	23%
YouTube	12%	31%	3%	16%	20%	5%	7%
Instagram	7%	19%	2%	17%	10%	3%	5%
Tiktok	2%	7%	5%	12%	4%	2%	5%
Other social media	3%	6%	7%	7%	8%	3%	7%
Street posters	18%	26%	15%	25%	40%	12%	29%
Radio	15%	15%	7%	20%	16%	6%	13%
Mail	8%	6%	8%	5%	0%	5%	5%
Google / online	7%	8%	8%	2%	6%	6%	8%
Stuff.co.nz	7%	2%	0%	5%	9%	20%	3%
Herald.co.nz	5%	3%	1%	11%	12%	10%	4%
Newspapers	4%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Digital screens	3%	6%	2%	3%	13%	0%	6%
Another place	8%	12%	13%	15%	9%	6%	8%
Not sure	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	1%
n =	*556*	*99*	*87*	*77*	*84*	*56*	*52*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have seen ads on live TV (30%) and more likely than average to have seen them on YouTube (31%) and Instagram (19%).

Māori:
- Are less likely than average to have seen ads on live TV (39%) and YouTube (3%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are more likely than average to have seen ads on Facebook (47%) and Instagram (17%).

Asian peoples:
- Are more likely than average to have seen ads on street posters (40%), digital screens (13%) and YouTube (20%).

People with a disability:
- Are more likely than average to have seen ads on live TV (69%).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to have seen ads on live TV (34%).

What was the message of the advertising?

[% Among those who recalled advertising]

Among those who recall seeing advertising, the key message take-outs were 'Orange Guy and Pup' (40%) and 'don't forget to enrol to vote' (34%).

Table 16: TV advertising message

	Total	18 to 29 years	Māori	Pacific peoples	Asian peoples	People with a disability	Non-voters
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
Orange Guy/Pup	40%	33%	36%	45%	45%	52%	32%
Don't forget to enrol to vote	34%	32%	24%	44%	47%	54%	41%
Enrol. Vote. Be Heard.	15%	29%	10%	31%	18%	33%	14%
It's quick and easy to enrol to vote	13%	17%	15%	32%	15%	51%	31%
Make your voices heard. Vote this election.	11%	27%	12%	15%	10%	29%	22%
Voting starts soon	8%	8%	8%	23%	7%	24%	6%
Getting your EasyVote card makes voting easy	7%	9%	8%	12%	3%	59%	1%
Voting is easy	7%	3%	17%	12%	4%	18%	12%
Enrolment information	7%	8%	8%	3%	6%	0%	7%
There's an election coming up	6%	3%	5%	18%	1%	13%	15%
Vote anytime between 2-14 October	5%	5%	9%	15%	0%	29%	7%
Voting information	5%	2%	5%	1%	2%	3%	0%
When it comes to voting, what feels right to you, is right	2%	0%	3%	2%	0%	10%	7%
Being inexperienced isn't an excuse, everyone should vote	2%	0%	7%	0%	0%	8%	9%
Not sure	8%	3%	8%	9%	8%	0%	4%
n =	303	37	37	37	41	38	21

Note: response categories of 1% or less are not shown.

Significance tests have not been conducted on the various segments due to low sample size.

Pre-Election Day behaviour

Recall receiving an EasyVote pack

[% Among those enrolled]

In 2023, 87% of those enrolled say they received an EasyVote pack in the mail. This is a significant drop from the 93% seen in 2020.

Table 17: Recall receiving an EasyVote pack

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	94%	93%	87%↓	85%	84%	80%	94%	88%	83%	90%↑	74%↓	69%
No	5%	7%	12%↑	13%	15%	17%	6%	12%	16%	8%↓	26%↑	22%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	3%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	9%↑
n =	*1,093*	*822*	*1,096*	*236*	*106*	*176*	*180*	*95*	*187*	*150*	*122*	*148*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	94%	93%	87%↓	90%	91%	77%↓	92%	94%	91%	83%↑	60%↓	68%
No	5%	7%	12%↑	8%	7%	21%↑	7%	6%	6%	14%↓	40%↑	28%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	1%	4%↑	3%	0%	4%↑
n =	*1,093*	*822*	*1,096*	*177*	*116*	*135*	*175*	*186*	*154*	*93*	*25*	*91*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to recall receiving an EasyVote pack (80%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to recall receiving an EasyVote pack (69%).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to recall receiving an EasyVote pack (77%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who recall receiving an EasyVote pack (down to 77% in 2023, from 91% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to recall receiving an EasyVote pack (68%).

How thoroughly people read the EasyVote pack

[% Among those who recalled receiving EasyVote pack]

Fewer than half (45%) of those who remember receiving an EasyVote pack read most or all of it. This is a significant decline from the 55% who did so before the 2020 General Election.

Table 18: How thoroughly people read the EasyVote pack

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Read most or all of it	46%↓	55%↑	45%↓	46%	53%	35%↓	43%↓	62%↑	43%↓	32%	36%	42%
Read some of it	24%↑	19%↓	24%↑	26%↑	15%↓	38%↑	21%	16%	23%	38%	21%	20%
Glanced at it	16%	14%	16%	14%	15%	8%	17%	12%	13%	16%	26%	20%
Didn't read it	13%	12%	14%	11%	15%	19%	17%	11%	21%↑	13%	17%	12%
Note sure	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	5%↑
n =	*1,031*	*763*	*946*	*206*	*86*	*130*	*169*	*86*	*153*	*136*	*94*	*103*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Read most or all of it	46%↓	55%↑	45%↓	41%	46%	39%	50%↓	68%↑	55%↓	22%	15%	20%
Read some of it	24%↑	19%↓	24%↑	37%	25%	38%↑	16%	15%	21%	20%↓	46%↑	29%
Glanced at it	16%	14%	16%	16%	22%	13%	14%↑	7%↓	15%↑	23%	23%	18%
Didn't read it	13%	12%	14%	4%	5%	7%	17%↑	10%↓	7%	35%	16%	32%
Note sure	1%	0%	1%	2%	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%
n =	*1,031*	*763*	*946*	*163*	*106*	*106*	*166*	*175*	*140*	*74*	*19*	*57*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are more likely than average to have read some of it (38%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who read most or all of it (down to 35% in 2023, from 53% in 2020) and an upwards shift in the proportion who read some of it (up to 38% in 2023, from 15% in 2020).

Māori:
- Are more likely than average not to have read it (21%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who read most or all of it (down to 43% in 2023, from 62% in 2020) and an upwards shift in those who didn't read it (up to 21% in 2023, from 11% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are more likely than average to have read some of it (38%).

People with a disability:
- Are more likely than average to have read most or all of it (55%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who read most or all of it (down to 55% in 2023, from 68% in 2020) and an upwards shift in the proportion who glanced at it (up to 15% in 2023, from 7% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average have read most or all of it (20%) and more likely than average to have not read it (32%).

Ease of finding the EasyVote card

[% Among those who read the EasyVote pack]

Of those who read their EasyVote pack, nearly all (92%) easily found the EasyVote card. However, this is a significant decrease from the 97% seen in 2020.

Table 19: Did people find the EasyVote card easily

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	95%	97%↑	92%↓	95%	93%	88%	91%↓	98%↑	84%↓	96%	91%	87%
No	3%	2%↓	5%↑	3%	3%	4%	7%↑	0%↓	11%↑	3%	9%	9%
Not sure	2%	1%	3%↑	1%	3%	8%	2%	2%	5%	1%	0%	4%↑
n =	*929*	*700*	*844*	*189*	*77*	*113*	*145*	*80*	*129*	*124*	*87*	*94*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	95%	97%↑	92%↓	96%	96%	85%↓	93%	97%	93%	75%↓	87%	79%
No	3%	2%↓	5%↑	2%	2%	6%	4%	1%	4%	16%↑	13%	14%
Not sure	2%	1%	3%↑	1%	2%	9%↑	3%	2%	3%	8%	0%	7%
n =	*929*	*700*	*844*	*158*	*103*	*101*	*142*	*161*	*132*	*65*	*16*	*58*

Demographic analysis

Māori:
- Are less likely than average to have easily found the card (84%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who found it easily (down to 84% in 2023, from 98% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have easily found the card (85%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion who found it easily (down to 85% in 2023, from 96% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to have easily found the card (79%).

Usefulness of the EasyVote pack

[% Among those who read the EasyVote pack]

Of those who read their EasyVote pack, three quarters (79%) found it to be useful. This is broadly consistent with 2020 findings. However, compared to 2020, more people now feel the card is not useful (up to 8% in 2023, from 4% in 2020).

Table 20: How useful people found the EasyVote pack

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very useful (5)	68%↑	62%↓	61%	63%↑	49%↓	45%	70%	66%	54%	74%	60%	48%
4	17%↓	26%↑	18%↓	20%↓	37%↑	29%	11%	20%	16%	16%	19%	20%
3	9%	8%	10%	11%	8%	11%	10%	5%	14%	7%	9%	14%
2	1%	2%	4%↑	1%	4%	8%	1%	5%	4%	2%	7%	2%
Not very useful (1)	4%↑	1%↓	4%↑	5%	2%	4%	8%	4%	6%	0%	5%	6%
Don't know	1%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	10%↑
n =	926	698	844	185	77	113	145	80	129	121	86	94

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very useful (5)	68%↑	62%↓	61%	69%	59%	55%	63%	70%	57%↓	30%	42%	42%
4	17%↓	26%↑	18%↓	16%↓	29%↑	20%	19%	22%	15%	14%	12%	20%
3	9%	8%	10%	11%	10%	12%	8%	6%	13%↑	26%	16%	16%
2	1%	2%	4%↑	1%	1%	4%	1%	0%	1%	3%↓	18%↑	4%
Not very useful (1)	4%↑	1%↓	4%↑	3%	1%	4%	9%↑	1%↓	11%↑	25%	11%	5%
Don't know	1%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	5%↑	1%	0%	3%↑	1%	0%	13%↑
n =	926	698	844	158	102	101	142	161	132	52	16	58

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to rate the EasyVote pack very useful (45%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to rate the EasyVote pack very useful (48%).

People with a disability:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion rating the EasyVote pack as very useful (down to 57% in 2023, from 70% in 2020).

Non-voters:
- Are less likely than average to rate the EasyVote pack very useful (42%).

Knowledge of being able to vote without EasyVote card

[% Among those enrolled]

Most of those who are enrolled (82%) are aware they are able to vote without their EasyVote card.

Table 21: Knowledge of being able to vote without EasyVote card

	Total	18 to 29 years	Māori	Pacific peoples	Asian peoples	People with a disability	Non-voters
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
Yes, was aware could vote without it	82%	70%	71%	69%	71%	87%	56%
No, wasn't aware could vote without it	3%	2%	4%	9%	9%	6%	8%
Not sure	15%	28%	25%	22%	20%	6%	37%
n =	1,096	176	187	148	135	154	69

New question in 2023.

Demographic analysis

Younger people, Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian peoples, and non-voters are all less likely than average to know they can vote without their EasyVote card (70%, 71%, 69%, 71%, and 56% respectively).

People with a disability are more likely than average to know they can vote without their EasyVote card (87%).

Searching for additional voting information

Eighteen percent of eligible voters looked for additional information on how to vote.

Table 22: Looked for additional voting information

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	12%↓	20%↑	18%	21%	26%	26%	14%↓	23%↑	20%	12%	17%	19%
No	87%↑	79%↓	79%	79%	73%	71%	86%	77%	78%	87%	83%	71%↓
Not sure	0%	0%	3%↑	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	10%↑
n =	*1,159*	*818*	*1,165*	*282*	*108*	*199*	*196*	*99*	*203*	*176*	*116*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	12%↓	20%↑	18%	18%	22%	28%	7%↓	18%↑	11%	10%	13%	17%
No	87%↑	79%↓	79%	80%	77%	62%↓	92%↑	82%↓	86%	89%	87%	75%
Not sure	0%	0%	3%↑	2%	1%	10%↑	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	8%↑
n =	*1,159*	*818*	*1,165*	*184*	*111*	*155*	*184*	*186*	*160*	*160*	*39*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people and Asian peoples are more likely than average to have looked for additional information (26% and 28% respectively).

People with a disability are less likely than average to have looked for additional information (11%).

Where people look for additional voting information

[% Among those who looked for additional voting information]

The most common sources of additional information were general online searches (48%) and the Electoral Commission's website (29%).

Table 23: Source of additional voting information

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Did a Google search/ searched elsewhere online	35%↓	47%↑	48%	34%	56%	34%	19%	33%	30%	28%	49%	46%
Visited the Electoral Commission website	35%	28%	29%	41%	30%	38%	23%	29%	16%	9%	34%	25%
Asked someone I knew	16%	14%	11%	25%	17%	18%	17%	10%	19%	23%	23%	17%
Called the Electoral Commission 0800 number	5%	4%	5%	2%	0%	4%	14%	10%	8%	15%	0%	14%
Visited a registrar or returning officer's office	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Emailed the Electoral Commission	1%	0%	2%↑	1%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	4%
Asked my local MP's office	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Electoral Commission Facebook/Twitter page	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	9%	0%	8%	0%	0%
Voting place*	-	-	2%	-	-	2%	-	-	15%	-	-	0%
Voting pack*	-	-	2%	-	-	0%	-	-	3%	-	-	0%
Not sure	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%	5%	0%	0%	6%	8%	18%	7%
n =	162	145	198	60	26	52	29	20	33	28	19	34

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Did a Google search/searched elsewhere online	35%↓	47%↑	48%	30%	36%	48%	48%	31%	30%	28%	66%	46%
Visited the Electoral Commission website	35%	28%	29%	42%	37%	26%	9%	32%	11%	25%	26%	17%
Asked someone I knew	16%	14%	11%	29%	34%	21%	21%	8%	3%	29%	60%	19%
Called the Electoral Commission 0800 number	5%	4%	5%	4%	0%	6%	4%	12%	38%	0%	0%	8%
Visited a registrar or returning officer's office	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Emailed the Electoral Commission	1%	0%	2%↑	3%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asked my local MP's office	0%	0%	2%↑	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15%	0%	0%	4%
Electoral Commission Facebook/Twitter page	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	6%	4%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
Voting place*	-	-	2%	-	-	0%	-	-	0%	-	-	8%
Voting pack*	-	-	2%	-	-	0%	-	-	0%	-	-	0%
Not sure	1%	3%	3%	0%	3%	4%	4%	0%	11%	4%	0%	5%
n =	162	145	198	36	23	42	16	33	15	18	4	29

*Notes: *New statement added in 2023. Response categories of 1% or less are not shown.*
Significance tests have not been conducted on the various segments due to low sample size.

Usefulness of the Electoral Commission's website

[% Among those who visited the website in search of additional voting info]

Seventy-five percent of those who visited the Electoral Commission's website found it useful. This is consistent with the 2020 and 2017 results. Just six percent rated the website as not useful, however note low sample size for this analysis.

Table 24: How useful did people find the Electoral Commission's website

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very useful (5)	65%	63%	43%	60%	70%	60%	75%	87%	52%	100%	59%	40%
4	18%	16%	32%	8%	24%	36%	25%	13%	35%	0%	12%	23%
3	9%	15%	18%	22%	6%	4%	0%	0%	9%	0%	29%	0%
2	0%	7%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	5%
Not very useful (1)	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%
Don't know	4%	0%	1%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%
n =	*53*	*35*	*51*	*23*	*9*	*15*	*7*	*4*	*7*	*2*	*7*	*8*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Very useful (5)	65%	63%	43%	55%	41%	65%	100%	32%	24%	0%	0%	37%
4	18%	16%	32%	17%	49%	0%	0%	29%	47%	0%	100%	19%
3	9%	15%	18%	28%	10%	21%	0%	39%	29%	23%	0%	0%
2	0%	7%	5%	0%	0%	13%	0%	0%	0%	17%	0%	33%
Not very useful (1)	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	38%	0%	0%
Don't know	4%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%	12%
n =	*53*	*35*	*51*	*14*	*7*	*10*	*1*	*7*	*3*	*5*	*1*	*4*

Significance tests have not been conducted on the various segments due to low sample size.

Additional information people would have liked

Most people could not think of any additional information that they would have liked (70%). Of those who wanted additional information, most suggested information on voting place locations (11%), party policies/candidates (9%), and date and time (8%).

Table 25: Additional voting information wanted

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Voting place locations	6%↓	9%↑	11%	6%↓	13%↑	16%	4%	8%	10%	13%↑	3%↓	24%
Party policies/candidates	7%	6%	9%	12%	9%	14%	5%	6%	9%	7%	5%	12%
Date and time of voting	4%↑	2%↓	8%	3%	4%	10%	1%	4%	4%	15%↑	1%↓	20%
Electorate candidates	3%	2%	5%	2%	1%	8%	1%	2%	2%	6%↑	1%↓	7%
Party lists	1%	1%	5%	0%	0%	8%	0%	0%	3%	6%	0%	11%
MMP	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	4%	3%	1%	1%	1%	0%	8%
How to mark ballot papers	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	5%	1%	0%	2%	3%	2%	6%
Special/advanced voting	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	4%	2%	4%	4%	0%	0%	5%
EasyVote	0%	1%	2%	1%	3%	5%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	7%
Nothing/not sure	-	76%	70%	-	64%	62%	-	70%	68%	-	82%	57%
n =	*1,115*	*822*	*1,165*	*269*	*114*	*199*	*196*	*99*	*203*	*156*	*122*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Voting place locations	6%↓	9%↑	11%	21%↑	9%↑	31%	2%↓	7%↑	14%	6%	4%	22%
Party policies/candidates	7%	6%	9%	10%↑	3%↓	16%	10%	8%	11%	8%	0%	13%
Date and time of voting	4%↑	2%↓	8%	18%↑	1%↓	25%	2%	3%	10%	1%	1%	20%
Electorate candidates	3%	2%	5%	16%↑	0%↓	16%	2%	6%	7%	1%	2%	9%
Party lists	1%	1%	5%	3%	0%	17%	1%	3%	6%	1%	0%	11%
MMP	2%	1%	3%	2%	1%	7%	2%	1%	8%	1%	0%	4%
How to mark ballot papers	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	3%	2%	0%	4%
Special/advanced voting	2%	1%	2%	0%	2%	3%	1%	1%	10%	3%	0%	4%
EasyVote	0%	1%	2%	0%	3%	6%	0%	1%	4%	0%	0%	4%
Nothing/not sure	-	76%	70%	-	81%	47%	-	75%	65%	-	88%	57%
n =	*1,115*	*822*	*1,165*	*162*	*108*	*155*	*181*	*185*	*160*	*154*	*42*	*160*

Note: response categories of 1% or less are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples are more likely than average to want more information on voting place locations (24%), date and time of voting (20%), party lists (11%), MMP (8%), how to mark ballot papers (6%), and EasyVote (7%).

Asian peoples are more likely than average to want more information on voting place locations (31%), party policies/candidates (16%), date and time of voting (25%), electorate candidates (16%), party lists (17%), MMP (7%), how to mark ballot papers (5%), and EasyVote (6%).

People with a disability are more likely than average to want more information on MMP (8%) and special/advanced voting (10%).

Non-voters are more likely than average to want more information on voting place locations (22%), date and time of voting (20%), and party lists (11%).

Voting and Election Day behaviour

Did people place an ordinary or special vote?

[% Among those who voted]

Eighty-three percent of voters surveyed said they cast an ordinary vote this election. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (91%).

Table 26: Type of vote placed

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Ordinary	93%	91%	83%↓	76%	85%	67%↓	91%	95%	72%↓	85%	75%	62%↓
Special	7%	9%	16%↑	23%	14%↓	32%↑	7%	5%	27%↑	15%	25%	34%
Not sure	1%	1%	0%↓	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%↑
n =	999	802	1,005	196	102	155	163	93	162	130	108	122

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Ordinary	93%	91%	83%↓	93%	85%↓	69%↓	91%	92%	86%
Special	7%	9%	16%↑	7%	13%	31%↑	8%	7%	14%↑
Not sure	1%	1%	0%↓	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
n =	999	802	1,005	163	119	117	156	186	144

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have cast an ordinary vote (67%) and more likely to have cast a special vote (32%).
- Have seen a rise in the proportion casting special votes (up to 32% in 2023, from 14% in 2020).

Māori:
- Are less likely than average to have cast an ordinary vote (72%) and more likely than average to have cast a special vote (27%).
- Have seen a rise in the proportion casting special votes (up to 27% in 2023, from 5% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have cast an ordinary vote (62%) and more likely than average to have cast a special vote (34%).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have cast an ordinary vote (69%) and more likely than average to have cast a special vote (31%).
- Have seen a rise in the proportion casting special votes (up to 31% in 2023, from 13% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen a rise in the proportion casting special votes (up to 14% in 2023, from 7% in 2020).

Voting on or before Election Day

[% Among those who voted]

Sixty-one percent of voters surveyed said they voted before Election Day. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (74%). The proportion of voters who voted on Election Day is significantly higher than 2020 (up to 39% in 2023, from 26%).

Table 27: Voted on or before Election Day

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Voted on Election Day	54%↑	26%↓	39%↑	48%↑	30%↓	35%	43%↑	27%↓	33%	54%↑	28%↓	42%↑
Voted before Election Day	46%↓	74%↑	61%↓	52%↓	70%↑	65%	57%↓	73%↑	67%	46%↓	70%↑	57%↓
n =	*998*	*809*	*1,005*	*196*	*104*	*155*	*163*	*91*	*162*	*130*	*109*	*122*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Voted on Election Day	54%↑	26%↓	39%↑	48%↑	27%↓	37%	51%↑	20%↓	33%↑
Voted before Election Day	46%↓	74%↑	61%↓	52%↓	73%↑	63%	49%↓	80%↑	67%↓
n =	*998*	*809*	*1,005*	*162*	*119*	*117*	*156*	*185*	*144*

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples:
- Have seen an increase in the proportion who voted on Election Day (up to 42% in 2023, from 28% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen an increase in the proportion who voted on Election Day (up to 33% in 2023, from 20% in 2020).

Where people voted

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly all voters (95%) voted at a voting or advance voting place. This is a decline from the 97% who did so in 2020.

Table 28: Where people voted

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Voting place (or advance voting place)	97%	97%	95%↓	97%	97%	96%	97%	95%	97%	96%	98%	95%
Somewhere else	2%	2%	4%↑	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%	1%	4%	2%	5%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%↑	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
n =	1,000	802	1,005	196	102	155	163	93	162	131	108	122

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Voting place (or advance voting place)	97%	97%	95%↓	95%	97%	90%↓	96%	95%	94%
Somewhere else	2%	2%	4%↑	4%	3%	10%↑	3%	5%	5%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%↑	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
n =	1,000	802	1,005	163	119	117	156	186	144

Demographic analysis

Asian peoples are more likely than average to have voted somewhere else (10%). They have also seen an increase in the proportion saying they voted somewhere else (up to 10% in 2023, from 3% in 2020).

People who accompanied voters to the voting place

[% Among those who voted at a voting place]

Just over half (52%) of those who voted at a voting place were accompanied by family members. This is significantly higher than the 2020 finding (47%). Forty-two percent of those who voted went by themselves. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (47%).

Table 29: People that accompanied voters to the voting place

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
With other family members	52%↑	47%↓	52%↑	45%	47%	43%	54%	53%	46%	59%	59%	47%
By myself	44%	47%	42%↓	42%	43%	45%	41%	43%	48%	39%	38%	46%
With other people (not family members)	5%	6%	6%	16%	10%	12%	6%	5%	7%	4%	3%	8%
n =	976	780	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	128	106	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
With other family members	52%↑	47%↓	52%↑	58%	50%	51%	45%	49%	51%
By myself	44%	47%	42%↓	38%	45%	36%	50%	45%	42%
With other people (not family members)	5%	6%	6%	4%	5%	13%↑	7%	7%	8%
n =	976	780	970	156	116	106	151	174	137

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have voted with other family members (43%) and are more likely than average to have voted with other people who are not family members (12%).

Asian people:
- Are more likely than average to have voted with other people who are not family members (13%).

Voted at the same voting place as in 2020

[% Among those who voted in 2023]

Thirty percent of people who voted in 2023 voted at the same place in 2020. This is significantly higher than the 2020 result (24%). Two thirds of voters (68%) voted at a different place to where they voted in 2020, which is significantly lower than the 2020 result.

Table 30: Voted at the same voting place as in 2020

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	41%↑	24%↓	30%↑	29%	15%	21%	46%↑	15%↓	23%	43%↑	19%↓	37%↑
No	57%↓	73%↑	68%↓	68%↓	85%↑	79%	53%↓	82%↑	77%	56%↓	79%↑	62%↓
Not sure	2%	2%	2%	3%	0%	-	1%	2%	-	0%	1%	1%
n =	825	705	853	90	65	96	124	77	134	105	95	88

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	41%↑	24%↓	30%↑	34%	21%	20%	46%↑	25%↓	33%
No	57%↓	73%↑	68%↓	65%	75%	80%	52%↓	73%↑	63%
Not sure	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	-	2%	1%	4%
n =	825	705	853	122	99	70	134	155	132

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have voted at the same voting place as in 2020 (21%).

Pacific peoples:
- Have seen an increase in the proportion saying they voted at the same voting place as the last general election (up to 37% in 2023, from 19% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have voted at the same voting place as in 2020 (20%).

Why people voted at a different voting place in 2023

[% Among those who voted at a different place in 2023]

The main reason for voting at a different voting place was convenience (47%).

Table 31: Reasons for voting at a different voting place in 2023

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
A different voting place was more convenient	58%	53%	47%↓	52%	40%	34%	66%	58%	46%	46%	36%	51%
I have moved since the last New Zealand general election	21%	24%	25%	34%	44%	54%	14%	25%	25%	31%	36%	36%
The place I voted last time wasn't a voting place this time	19%	17%	21%	13%	5%	10%	20%	16%	18%	21%	8%	12%
Other reason	0%↓	7%↑	9%	1%	6%	6%	0%	9%	12%	1%	5%	0%↓
Not sure	5%↑	2%↓	1%	3%	5%	1%	6%	0%	0%	2%	15%	2%↓
n =	*479*	*509*	*574*	*62*	*53*	*78*	*67*	*61*	*99*	*61*	*75*	*60*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
A different voting place was more convenient	58%	53%	47%↓	45%	45%	55%	61%	60%	47%
I have moved since the last New Zealand general election	21%	24%	25%	35%	35%	24%	14%	21%	26%
The place I voted last time wasn't a voting place this time	19%	17%	21%	17%	7%	16%	24%↑	12%↓	23%
Other reason	0%↓	7%↑	9%	1%	8%	5%	0%	9%	5%
Not sure	5%↑	2%↓	1%	4%	6%	1%	3%	1%	1%
n =	*479*	*509*	*574*	*80*	*78*	*55*	*69*	*109*	*81*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have voted at a different voting place because it was more convenient (34%) and more likely than average to do so because they have moved since the last general election (54%), or because the place they voted last time was not a voting place this time (10%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have voted at a different voting place due to the place they voted last time not being a voting place this time (12%).

How people knew where to vote in 2023

[% Among those who voted]

The main source of information about where to vote in 2023 was reading about it in mail (20%). Closely followed by the internet and signage (both 18%).

The composition of information sources varies greatly between 2017, 2020 and 2023.

Table 32: Source of information about voting place location*

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Read about it in something I received in the mail	39%↑	3%↓	20%↑	31%↑	3%↓	12%↑	34%↑	2%↓	12%↑	51%↑	5%↓	11%
From the website/ internet	12%↓	28%↑	18%↓	21%↓	36%↑	24%↓	11%↓	41%↑	15%↓	9%↓	23%↑	9%↓
Signs/signage	23%↓	31%↑	18%↓	23%	29%	19%	22%	22%	23%	18%↓	38%↑	21%↓
Was driving/walking /going past and saw it	16%↓	24%↑	15%↓	17%↓	29%↑	16%↓	12%	15%	15%	46%	35%	14%↓
I've voted there in the past	17%↑	11%↓	8%↓	10%↑	3%↓	6%	17%↑	6%↓	6%	26%↑	4%↓	16%↑
Family/friends/workmates, etc. told me there	18%↑	14%↓	8%↓	26%	21%	13%	18%	14%	8%	39%↑	10%↓	12%
From information in the local newspapers	7%↓	14%↑	2%↓	2%	0%	0%	8%	16%	2%↓	7%	5%	0%↓
From advertising (in general)	4%	3%	2%	4%	0%	1%	5%	4%	3%	1%	2%	3%
Expected to find it at the school	6%↑	2%↓	2%	5%	4%	2%	6%	5%	1%	3%	2%	1%
Not sure	3%↑	1%↓	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
n =	*976*	*761*	*970*	*192*	*96*	*149*	*160*	*88*	*160*	*128*	*95*	*116*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Read about it in something I received in the mail	39%↑	3%↓	20%↑	52%↑	3%↓	19%↑	38%↑	6%↓	20%↑
From the website/ internet	12%↓	28%↑	18%↓	18%	27%	18%	6%↓	21%↑	13%
Signs/signage	23%↓	31%↑	18%↓	20%	18%	9%	24%	30%	6%↓
Was driving /walking/ going past and saw it	16%↓	24%↑	15%↓	29%↓	44%↑	22%↓	15%	17%	12%
I've voted there in the past	17%↑	11%↓	8%↓	18%↑	7%↓	9%	13%	10%	16%
Family/friends/workmates, etc. told me there	18%↑	14%↓	8%↓	30%	20%	15%	14%	11%	9%
From information in the local newspapers	7%↓	14%↑	2%↓	4%	3%	3%	8%↓	20%↑	7%↓
From advertising (in general)	4%	3%	2%	3%	1%	0%	7%↑	2%↓	1%
Expected to find it at the school	6%↑	2%↓	2%	0%	0%	0%	8%↑	3%↓	1%
Not sure	3%↑	1%↓	1%	2%	1%	0%	5%↑	1%↓	7%
n =	*976*	*761*	*970*	*156*	*108*	*106*	*151*	*173*	*137*

Note: response categories of 1% or less are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to find this information in mail they received (12%).

Māori
- Are less likely than average to find this information in mail they received (12%).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to find this information in mail they received (11%) or on the internet (9%).
- Are more likely than average to know where to vote from past experience (16%).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to gain this information from signage (9%).
- Are more likely than average to get this information from friends and family (15%).

People with a disability:
- Are less likely than average to gain this information from signage (6%).
- Are more likely than average to get this information from past experience (16%), or from information in a local newspaper (7%).

Polling place behaviour and satisfaction

The time of day when people voted

[% Among those who voted]

Forty-four percent of voting occurred before 12pm. Twenty-seven percent of voting took place between 12.00pm and 2.00pm, with the peak occurring between 11.00am – 11.59am. Voters were less likely to vote later in the day, with 19% voting after 3.00pm.

Table 33: Time of day when voted

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
9.00am – 9.59am	8%	9%	7%	4%	3%	5%	8%	5%	9%	10%	9%	7%
10.00am – 10.59am	15%	16%	18%	8%	12%	14%	15%	18%	18%	20%	12%	18%
11.00am – 11.59am	20%	17%	19%	19%	11%	10%	16%	14%	19%	11%	15%	12%
12.00pm – 12.59pm	14%↓	18%↑	18%	19%↓	30%↑	22%	23%	29%	19%	21%	18%	11%
1.00pm – 1.59pm	10%	11%	9%	13%	15%	16%	14%	8%	10%	8%	14%	9%
2.00pm – 2.59pm	9%↓	13%↑	8%↓	8%	11%	9%	6%	13%	6%	8%	11%	10%
3.00pm – 3.59pm	9%	6%	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%	3%	8%	10%	8%	13%
4.00pm – 4.59pm	6%	4%	6%	9%	5%	7%	3%	4%	2%	5%	9%	10%
5.00pm – 5.59pm	5%↑	2%↓	3%	4%	1%	7%↑	3%	3%	5%	4%	0%	2%
6.00pm or later	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	3%
Not sure	2%	2%	3%	3%	0%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	5%↑
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
9.00am – 9.59am	8%	9%	7%	11%	12%	8%	8%	7%	7%
10.00am – 10.59am	15%	16%	18%	14%	10%	13%	12%	18%	21%
11.00am – 11.59am	20%	17%	19%	20%	19%	16%	20%	15%	23%
12.00pm – 12.59pm	14%↓	18%↑	18%	12%	18%	14%	14%	19%	8%↓
1.00pm – 1.59pm	10%	11%	9%	3%	7%	10%	9%	15%	8%↓
2.00pm – 2.59pm	9%↓	13%↑	8%↓	12%	15%	10%	13%	14%	6%↓
3.00pm – 3.59pm	9%	6%	8%	10%↑	3%↓	12%↑	8%	5%	8%
4.00pm – 4.59pm	6%	4%	6%	6%	5%	4%	6%	2%	4%
5.00pm – 5.59pm	5%↑	2%↓	3%	5%	5%	4%	6%↑	1%↓	1%
6.00pm or later	2%	2%	2%	4%	3%	6%	2%	1%	0%
Not sure	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	11%↑
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Demographic analysis

Younger people are less likely than average to have voted before 12:00pm (29%).

Incidence of people having to queue before voting

[% Among those who voted]

Just over a third of voters (37%) said they had to queue before voting. This is significantly higher than was the case in 2020 (22%) and 2017 (31%).

Table 34: Incidence of people having to queue before voting

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	31%↑	22%↓	37%↑	40%↑	22%↓	48%↑	31%	20%	33%↑	28%	21%	37%↑
No	69%↓	78%↑	63%↓	60%↓	78%↑	52%↓	69%	80%	67%↓	72%	79%	62%↓
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Yes	31%↑	22%↓	37%↑	34%↑	17%↓	44%↑	27%	21%	40%↑
No	69%↓	78%↑	63%↓	66%↓	83%↑	55%↓	73%	79%	58%↓
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are more likely than average to have had to queue before voting (48%).
- Have seen an increase in the proportion who say they had to queue before voting (up to 48% in 2023, from 22% in 2020).

Māori:
- Have seen a rise in the proportion who had to queue before voting (up to 33% in 2023, from 20% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Have seen a rise in the proportion who had to queue before voting (up to 37% in 2023, from 21% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Have seen a rise in the proportion who had to queue before voting (up to 44% in 2023, from 17% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen a rise in the proportion who had to queue before voting (up to 40% in 2023, from 21% in 2020).

Items taken to the voting place

[% Among those who voted]

Three quarters of those who voted in 2023 took along their EasyVote card, which is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (down to 75% in 2023, from 82% in 2020). Twenty-two percent did not take along anything, and the remaining seven percent took along a voting slip from the Electoral Commission. Both of these results are significantly higher than they were in 2020 (16% and 3% respectively in 2020).

Table 35: Items taken to the voting place

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Your EasyVote card	80%	82%	75%↓	74%	70%	56%↓	76%	84%	58%↓	72%	57%	44%
A voting slip from the Electoral Commission	3%	3%	7%↑	2%	4%	8%	5%	3%	6%	10%↑	1%↓	17%↑
None of the above	19%	16%	22%↑	25%	26%	39%↑	23%	16%	40%↑	23%↓	43%↑	47%
n =	*976*	*782*	*970*	*192*	*99*	*149*	*160*	*88*	*160*	*128*	*107*	*116*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Your EasyVote card	80%	82%	75%↓	84%	78%	67%	78%	81%	80%
A voting slip from the Electoral Commission	3%	3%	7%↑	6%	5%	15%↑	5%	4%	7%
None of the above	19%	16%	22%↑	13%	17%	23%	20%	17%	18%
n =	*976*	*782*	*970*	*156*	*117*	*106*	*151*	*174*	*137*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have taken their EasyVote card to the voting place (56%).
- Have seen a fall in the proportion taking their EasyVote card to the voting place (down to 56% in 2023, from 70% in 2020).

Māori:
- Are less likely than average to have taken their EasyVote card to the voting place (58%).
- Have seen a fall in the proportion taking their EasyVote card to the voting place (down to 58% in 2023, from 84% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to have taken their EasyVote card to the voting place (44%).

Length of time taken to vote

[% Among those who voted]

A third of voters (38%) say it took them less than five minutes to vote, a further third (36%) say it took between five and ten minutes to vote and the remaining quarter (25%) say they had to wait more than ten minutes to vote.

There have been several significant chances in wait time between 2017, 2020 and 2023 which indicate that people are increasingly having to wait longer to vote.

Table 36: Length of time taken to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Up to 5 minutes	59%↑	48%↓	38%↓	48%	47%	27%↓	58%	47%	34%↓	65%	48%	37%
5-10 minutes	27%↓	33%↑	36%	27%	30%	44%↑	28%	30%	35%	24%	37%	31%
11-15 minutes	7%↓	11%↑	11%	11%	12%	9%	5%↓	15%↑	13%	6%	10%	11%
16-20 minutes	4%	3%	6%↑	6%	8%	7%	4%	1%	5%↑	3%	2%	5%
21-25 minutes	0%↓	1%↑	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	7%↑
26-30 minutes	1%	2%	4%↑	3%	3%	7%	1%	5%	4%	0%	4%	5%
More than 30 minutes	1%	1%	4%↑	3%	0%	5%↑	2%	0%	6%↑	2%	1%	3%
n =	*975*	*782*	*970*	*191*	*99*	*149*	*160*	*88*	*160*	*128*	*107*	*116*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Up to 5 minutes	59%↑	48%↓	38%↓	55%	54%	43%	56%	54%	35%↓
5-10 minutes	27%↓	33%↑	36%	31%	28%	28%	32%	29%	32%
11-15 minutes	7%↓	11%↑	11%	8%	13%	13%	4%↓	11%↑	15%
16-20 minutes	4%	3%	6%↑	4%	3%	6%	2%	4%	5%
21-25 minutes	0%↓	1%↑	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
26-30 minutes	1%	2%	4%↑	1%	2%	7%	3%↑	0%↓	7%↑
More than 30 minutes	1%	1%	4%↑	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	3%
n =	*975*	*782*	*970*	*155*	*117*	*106*	*151*	*174*	*137*

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to have said it took less than five minutes to vote (27%).
- Have seen a fall in the proportion saying it took less than five minutes to vote (down to 27% in 2023, from 47% in 2020). The proportion saying it took five to 10 minutes to vote has increased (up to 44% in 2023, from 30% in 2020) and more than 30 minutes has also increased (up to 5% in 2023, from 0% in 2020).

Māori:
- Have seen a fall in the proportion saying it took less than five minutes to vote (down to 34% in 2023, from 47% in 2020) and a rise in the proportion saying it took 16 to 20 minutes to vote (up to 5% in 2023, from 1% in 2020). The proportion saying it took more than 30 minutes to vote has also increased (up to 6% in 2023, from 0% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen a fall in the proportion saying it took less than five minutes to vote (down to 35% in 2023, from 54% in 2020). The proportion saying it took 26 to 30 minutes to vote has increased (up to 7% in 2023, from 0% in 2020).

Satisfaction with the length of time taken to vote

[% Among those who voted]

The vast majority (93%) of those who voted said it took a reasonable amount of time, given what they had to do. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (98%). Seven percent said the voting process took too long, which is significantly higher than in 2020 (2%).

Table 37: Satisfaction with the length of time taken to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
A reasonable amount of time given what you had to do	96%	98%	93%↓	93%	96%	89%↓	96%	96%	92%	94%	95%	92%
Too long	3%↑	2%↓	7%↑	6%	3%	10%↑	3%	0%	8%↑	6%	5%	5%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%↑	1%	1%	0%	1%	4%	0%	0%	0%	3%
n =	975	781	963	192	98	148	159	88	158	128	106	115

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
A reasonable amount of time given what you had to do	96%	98%	93%↓	96%	99%	85%↓	97%	98%	94%
Too long	3%↑	2%↓	7%↑	3%	1%	11%↑	3%	2%	6%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%↑	1%	0%	4%↑	0%	0%	0%
n =	975	781	963	156	117	106	150	174	134

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion saying it took a reasonable amount of time to vote (down to 89% in 2023, from 96% in 2020), while the proportion saying it took too long increased (up to 10% in 2023, from 3% in 2020).

Māori:
- Have seen an increase in the proportion saying it took too long to vote (up to 8% in 2023, from 0% in 2020).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to feel it took a reasonable amount of time (85%).
- Have seen a drop in the proportion saying it took a reasonable amount of time to vote (down to 85% in 2023, from 99% in 2020), while the proportion saying it took too long increased (up to 11% in 2023, from 1%).

Satisfaction with the convenience of the voting location

[% Among those who voted]

Satisfaction with the convenience of the voting location was very high, with almost all (96%) rating it four or five out of five. Overall and across most groups, the convenience of voting locations was rated consistently with the 2020 General Election.

Table 38: Satisfaction with the convenience of the voting location

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	87%	85%	84%	78%	79%	82%	87%	83%	77%	83%	75%	72%
4	11%	13%	12%	16%	20%	11%	8%	16%	14%	12%	20%	20%
3	2%	1%	2%	4%	1%	5%	4%	2%	7%↑	4%	4%	3%
2	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
n =	*978*	*782*	*970*	*192*	*99*	*149*	*160*	*88*	*160*	*129*	*107*	*116*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	87%	85%	84%	80%	82%	77%	85%	86%	80%
4	11%	13%	12%	16%	16%	17%	12%	12%	14%
3	2%	1%	2%	4%	1%	3%	3%	1%	2%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*970*	*157*	*117*	*106*	*151*	*174*	*137*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Māori and Pacific peoples are less likely than average to rate voting locations a five out of five (77% and 72% respectively).

Satisfaction with how identifiable the voting place was

[% Among those who voted]

Three quarters of voters (78%) rated voting place identifiability a four or five out of five. Very few voters feel voting places were poorly identifiable.

Table 39: Satisfaction with how identifiable the voting place was

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	78%	79%	78%	69%	73%	73%	79%	78%	78%	81%	72%	69%
4	16%	13%	17%↑	20%	16%	18%	12%	15%	14%	14%	22%	23%
3	4%	5%	3%↓	8%	8%	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	2%	4%
2	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	1%	3%	1%
1 - Poor	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	78%	79%	78%	74%	78%	74%	75%	76%	76%
4	16%	13%	17%↑	16%	17%	20%	17%	13%	14%
3	4%	5%	3%↓	10%↑	3%↓	3%	5%	6%	4%
2	1%	2%	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%	2%	1%
1 - Poor	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	3%	3%	3%
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples are less likely than average to rate the identifiability of voting places a five out of five (69%).

Satisfaction with having easy to find voting screens

[% Among those who voted]

Two thirds of voters (68%) rated the ease of finding the voting screens at voting places excellent. This is significantly lower than seen in 2020 (81%).

Please note, in 2017 the wording of this question rated the ease of voting *booths*.

Table 40: Satisfaction with having easy to find voting screens

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	84%	81%	68%↓	73%	77%	58%↓	83%	79%	61%↓	84%	69%	58%
4	13%	11%	15%↑	23%	14%	2%↓	14%	8%	13%	13%	26%	22%
3	2%	3%	5%↑	3%	6%	10%	3%	5%	10%	2%	3%	10%↑
2	1%	0%	1%↑	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%↑	1%	2%	2%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	1%↑	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%
n =	*978*	*782*	*970*	*192*	*99*	*149*	*160*	*88*	*160*	*129*	*107*	*116*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	84%	81%	68%	77%	84%	65%	83%	82%	71%
4	13%	11%	15%	21%↑	11%↓	17%	13%	9%	12%
3	2%	3%	5%	1%	2%	6%	2%	2%	2%
2	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%
n =	*978*	*782*	*970*	*157*	*117*	*106*	*151*	*174*	*137*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to rate having easy to find voting screens a five out of five (58%).
- Have seen a downward turn in the proportion rating having easy to find voting screens a five out of five (down to 58% in 2023, from 77% in 2020).

Māori:
- Have seen a downward turn in the proportion rating having easy to find voting screens a five out of five (down to 61% in 2023, from 79% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to rate having easy to find voting screens a five out of five (58%).

Satisfaction with having easy to find paper ballot boxes

[% Among those who voted]

Eighty percent of voters rated the ease of finding the paper ballot boxes as excellent. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (85%). However, very few rated this aspect of the voting process as poor.

Table 41: Satisfaction with having easy to find ballot boxes

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	82%	85%	80%↓	70%↓	82%↑	72%	81%	82%	74%	81%	72%	68%
4	13%	12%	15%	21%↑	9%↓	22%↑	10%	18%	18%	14%	27%	21%
3	2%	2%	3%	5%	4%	4%	6%	0%	4%↑	2%	0%	5%↑
2	1%	1%	0%↓	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	82%	85%	80%↓	76%↓	87%↑	77%	77%↓	86%↑	78%
4	13%	12%	15%	20%↑	11%↓	20%	16%	10%	16%
3	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	3%
2	1%	1%	0%↓	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Younger people and Pacific peoples are less likely than average to rate having easy to find ballot boxes a five out of five (72% and 68% respectively).

Overall satisfaction with the ease of placing your vote

[% Among those who voted]

The majority of voters (83%) rated the overall ease of placing their vote as excellent. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (88%).

Table 42: Overall satisfaction with the ease of placing your vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	88%	88%	83%↓	81%	85%	81%	88%	93%	81%↓	86%	75%	70%
4	10%	11%	12%	15%	12%	11%	10%	7%	14%	11%	22%	22%
3	1%	0%	3%↑	4%	0%	4%↑	2%	0%	3%↑	2%	1%	4%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	4%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	88%	88%	83%↓	80%↓	91%↑	77%↓	88%	89%	82%
4	10%	11%	12%	15%	8%	17%↑	11%	8%	14%
3	1%	0%	3%↑	4%	1%	4%	1%	1%	1%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Māori:
- Have seen a fall in the proportion rating the overall ease of placing their vote a five out of five (down to 81% in 2023, from 93% in 2020).

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to rate the ease of placing their vote as five out of five (70%).

Asian peoples:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion rating the overall ease of placing their vote a five out of five (down to 77% in 2023, from 91% in 2020).

Satisfaction with the voting papers having clear instructions

[% Among those who voted]

Three quarters of voters (76%) rated the voting papers as excellent on having clear instructions. This is significantly lower than the 2020 finding (83%). Very few rated this aspect of the voting process as poor.

Table 43: Satisfaction with the voting papers having clear instructions

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	81%	83%	76%↓	74%	74%	74%	79%	83%	75%	80%	80%	70%
4	15%	15%	18%	21%	21%	15%	16%	15%	17%	13%	19%	25%
3	3%↑	1%↓	5%↑	4%	1%	10%↑	2%	0%	4%↑	6%↑	1%↓	3%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%	2%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Poor – 1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*1,005*	*198*	*100*	*155*	*163*	*91*	*162*	*135*	*108*	*122*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	81%	83%	76%↓	72%	70%	63%	76%	84%	67%↓
4	15%	15%	18%	22%	28%	28%	18%	12%	27%↑
3	3%↑	1%↓	5%↑	5%	1%	6%↑	2%	1%	3%
2	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Poor – 1	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*1,005*	*165*	*119*	*117*	*155*	*185*	*144*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Asian people:
- Are less likely than average to rate voting papers as having clear instructions a five out of five (63%).

People with a disability:
- Are less likely than average to rate voting papers as having clear instructions a five out of five (67%).
- Have seen a downturn in the proportion rating voting papers as having clear instructions a five out of five (down to 67% in 2023, from 84% in 2020).

Satisfaction with the ease of finding the name of the person or party

[% Among those who voted]

Three quarters of voters (79%) feel the voting papers were excellent for easily finding the person or party they wanted to vote for. Very few rated this aspect of the voting process as poor.

Table 44: Satisfaction with the ease of finding the name of the person or party

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	84%↑	80%↓	79%	81%	75%	83%	85%	75%	79%	81%	76%	70%
4	12%↓	17%↑	16%	14%	21%	10%↓	12%	19%	13%	16%	22%	22%
3	3%	1%	4%↑	4%	1%	6%↑	1%	0%	4%↑	1%	1%	4%
2	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%↓	5%↑	2%	0%	0%	0%
Poor – 1	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%
n =	1,000	797	1,005	198	100	155	163	91	162	135	108	122

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	84%↑	80%↓	79%	79%	71%	71%	80%	77%	71%
4	12%↓	17%↑	16%	16%	25%	19%	15%	19%	21%
3	3%	1%	4%↑	3%	2%	7%	3%	1%	4%
2	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Poor – 1	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	2%	0%
n =	1,000	797	1,005	165	119	117	155	185	144

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples and people with a disability are less likely than average to rate the ease of finding the name of the person or party they wished to vote a five out of five (70% and 71% respectively).

Satisfaction with the privacy of the voting screen

[% Among those who voted]

Just over two thirds (69%) of all voters said that the privacy of the voting booths was excellent. This is significantly lower than the 74% seen in 2020.

Please note, in 2017 the wording of this question rated the privacy of the voting *booth*.

Table 45: Satisfaction with the privacy of the voting screen

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	69%↓	74%↑	69%↓	57%	61%	54%	71%	68%	70%	65%	73%	62%
4	22%	19%	19%	31%	25%	25%	18%	21%	15%	23%	26%	26%
3	7%	5%	6%	8%	9%	12%	8%	7%	10%	9%↑	1%↓	4%
2	1%	1%	3%↑	2%	3%	4%	2%	5%	5%	3%	1%	3%
Poor – 1	1%	0%	1%↑	2%	1%	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
n =	*978*	*788*	*1,005*	*194*	*99*	*155*	*161*	*90*	*162*	*131*	*107*	*122*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	69%↓	74%↑	69%↓	59%↓	75%↑	63%↓	65%	73%	65%
4	22%	19%	19%	29%	19%	19%	26%	18%	18%
3	7%	5%	6%	10%	5%	7%	6%	5%	4%
2	1%	1%	3%↑	0%	0%	7%↑	1%	3%	3%
Poor – 1	1%	0%	1%↑	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*788*	*1,005*	*159*	*118*	*117*	*150*	*179*	*144*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Younger people:
- Are less likely than average to rate the privacy of the voting screen a five out of five (54%).

Asian peoples:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion rating the privacy of the voting screen a five out of five (down to 63% in 2023, from 75% in 2020).

Satisfaction with the layout of the general election ballot paper

[% Among those who voted]

Two thirds of voters (66%) rated the layout of the ballot paper as excellent. This is significantly lower than the 2020 result (73%).

Table 46: Satisfaction with the layout of the ballot paper

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	75%	73%	66%↓	69%	69%	64%	77%↑	64%↓	66%	77%	71%	56%↓
4	18%	20%	24%↑	25%	24%	23%	16%	26%	21%	17%	27%	34%
3	5%	5%	7%	3%	7%	10%	6%	7%	9%	4%	1%	5%
2	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%↑	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%	0%
Poor – 1	0%	0%	1%↑	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*1,005*	*198*	*100*	*155*	*163*	*91*	*162*	*135*	*108*	*122*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Excellent – 5	75%	73%	66%↓	71%	71%	59%	69%	73%	62%↓
4	18%	20%	24%↑	18%	25%	26%	23%	19%	29%↑
3	5%	5%	7%	7%	3%	10%↑	5%	6%	5%
2	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	2%
Poor – 1	0%	0%	1%↑	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*1,005*	*165*	*119*	*117*	*155*	*185*	*144*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely than average to rate the layout of the ballot paper a five out of five (56%).
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion rating the layout of the ballot paper a five out of five (down to 56% in 2023, from 71% in 2020).

People with a disability:
- Have seen a downward shift in the proportion rating the layout of the ballot paper a five out of five (down to 62% in 2023, from 73% in 2020).

Overall satisfaction with the ballot paper

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly three quarters (71%) of voters said that the ballot paper was excellent overall. This is consistent with the 2020 result (72%).

Table 47: Overall satisfaction with the ballot paper

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	77%↑	72%↓	71%	74%↑	62%↓	75%↑	76%↑	62%↓	71%	77%	73%	62%
4	17%↓	24%↑	21%	19%↓	35%↑	19%↓	17%↓	33%↑	20%↓	18%	24%	31%
3	4%	3%	5%↑	5%	3%	3%	6%	5%	5%	4%	1%	3%
2	1%	0%	1%↑	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*1,005*	*196*	*100*	*155*	*163*	*91*	*162*	*131*	*108*	*122*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	77%↑	72%↓	71%	69%	69%	63%	74%	68%	67%
4	17%↓	24%↑	21%	24%	27%	27%	18%	25%	27%
3	4%	3%	5%↑	4%	3%	6%	5%	5%	2%
2	1%	0%	1%↑	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*1,005*	*163*	*119*	*117*	*156*	*185*	*144*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Younger people have seen a rise in the proportion rating the ballot paper as excellent overall (up to 75% in 2023, from 62% in 2020).

Rating of voting place staff being pleasant and polite

[% Among those who voted]

The majority (88%) of voters rated the staff as excellent on being pleasant and polite, with very few rating them as poor. This is consistent with the 2020 General Election.

Table 48: Rating of voting place staff being pleasant and polite

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	87%	85%	88%	83%	79%	88%	88%	78%	84%	88%	79%	83%
4	9%	12%	9%↓	15%	17%	6%↓	9%	18%	10%	6%↓	18%↑	11%
3	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	5%	3%	3%	3%	5%	0%	4%↑
2	0%	0%	1%↑	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%
1 - Poor	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	87%	85%	88%	78%	84%	76%	88%	88%	84%
4	9%	12%	9%↓	18%	16%	19%	6%	8%	13%
3	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%	5%	3%	1%
2	0%	0%	1%↑	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
1 - Poor	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Asian people are less likely than average to rate voting place staff being pleasant and polite a five out of five (76%).

Rating of voting place staff's ability to answer questions

[% Among those who voted]

Just over two thirds of voters (69%) who asked questions rated the voting place staff's ability to answer these as excellent. This is consistent with the 2020 General Election results.

Table 49: Rating of voting place staff's ability to answer questions

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	65%↓	71%↑	69%	65%	76%	77%	69%	65%	67%	79%	72%	69%
4	9%	10%	12%	13%	12%	11%	9%↓	19%↑	13%	8%	22%	19%
3	3%	4%	3%	3%	7%	5%	5%	1%	6%↑	5%	2%	4%
2	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
1 - Poor	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%
n =	978	782	970	192	99	149	160	88	160	129	107	116

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	65%↓	71%↑	69%	68%↓	80%↑	69%	63%	68%	66%
4	9%	10%	12%	17%	14%	17%	10%	9%	15%
3	3%	4%	3%	4%	1%	7%↑	3%	4%	3%
2	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%
1 - Poor	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
n =	978	782	970	157	117	106	151	174	137

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Younger people are more likely than average to rate voting place staff's ability to answer questions a five out of five (77%).

Rating of the efficiency of voting place staff

[% Among those who voted]

Consistent with the 2017 and 2020 General Elections, 80% of voters rated staff efficiency as excellent.

Table 50: Rating of the efficiency of voting place staff

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific Peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	81%	79%	80%	75%	67%	74%	86%↑	72%↓	78%	81%	77%	73%
4	15%	17%	15%	19%	24%	18%	9%↓	23%↑	14%	13%	18%	22%
3	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%	4%	5%	3%	2%	4%	2%	3%
2	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%	1%	5%↑	3%	1%	1%
1 - Poor	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%
n =	978	782	966	192	99	149	160	88	159	129	107	114

	Total			Asian Peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	81%	79%	80%	75%	80%	71%	83%	82%	79%
4	15%	17%	15%	19%	19%	23%	14%	14%	14%
3	2%	3%	3%	4%	0%	3%	2%	2%	6%
2	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%	2%	0%
1 - Poor	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
n =	978	782	966	157	117	106	151	174	135

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Māori:
- Are more likely than average to rate the efficiency of voting place staff a two out of five (5%).
- The five percent rating two out of five is a significant increase on the one percent observed in 2020.

Pacific peoples:
- Are more likely than average to rate the efficiency of voting staff a four out of five (22%). The percentage of Pacific peoples rating the efficiency of voting place staff either four or five out of five is similar to the total population, however.

Asian peoples:
- Are more likely than average to rate the efficiency of voting staff a four out of five (23%). The percentage of Asian peoples rating the efficiency of voting place staff a four or five out of five is similar to the total population, however.

Rating of how comfortable and welcome voters felt

[% Among those who voted]

Most voters (82%) rated the comfort and the welcome they felt as excellent. Note that this question was first asked in 2020.

Table 51: Rating of how comfortable and welcome voters felt

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific Peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	-	80%	82%	-	74%	77%	-	73%	77%	-	73%	76%
4	-	17%	14%	-	24%	15%	-	21%	12%	-	23%	21%
3	-	2%	4%	-	1%	7%	-	6%	10%	-	2%	3%
2	-	1%	1%	-	1%	1%	-	0%	1%	-	0%	0%
1 - Poor	-	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	-	0%	0%	-	3%	0%
n =	-	782	964	-	99	149	-	88	160	-	107	113

	Total			Asian Peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	-	80%	82%	-	85%	75%	-	81%	78%
4	-	17%	14%	-	13%	19%	-	16%	19%
3	-	2%	4%	-	0%	4%	-	2%	4%
2	-	1%	1%	-	2%	2%	-	0%	2%
1 - Poor	-	0%	0%	-	1%	0%	-	0%	0%
n =	-	782	964	-	117	106	-	174	136

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Māori are more likely than average to rate the comfort and welcome they felt as three out of five (10%).

Pacific peoples are more likely than average to rate the comfort and welcome they felt as four out of five (21%).

Overall rating of the voting place staff

[% Among those who voted]

Most voters (85%) said 'excellent' when asked to provide an overall rating of staff at their voting place. This is consistent with the proportions seen in 2017 and 2020. Also consistent with 2017 and 2020, zero percent of voters rated staff poor.

Table 52: Overall rating of the voting place staff

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	84%	83%	85%	78%	74%	87%↑	84%	79%	81%	87%	76%	81%
4	12%	14%	12%	18%	24%	8%↓	12%	18%	11%	8%	21%	15%
3	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%	2%	1%	3%
2	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	4%	3%	1%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
n =	*978*	*782*	*966*	*192*	*99*	*148*	*160*	*88*	*160*	*129*	*107*	*113*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	84%	83%	85%	76%	82%	74%	84%	85%	81%
4	12%	14%	12%	20%	17%	23%	12%	12%	15%
3	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
2	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*966*	*157*	*117*	*106*	*151*	*174*	*136*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Māori:
- Are more likely than average to rate voting place staff a two out of five (4%).

Asian peoples:
- Are less likely than average to rate voting place staff excellent (74%) and are more likely to rate them four out of five (23%).

Overall rating of the voting process

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly two thirds of voters (65%) rated the overall voting process as excellent. This is slightly down from 69% in 2020, but this is not a statistically significant change. Consistent with 2017 and 2020, very few people rate the process lowly, with just two percent rating it a one (poor) or two out of five.

Table 53: Overall rating of the voting process

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	71%	69%	65%	61%	62%	68%	75%	62%	60%	76%	84%	64%↓
4	23%	26%	28%	27%	33%	26%	13%↓	33%↑	28%	19%	12%	25%↑
3	4%	3%	5%	11%↑	3%↓	5%	8%	4%	9%	3%	4%	6%
2	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	0%	2%	2%	0%	3%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%
n =	*1,000*	*802*	*997*	*196*	*102*	*154*	*163*	*93*	*162*	*131*	*108*	*118*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 - Excellent	71%	69%	65%	65%	71%	64%	69%	66%	70%
4	23%	26%	28%	26%	27%	27%	23%	28%	20%
3	4%	3%	5%	7%↑	1%↓	7%↑	7%	3%	6%
2	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	3%
n =	*1,000*	*802*	*997*	*163*	*119*	*116*	*156*	*186*	*143*

Note: 'Don't know' responses are not shown.

Demographic analysis

Pacific peoples:
- Are less likely to rate the voting process excellent (64%) than they were in 2020 (84%) and are more likely to rate it four out of five (25%) than they were in 2020 (12%).

Asian peoples:
- Are more likely to rate the voting process three out of five (7%) than they were in 2020 (1%). The increase in the percentage rating three out of five is a return to the level seen in 2017.

Incidence of encountering an issue when voting

[% Among those who voted]

Almost all (96%) of those who voted did not encounter any issues while voting. This is consistent with results from the 2017 and 2020 General Elections.

Table 54: Incidence of encountering an issue when voting

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
No issue while voting	95%	94%	96%	96%	95%	96%	91%	94%	92%	97%	96%	95%
Yes, had an issue while voting	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%	3%	7%	5%	8%	3%	4%	2%
n =	999	801	1,002	196	102	155	163	93	162	130	108	122

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
No issue while voting	95%	94%	96%	99%	97%	95%	95%	93%	93%
Yes, had an issue while voting	5%	5%	4%	0%	2%	3%	3%	6%	7%
n =	999	801	1,002	163	118	117	156	186	141

Demographic analysis

Māori are more likely than average to have had an issue while voting (8%).

Non-voter behaviour and reasons for not voting

Possibility of voting in the 2023 General Election

[% did not vote in 2023 election].

Around two thirds (64%) of people who did not vote in the 2023 General Election said that they had considered doing so. While this percentage is lower than that in the 2020 General Election, it is not significantly lower.

Table 55: Possibility of voting in the New Zealand general election

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**
Yes	53%↓	70%↑	64%	55%↓	74%↑	58%	46%↓	85%↑	83%	57%	63%	45%
No	40%↑	23%↓	29%	37%↑	15%↓	32%	50%↑	5%↓	14%	25%	29%	34%
Not sure	7%	7%	7%	8%	11%	10%	4%	10%	3%	18%	8%	22%
n =	*166*	*162*	*160*	*89*	*51*	*44*	*33*	*34*	*41*	*50*	*30*	*52*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**	**2017**	**2020**	**2023**
Yes	53%↓	70%↑	64%	69%	72%	58%	57%↓	78%↑	71%
No	40%↑	23%↓	29%	15%	16%	32%	40%↑	17%↓	25%
Not sure	7%	7%	7%	15%	12%	10%	2%	5%	4%
n =	*166*	*162*	*160*	*23*	*32*	*38*	*28*	*36*	*16*

Demographic analysis

Māori non-voters are more likely than average to have considered voting (83%) while Pacific non-voters are less likely than average to have considered voting (45%).

When non-voters decided not to vote

[% did not vote in 2023 election].

Thirty-one percent of non-voters made the decision not to vote on election day, a further 22% decided not to vote one to two weeks before, and 25% decided not to vote at least a month before. Nearly a quarter of non-voters (23%) weren't sure when they decided not to vote, this is an increase on the percentage who weren't sure in 2020 and 2017 (6% and 7%, respectively).

Table 56: When non-voters decided not to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
On Election Day	29%	34%	31%	28%	40%	31%	13%↓	49%↑	32%	29%	42%	17%↓
One week before Election Day	18%	19%	16%	18%	26%	15%	21%	24%	17%	36%	15%	14%
Two weeks before	3%↓	7%↑	6%	5%	10%	5%	4%	10%	8%	2%	6%	5%
About a month before	6%	9%	4%	6%	3%	0%	18%	5%	5%	2%	0%	2%
More than a month before	38%↑	24%↓	21%	31%↑	17%↓	15%	38%↑	6%↓	16%	20%	29%	24%
Not sure	7%	6%	23%↑	11%	4%	35%↑	6%	6%	22%↑	11%	9%	39%↑
n =	*165*	*162*	*160*	*88*	*51*	*44*	*33*	*34*	*41*	*50*	*30*	*52*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
On Election Day	29%	34%	31%	27%	40%	33%	36%	33%	29%
One week before Election Day	18%	19%	16%	31%	18%	18%	13%	18%	0%
Two weeks before	3%↓	7%↑	6%	11%	4%	1%	0%	12%	10%
About a month before	6%	9%	4%	0%	10%	6%	6%	13%	10%
More than a month before	38%↑	24%↓	21%	10%	23%	21%	42%↑	19%↓	40%
Not sure	7%	6%	23%↑	21%	5%	20%↑	3%	6%	11%
n =	*165*	*162*	*160*	*22*	*32*	*38*	*28*	*36*	*16*

Demographic analysis

Younger non-voters, Māori non-voters, Pacific non-voters, and Asian non-voters were all more likely to say they weren't sure when they decided not to vote than they were in 2020. Beyond this consistent difference, the only other statistically significant difference from the average, or versus 2020, was Pacific non-voters being less likely to have decided not to vote on election day (17%) than in 2020 (42%).

Amount of effort invested in decision not to vote

[% did not vote in 2023 election].

Non-voters were asked how much effort they put into deciding whether or not to vote. Around a quarter (26%) said they put a lot of thought into the decision, 39% put in some thought, and 35% put in no thought at all. This is consistent with the last two general elections.

Table 57: Amount of effort invested in decision not to vote

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Put a lot of thought into deciding whether or not to vote	29%	31%	26%	17%	18%	25%	31%	51%	28%↓	28%	32%	27%
Put just a little thought into it	38%	38%	39%	44%	46%	34%	28%	31%	43%	35%	34%	22%
Didn't think about it at all	33%	31%	35%	39%	37%	41%	41%↑	18%↓	29%	38%	34%	51%
n =	165	162	160	90	51	44	33	34	41	51	30	52

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
Put a lot of thought into deciding whether or not to vote	29%	31%	26%	33%	15%	21%	32%	39%	21%
Put just a little thought into it	38%	38%	39%	47%	45%	44%	38%	38%	44%
Didn't think about it at all	33%	31%	35%	20%	41%	35%	30%	23%	35%
n =	165	162	160	21	32	38	28	36	16

Demographic analysis

Māori non-voters:

- Are less likely to say they put a lot of thought into deciding whether or not to vote (28%) than they were in 2020 (51%). The 2023 result is consistent with the 2017 result.

Pacific non-voters:

- Are more likely than average to say they didn't think about voting at all (51%) and less likely than average to say they just put a little thought into it (22%).

Reasons for not voting

[% did not vote in 2023 election].

Non-voters were asked the main reason why they didn't vote in the 2023 election, and then what other reasons, if any, that they had. Non-voters were not prompted with a list of reasons, instead the interviewers had a pre-code list available to code responses into, as well as an opportunity to record verbatim other reasons not on the pre-code list.

In the following table, the main and total reasons are listed and compared to the previous general election. Please note that there are some differences in reasons between the elections and that statistical significance has not been tested. For easier interpretation, reasons have been grouped into high-level codes.

Non-voters most common reasons for not voting fell into three groups:

(1) Personal barriers (e.g., personal commitments, work commitments, health reasons). Eighteen percent of non-voters named a personal barrier as a main reason for not voting and 25% named it as either a main or other barrier.

(2) Issues to do with the voting process (e.g., not getting to the voting place on time, not being enrolled, not knowing how to vote). Sixteen percent said something related to the voting process was their main reason for not voting. In total, 25% of non-voters said the voting process was either a main or other reason for them not voting.

(3) Not knowing who to vote for (e.g., not knowing the candidates, didn't know who to vote for). Fifteen percent of non-voters said not knowing who to vote for was a main reason for them not voting and in total 22% said this was a main or other reason for them not voting.

Beyond these three groups of reasons, the practical access barrier group of reasons (8% said it was their reason and 13% said it was their main or other reason for not voting) and not believing in voting (9% main reason, 12% main or other) were the most frequently mentioned reasons.

Table 58: Main and total reasons for not voting*

	Main reason		Total reasons	
	2020	**2023**	2020	**2023**
Didn't know who to vote for	**22%**	**15%**	**25%**	**22%**
Didn't know who to vote for	17%	5%	20%	6%
Couldn't work out who to vote for	5%	8%	6%	12%
Didn't know the candidates	0%	3%	0%	6%
Voting process	**7%**	**16%**	**13%**	**25%**
Wasn't enrolled	4%	6%	5%	9%
Didn't know where to vote	2%	1%	3%	5%
Didn't get to the voting place on time	1%	7%	4%	8%
Didn't know how to vote	0%	3%	0%	4%
Didn't know when to vote	0%	0%	0%	4%
Couldn't work out how to vote in the referendums	0%	-	1%	-
Personal barrier	**28%**	**18%**	**35%**	**25%**
Had personal commitments	11%	5%	16%	10%
Religious reasons not to vote	8%	2%	9%	2%
Had work commitments	5%	7%	7%	10%
Health reasons	3%	5%	5%	7%
Disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Practical access barrier	**2%**	**8%**	**2%**	**13%**
Voting place too far away/no transport	0%	1%	1%	1%
Away from home but still in New Zealand	1%	0%	1%	6%
Religious day (i.e., Sabbath, Holy Day)	1%	1%	1%	1%
Overseas at the time	0%	6%	0%	7%
Other				
Don't believe in voting/couldn't be bothered	11%	9%	13%	12%
I forgot	4%	4%	5%	8%
COVID-19/other illness	0%	0%	1%	0%
Wasn't aware of election	0%	1%	0%	2%
Bad weather on voting day	0%	2%	0%	3%
Others	25%	19%	34%	23%
No particular reason	2%	3%	2%	3%
Not sure	0%	4%	8%	18%
n =	*162*	*160*	*162*	*160*

Notes:

* *Main reason is single response; total reasons include main plus any other reason(s) given for not voting.*

Confidence in fair and impartial elections

Electoral Commission conduct parliamentary elections fairly

Nearly threequarters (74%) of all eligible voters rate their confidence in the Electoral Commission to conduct parliamentary elections fairly a four or five (total confidence) out of five. This is statistically significantly lower than the 87% seen in 2020, but in line with the 78% seen in 2017. Seven percent of eligible voters rated their confidence a one (no confidence) or two out of five, again significantly higher than in 2020 (3%) but in line with 2017 (6%).

The increase in ratings from 2017 to 2020 and then a subsequent drop in 2023 is consistent with the pattern of ratings amongst the government agencies included in Verian's Public Sector Reputation Index[1] and is due to spike in public sentiment towards government agencies due to the initial handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 59: Confidence that The Electoral Commission conducts elections fairly

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 – Total confidence	57%	59%	51%↓	35%	49%↑	34%↓	45%	53%	31%↓	41%	44%	31%↓
4	21%	28%↑	23%↓	24%	33%	26%	21%	29%	26%	17%	33%↑	24%
3	17%	10%↓	19%↑	30%	14%↓	30%	25%	13%↓	27%↑	34%	17%↓	26%↑
2	4%	2%↓	4%↑	7%	4%	7%	6%	5%	9%	4%	2%	11%↑
1 – No confidence	2%	1%	3%↑	4%	1%↓	3%	4%	0%↓	7%↑	4%	3%	9%↑
n =	*1,165*	*976*	*1,165*	*284*	*152*	*199*	*196*	*134*	*203*	*180*	*146*	*174*

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 – Total confidence	57%	59%	51%↓	52%	49%	42%	49%	63%↑	51%↓	31%	31%	28%
4	21%	28%↑	23%↓	20%	36%↑	23%	22%	23%	22%	18%	32%↑	18%↓
3	17%	10%↓	19%↑	24%	13%↓	23%↑	21%	7%↓	18%↑	39%	27%↓	35%
2	4%	2%↓	4%↑	3%	1%	8%↑	4%	5%	7%	5%	6%	10%
1 – No confidence	2%	1%	3%↑	0%	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%	7%	4%	9%
n =	*1,165*	*976*	*1,165*	*186*	*149*	*155*	*184*	*228*	*160*	*165*	*162*	*160*

Demographic analysis

Younger people (60%), Māori (57%), Pacific peoples (55%), Asian peoples (65%), and non-voters (46%) are all less likely than average (74%) to rate their confidence that the Electoral Commission conducts elections fairly a four or five out of five. These same groups, except for younger people, are also more likely than average to rate their confidence a one or two out of five (Māori 15%, Pacific peoples 20%, Asian peoples 13%, non-voters 19%).

Compared to 2020, confidence in the Electoral Commission to conduct elections fairly (% rating 4 or 5 out of 5) has dropped amongst: younger people (82% to 60%), Māori (82% to 57%), Pacific peoples (77% to 55%), Asian peoples (85% to 65%), people with a disability (86% to 73%), and non-voters (63% to 46%). However, as with the overall result, the percentage of each these demographic groups rating their confidence a four or five out of five is in line with the 2017 results (i.e., 2023 is not statistically significantly different to 2017). Pacific peoples and Asian peoples are more likely to rate their confidence a one or two out of five than they were in 2017 (Pacific peoples 20% in 2023 versus 8% in 2017 and Asian peoples 13% in 2023 versus 3% n 2017).

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[1] https://www.veriangroup.com/insights/thought-leadership/public-sector-reputation-index-nz

Electoral Commission staff conduct Parliamentary elections impartially

Seventy-three percent of all eligible voters rate their confidence in Electoral Commission staff to conduct parliamentary elections impartially a four or five (total confidence) out of five. This is statistically significantly lower than the 85% seen in 2020 and the 79% seen in 2017. Six percent of eligible voters rated their confidence a one (no confidence) or two out of five, significantly higher than in 2020 (3%) but in line with 2017 (5%).

Table 60: Confidence that Electoral Commission staff conduct parliamentary elections impartially

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 – Total confidence	57%	59%	49%↓	34%	48%↑	35%↓	42%	48%	28%↓	39%	46%	32%↓
4	22%	26%↑	24%	29%	26%	23%	24%	27%	26%	19%	31%↑	19%↓
3	16%	12%↓	20%↑	30%	22%	32%↑	25%	21%	37%↑	33%	15%↓	34%↑
2	3%	2%	4%↑	3%	1%	8%↑	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%	7%
1 – No confidence	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	5%	0%↓	6%↑	6%	5%	8%
n =	1,165	976	1,165	284	152	199	196	134	203	180	146	174

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 – Total confidence	57%	59%	49%↓	46%	50%	42%	49%	63%↑	47%↓	32%	34%	25%
4	22%	26%↑	24%	26%	30%	21%	28%	23%	26%	23%	26%	17%↓
3	16%	12%↓	20%↑	24%	16%	29%↑	16%	9%↓	19%↑	35%	32%	36%
2	3%	2%	4%↑	2%	3%	5%	5%	2%	4%	6%	5%	13%↑
1 – No confidence	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%	5%	4%	3%	8%↑
n =	1,165	976	1,165	186	149	155	184	228	160	165	162	160

Demographic analysis

Younger people (58%), Māori (55%), Pacific peoples (51%), Asian peoples (63%), and non-voters (42%) are all less likely than average (73%) to rate their confidence that Electoral Commission staff conduct parliamentary elections impartially a four or five out of five. Pacific peoples (20%) and non-voters (22%) are also more likely than average to rate their confidence a one or two out of five.

Compared to 2020, confidence in Electoral Commission staff to conduct parliamentary elections impartially (% rating 4 or 5 out of 5) has dropped amongst all demographic sub-groups shown in the table above. Compared to 2017, confidence (% rating 4 or 5 out of 5) has dropped amongst Māori (66% to 54%) and non-voters (55% to 42%). Again, compared to 2017, lower levels of confidence (% rating 1 or 2 out of 5) have increased amongst Pacific peoples (9% to 16%), Asian peoples (3% to 8%), and non-voters (10% to 22%).

Electoral Commission is trustworthy

Just over threequarters (77%) of eligible voters agree that the Electoral Commission is trustworthy, while six percent disagree. This is a much higher level of trust that the public sector average (54%) found in Verian's 2023 Public Sector Reputation Index[2].

Table 61: The Electoral Commission is trustworthy

	Total			18 to 29 years			Māori			Pacific peoples		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 – Strongly agree	-	-	53%	-	-	44%	-	-	29%	-	-	32%
4	-	-	23%	-	-	24%	-	-	25%	-	-	19%
3	-	-	17%	-	-	23%	-	-	30%	-	-	31%
2	-	-	3%	-	-	5%	-	-	12%	-	-	10%
1 – Strongly disagree	-	-	3%	-	-	4%	-	-	5%	-	-	9%
n =		1,165			199			203			174	

	Total			Asian peoples			People with a disability			Non-voters		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
5 – Strongly agree	-	-	53%	-	-	49%	-	-	46%	-	-	32%
4	-	-	23%	-	-	26%	-	-	27%	-	-	23%
3	-	-	17%	-	-	22%	-	-	20%	-	-	31%
2	-	-	3%	-	-	1%	-	-	5%	-	-	7%
1 – Strongly disagree	-	-	3%	-	-	2%	-	-	2%	-	-	7%
n =		1,165			155			160			160	

Demographic analysis

Younger people (68%), Māori (54%), Pacific peoples (51%), and non-voters (55%) are all less likely than average to agree that the Electoral Commission is trustworthy. Māori (17%), Pacific peoples (19%), and non-voters (14%) are also more likely to disagree that the Electoral Commission is more trustworthy than average.

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[2] https://www.veriangroup.com/insights/thought-leadership/public-sector-reputation-index-nz

Appendix A: Overview tables (2023)

Overview: Voters and non-voters

The following table shows results split by voters and non-voters. Only key questions that were asked of both voters and non-voters are shown here. Please refer to the tables in the main report for voter/non-voter specific questions.

Were you enrolled to vote in the New Zealand general election just been?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	90%	100%	56%
Base n =	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*

Why did you initially enrol to vote?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Wanted my opinion to count	41%	43%	25%
You have to, it's the law	16%	14%	26%
Wanted to make a difference	18%	17%	22%
Someone I know encouraged me to	5%	5%	8%
Other reasons	38%	39%	33%
Not sure	6%	5%	10%
Base n =	*1,096*	*1,005*	*91*

Were you eligible to vote in the 2020 New Zealand General Election?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	89%	94%	70%
Base n =	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*

Voting process (% 4 or 5 out of 5)	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Understand the voting process	90%	94%	74%
Understand the enrolling process	90%	94%	76%
How to enrol to vote	89%	94%	73%
How to update your enrolment details	84%	92%	58%
How to vote	94%	99%	75%
Where you can vote	94%	98%	82%
What to do if can't get to a voting place	68%	73%	51%
Base n =	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*

Seen any advertising about how to enrol or vote	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	49%	54%	30%
Base n =	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*

Where did you see or hear that advertising about how to enrol or vote?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Live television	52%	55%	34%
On demand television	11%	11%	15%
Social media website, e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok etc.	33%	33%	36%
Street posters	18%	16%	29%
Website that isn't a social media website	17%	17%	14%
Radio	15%	15%	13%
Mail	8%	9%	5%
All others	10%	11%	7%
Not sure	2%	2%	1%
Base n =	*556*	*504*	*52*
Message outtake by channel grouped to overall	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Don't forget to enrol to vote	37%	38%	27%
Orange Guy/Pup	35%	35%	34%
Enrol. Vote. Be Heard.	21%	22%	16%
It is quick and easy to enrol to vote	17%	14%	31%
Voting starts soon	12%	11%	13%
Makes your voices heard. Vote this election	11%	11%	15%
Voting is easy	10%	10%	10%
There is an election coming up	9%	8%	12%
Getting your EasyVote card makes voting easy	7%	7%	7%
Vote anytime between 2 and 14 October	5%	5%	2%
All other messages	37%	37%	37%
Not sure	12%	12%	11%
Base n =	*545*	*494*	*51*
Do you recall receiving your EasyVote pack in the mail?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	87%	90%	68%
Base n =	*1,096*	*1,005*	*91*
Which of these categories best describes what you did with the EasyVote pack?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Read most or all of it	45%	48%	20%
Read some of it	24%	24%	29%
Glanced at it	16%	16%	18%
Didn't read it	14%	12%	32%
Not sure	1%	1%	1%
Base n =	*946*	*889*	*57*
There was an EasyVote card contained within the pack. Did you find it easily?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	92%	94%	79%
Base n =	*844*	*786*	*58*
On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is not very useful and 5 is very useful, overall, how useful did you find the EasyVote pack?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
(% 4 or 5 out of 5, excluding don't know)	81%	83%	71%
Base n =	*825*	*775*	*50*

Appendix B: Sample profile

The following table shows the unweighted (i.e. the number of interviews conducted) sample sizes by demographics.

Gender	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Male	532	457	75
Female	629	544	85
Gender diverse	4	4	0
Total	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*

Age	Total	Voters	Non-voters
18-29	155	104	51
30-39	142	104	38
40-49	131	102	29
50-59	186	156	30
60-69	177	169	8
70+	247	241	6
n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*

Ethnicity	Total	Voters	Non-voters
New Zealand European	577	542	35
Māori	203	162	41
Samoan	77	60	17
Cook Island Māori	44	25	19
Tongan	32	23	9
Niuean	11	8	3
Other Pacific Island ethnic group (specify)	25	18	7
Chinese	42	31	11
Indian	62	46	16
Other Asian ethnic group	52	41	11
New Zealander / Kiwi	38	36	2
Other ethnic group	43	38	5
Rather not say	7	6	1
n =	*1,065*	*1,005*	*160*

Highest completed qualification	Total	Voters	Non-voters
No qualification	112	86	26
School Certificate or NCEA level 1	121	103	18
Sixth Form Certificate, University Entrance or NCEA Level 2	132	110	22
Bursary, Scholarship or NCEA level 3 or 4	87	72	15
A trade qualification	68	62	6
A certificate or diploma that does not require a degree	142	127	15
A polytech degree	24	22	2
A university degree	225	200	25
Postgraduate qualification, e.g. Honours, Masters, Doctorate	179	168	11
Other	42	33	9
Not sure	20	13	7
Rather not say	13	9	4

Were you born in New Zealand?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	804	714	90
No	358	289	69
Rather not say	3	2	1

n =	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*
Gross household income	**Total**	**Voters**	**Non-voters**
>30k	129	100	29
30-50k	107	91	16
50-70k	93	78	15
70-100k	109	87	22
100-120k	60	53	7
120-150k	87	77	10
150k+	242	233	9
Not sure	214	174	40
Rather not say	124	112	12

n =	*1,165*	*1,005*	*160*

Electoral Commission

Electoral Management System (EMS) Controls Assessment

March 2024

Karl Le Quesne
Electoral Commission
34/42 Manners Street,
Te Aro,
Wellington 6011

28 March 2024

Electoral Management System (EMS) Controls Assessment

Kia ora Karl

Thank you for the opportunity to perform this engagement for the Electoral Commission.

Our engagement was performed, and this report was developed, in accordance with our All of Government Consultancy Services Order (CSO) dated 12 June 2023, and is subject to the terms and conditions outlined in the CSO. Our work was limited to the specific procedures and analysis described in the CSO. Our work was performed in July and October 2023 with interim findings from stage one shared in August 2023.

The observations in this report are based off the evidence gathered throughout the engagement, and are limited by the accuracy of the information provided by the Electoral Commission.

I would like to thank the staff members that we have directly worked with for their time and contribution. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or require further information.

Ngā mihi,

Partner
PwC New Zealand (Wellington)

Director
PwC New Zealand

Contents

1
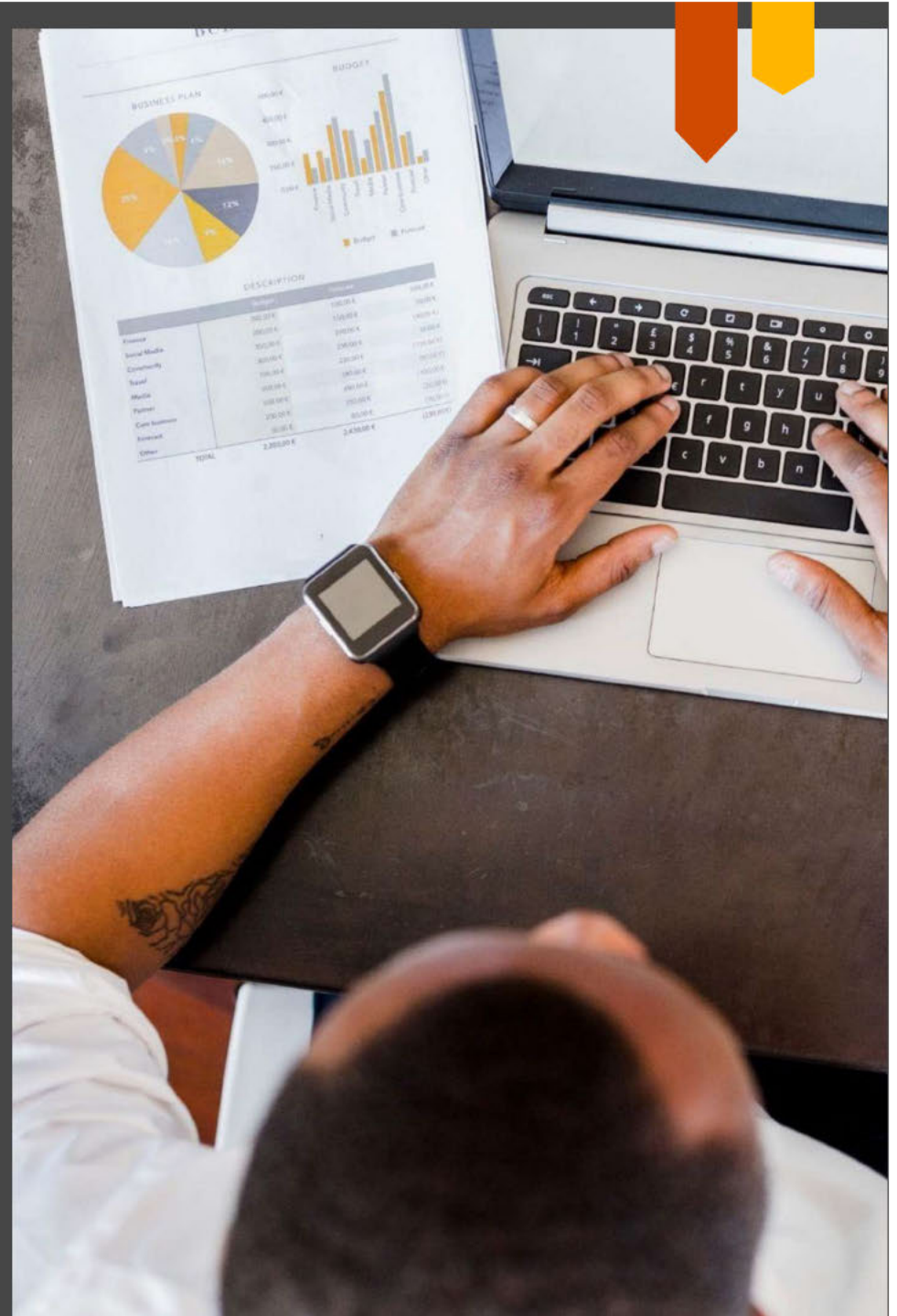
Executive Summary

Executive summary

Background

The Electoral Commission ("the Commission") largely operates paper-based process documents / business rules that the regional staff are expected to adhere to. These are largely contained in the Operations Manual distributed by Voting Services prior to each election.

We were asked to complete a two-stage internal audit of the finance components of the Electoral Management System (EMS) systems which the regional offices use for accounts payable, some human resource functions and budgeting.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the work completed by PwC and the Commission over the course of the engagement.

Objective and approach

The objective of this assessment was to provide the Electoral Commission with assurance over their current EMS financial processes, and to provide pragmatic recommendations to reduce the risk of incorrect and / or inaccurate financial records.

This engagement was executed in two stages:

- **Stage One -** We assessed the design of EMS controls against PwC's global good practice guidelines. This included one-on-one interviews and workshops to clarify our understanding. A summary of our interim observations was shared with the Commission in August 2023.

- **Stage Two -** We examined a sample of transactions to identify how effectively key controls had operated in practice.

Scope

This engagement considered the control design for the following sub-processes:

- budgets
- creating a supplier
- entering an invoice for payment
- paying a supplier
- paying an expense claim
- travel bookings
- paying koha
- use of purchase orders
- petty cash
- paying invoices at National Office
- transfer of data from EMS to Business Central
- review of the Cashbook system
- month-end financial procedures.

For each in-scope process, we considered:

1. How the control(s) achieved the Electoral Commission's policy; and

2. How they supported completeness, accuracy, validity, restricted access, and timeliness of these transactions.

Key messages

During Stage One of this engagement, we identified several areas for the Electoral Commission to strengthen processes and controls. In response, the Commission made numerous improvements to the control environment. These improvements were evident in Stage Two of our engagement, with only three medium and one low risk area for the Commission to consider in advance of future elections.

Context

With full knowledge that the financial control environment was suboptimal, the Commission proactively engaged PwC to complete this assessment. Many of the control weaknesses stem from the use of EMS, which is not fit for purpose as a financial management system. As a result there are numerous manual processes and controls in operation across the 65 electorates.

Working within these constraints, the Commission sought PwC's advice on where processes and controls could be strengthened.

Summary of Stage One assessment

Stage One focussed on the design of existing controls within Electorates and, specifically, the EMS controls. By way of context, EMS is only used to manage 5% of the Electoral Commission's budgeted spend.

During Stage One we noted:
- several control gaps
- that there was a risk of unidentified fraudulent or erroneous transactions being processed
- that the comparatively small Electorate budgets should allow Finance to identify any major errors or frauds (i.e. exceeding $10k) - albeit potentially not until after the election.

After Stage One we provided pragmatic control recommendations to help reduce risk for Election 2023.

These recommendations included:
- enhancing and centralising controls for purchase orders and vendor master data
- enhancing controls around bank accounts, Eftpos cards and financial review of expenditure
- improving documentation on financial review processes.

The Commission considered our findings and recommendations and addressed the top risks as efficiently as possible within the constraints of their environment.

Key enhancements implemented included:
1. establishing an HQ Support Role to fulfil financial administration duties
2. scanning all source documents to the National Office to ensure documents are reviewed and paid on time
3. issuing new Eftpos card daily transaction limits
4. conducting monthly national office control check reconciliations (N.b. this was not tested by PwC).

These enhancements represented a significant improvement from Stage One. Residual risk observations, where some risk remains, are discussed in the Stage Two summary.

A summary of the key processes and controls, including any remaining gaps, is included in Appendix II of this report.

Key messages

The majority of key controls that we sampled during Stage Two were found to be operating as designed. The remaining areas of medium and low risk should be considered by the Commission as potential areas of improvement for the next election. More detail on these are included in in Appendix I of this report.

As part of **Stage Two** we tested 27 key controls at the National Office and across five electorates.

East Coast Bays

Kaipara ki Mahurangi

Wairarapa
Hutt South

Waimakariri

Overall, we found…

Medium

Low

The majority (23/26) of key controls tested operated as described

One low-risk observation relating to reporting being unavailable to support EM budget reviews.

Three medium-risk observations:

1. **Approvals -** Some purchase orders tested had not been approved by the HQ Support Role as expected.

2. **Segregation of duties -** HQ Support Role and EM both have the ability to set up creditors within the EMS system.

3. **Non-compliance with the Expense Policy**

   o one instance of an expense claim approved by the EM and not the HQ Support Role

   o one instance where the EM approved an expense claim with no supporting receipt provided.

We note that a number of these exceptions relate directly to the new HQ Support Role. This role was still being embedded across electorates at the time of our Stage Two work.

We recommend Management should confirm the incidents we noted are isolated and have not resulted in inappropriate activity.

Key messages (cont.)

Recommended next steps

In this engagement we observed and made recommendations based on pragmatic and achievable changes to manage risk. Management have already made significant improvements based on our recommendations in Stage One.

In standing up Election 2026 financial controls, there is an opportunity to streamline, simplify and strengthen the design of processes and controls. This will support more effective risk management, and achievement of the Commission's business outcomes.

We recommend our report is revisited to:

- help inform that design work in line with the Commission's risk appetite (N.B. we anticipate that depending on risk appetite, there may be significant investment required in terms of technology centralisation and systemisation)

- ensure the control gaps observed in this report are considered and addressed in preparation for Election 2026.

A summary of the updated results from Stage One, and our Stage Two control sample assessments, are included in the appendices of this report.

Overall management comments

We are grateful for the PWC report that both enabled and shows how we greatly improved the management of risk during the GE2023 election.

The advice received will also be helpful in the design of future general elections.

Emma Gillard
(Finance and Administration Manager)

Appendices

Appendix I

Stage 2 - Summary of control operations assessment

Summary of testing performed

For Stage Two, we visited five electorates (East Coast Bays, Kaipara ki Mahurangi, Waimakariri, Hutt South, and Wairarapa) and the National Office to complete walkthroughs and testing over a sample of key controls to provide insight into how effectively the controls were operating.

The table below outlines a summary of the results of our testing.

Result of our testing		Count
No exceptions noted		23
Extreme risk control failures	*i.e. a weakness with a significant potential impact to the Commission which should be remediated immediately.*	-
High risk control failures	*i.e. a weakness that could compromise internal control and / or operational efficiency and that should be investigated and resolved as a matter of some urgency.*	-
Medium risk control failures	*i.e. a weakness that can undermine the system of internal controls and / or operational efficiency. Management should confirm the incidents are isolated and have not resulted in inappropriate activity.*	3
Low risk control failures	*i.e. a weakness that does not seriously detract from the system of internal control and/or operational efficiency. Issues with a low exposure rating may also be 'housekeeping' in nature.*	1
Overall total of controls tested:		27

The table on the following pages breaks down the controls we tested, outlines a brief summary of our testing approach, and details the results of our assessment. We have not tested every control outlined in Appendix II, but only those explicitly noted in Appendix I.

Summary of testing performed (continued)

Sub-process	Control Ref	Control	Summary of work performed	Priority Rating
Use of purchase orders	C1.2 (New Control)	All invoices are required to be independently reviewed and approved by the HQ Support Role against the PO raised (from 13 Sept onwards).	**Exceptions noted -** Purchase orders were not approved by the HQ Support Role for 4/11 transactions tested across 3 electorate offices. These exceptions occurred within the first 2 weeks of the role being established, whilst noting that testing was limited to after the implementation of the HQ Support role.	Medium
Creating a supplier	C2.1	All changes to vendor details in BC required independent approval through one-up review in Business Central platform. The one-up review is system-controlled. Supporting evidence e.g. bank statement is required to be verified against information within EMS by the reviewer.	Inspected a sample of 5 vendors at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C2.2	EFT payments cannot be processed if the bank account is not approved in the Business Central platform. An error message will appear when entering a vendor payment in BC to a payment journal without an approved bank account. This error message cannot be bypassed.	Sighted default error message when an incorrect bank account in EMS was imported to BC. No exceptions noted.	-
	C2.3 (New Control)	Vendors are independently set up in EMS by the HQ Support Role from 13 Sept onwards to enforce segregation of duties from the EM.	**Exception noted -** HQ Support Role and EM both have the functionality to set up creditors within the EMS system. In practice, one person would upload creditor details into EMS, and the other would mark them as checked. However, there is no evidence held within EMS of who uploaded and checked creditor details, as both roles can create a creditor and mark it as checked.	Medium

Summary of testing performed (continued)

Sub-process	Control Ref	Control	Summary of work performed	Priority Rating
Entering an invoice for payment	C3.1	EMS automatically identifies potential duplicate invoices by matching the invoice name and number with previously paid invoices. This warning cannot be bypassed.	Observed attempt to enter duplicate invoice information at one electorate office. No exceptions noted. However, we have identified that invoice number detail is not a mandatory field to be completed within Dynamics 365 Business Central, therefore the control will only operate if there is no input in this field.	-
Paying a supplier	C4.2	Finance performs a review of an EMS transactions listing to confirm no invoices over $5,000 are processed for payment via EMS, prior to an accounts payable pay run. Invoices over $5,000 must be sent to the National Office for processing along with supporting documentation.	Sighted the preparation and review of a pay run at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C4.3	Segregation of duties is enforced as EMs raise POs, HQ Support Roles review the invoice details against the PO and enters the invoice into EMS, Finance pays the invoice.	Tested a sample of eight purchase orders and invoices across three electorates and the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C4.4	Eftpos cards have an ATM daily withdrawal limit of $1,000 and a daily transaction limit of $5,000.	Sighted confirmation from BNZ for new withdrawal limit, and inspected a sample of five electorate's eftpos cards to confirm limits. No exceptions noted.	-
	C4.6 (New Control)	All invoices (below $5,000) are required to be independently reviewed and approved (by the HQ Support Role) against the PO raised by the EM.	Tested a sample of 30 purchase orders and invoices across five electorates and the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
Transfer of data from EMS to BC	C5.3	The data transfer process is prepared by Financial Accountant and is independently reviewed by one-up (notified through BC generated email) and requires two independent levels of posting approval in BC.	Observed the data transfer process at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-

Summary of testing performed (continued)

Sub-process	Control Ref	Control	Summary of work performed	Priority Rating
Transfer of data from EMS to BC	C5.4	Access to downloading the EMS file and uploading it into Dynamics 365 Business Central (BC) is limited to Finance.	Enquired with Electorate Manager and HQ Support Role on their accessing rights to Dynamics 365 Business Central and validated that they have no access to Dynamics 365 Business Central. No exceptions noted.	-
Paying invoices at National Office	C6.2	"System-enabled checks within BC detects duplicate invoice numbers for the same vendor. It then warns the user that it is a duplicate to prevent duplicate payments. This BC notification cannot be bypassed. Once an invoice number has been paid, it cannot be processed for payment again."	Observed an attempt in EMS to enter a duplicate invoice number. No exceptions noted.	-
	C6.4	Invoices over $5,000 are sent to the National Office and independently approved by Regional Managers then processed by accountants in the Finance Team.	Tested a sample of 5 invoices over $5,000 in value at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
Paying an expense claim	C7.3	Expense claims from staff members under EMs must be approved by EM and independently reviewed by the HQ Support Role. Expense claims from EMs must be approved by the RMs through BC's electronic approval process.	**Exceptions noted -** Of the 25 samples tested, we identified: • One instance of an expense claim approved by the EM and not the HQ Support Role. From further investigation, the person in the HQ Support Role was yet to be trained. • One instance where the EM approved an expense claim for a staff member's dinner with no supporting receipt provided.	Medium
	C7.4 (New Control)	All receipts for expense reimbursements are required to be independently reviewed and approved by the HQ Support Role against the expense reimbursement form.	Inspected a sample of 25 expense reimbursements across five electorates and at National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
Month-end procedures	C9.2	The electorate budget is reviewed by the budget holders at month-end to help monitor whether the budget is on track and that funds are being allocated appropriately.	**Exception noted -** Due to the reporting functionality within the EMS system not being available, EMs were unable to monitor actual spending against the budget.	Low

Summary of testing performed (continued)

Sub-process	Control Ref	Control	Summary of work performed	Priority Rating
Month-end procedures	C9.4	Segregation of duties is enforced as EMs/HQ Support Roles record transaction, National Office Finance Team review financial statements. This is to minimise the risk of errors and fraudulent activities.	Observed segregation of duties across five Electorates and the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C9.5	Bank reconciliations are performed monthly by the EMs to help confirm all financial transactions are accounted for, and that there are no discrepancies between the bank statement and cashbook. HQ Support role will be responsible for entering data into EMS cashbook, so the segregation of duties issue is resolved.	Tested a bank reconciliation at five Electorates. No exceptions noted.	-
Travel booking	C10.1	Travel requests for electorate staff must have one-up approved via a Travel Request form (M39-TRAVEL) prior to travel. The RM must approve in advance for all electoral travel where the cost is likely to exceed $500, as well as a car rental, flights or accommodation.	Tested a sample of five travel requests at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C10.3	Supporting documentation such as receipts should be provided for all travel-related expense reimbursements. These are submitted for approval to Finance as a part of the expense reimbursement process. All personal expense reimbursements requests are required to be independently approved by Finance, against supporting receipts.	Tested a sample of 20 travel-related expense reimbursements across five Electorates and at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-

Summary of testing performed (continued)

Sub-process	Control Ref	Control	Summary of work performed	Priority Rating
Paying koha	C11.2	Pre-approval is required to be obtained from the Chief Executive for all koha payments.	No koha payments were made during the testing period.	-
Petty cash	C12.3	Petty cash fund is capped at $300 for each electorate, and is intended for purchasing office supplies, such as milk and biscuits. After the election, EMs deposit the remaining funds into the electorate cheque account from petty cash.	Four out of five Electorates tested did not hold petty cash on site. No exceptions noted.	-
	C12.4	All petty cash is kept secure in a locked tin, with access limited to only EMs.		
Budgets	C13.2	Finance review and approve all budget changes raised by the EMs prior to updating the budget in EMS.	Validated Finance review at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C13.3	Peer review is performed by Finance to verify the budget data entered in the spreadsheet by the EMs against the amounts loaded into EMS, prior to the budget being finalised and locked down. 'Regional Budget Summary Report' is run and reviewed by RMs before they sign off budgets for their electorates. (not documented, could be email comms or calendar dates). Verify with voting services that current processes are being followed.	Validated Finance review at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C13.4	Finance prepares a spreadsheet of the electorate's budget, which is reviewed and approved by EMs and RMs.	Validated EM and RM review at the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-
	C13.5	Once the budgets has been approved by Finance, systematic restrictions in EMS lock down the budget, preventing unauthorised changes from being made.	Validated restrictions in EM the National Office. No exceptions noted.	-

Appendix II

Stage 1 update - Summary of key controls, gaps and new controls

Key objectives of the EMS financial processes

Financial processes are expected to provide confidence in the completeness, accuracy and validity, restricted access, and timeliness of financial information. We have considered these key objectives when identifying the key controls and control gaps across the in-scope business processes.

Completeness	All relevant financial transactions, records, and information are accurately captured and recorded. Completeness involves verifying that all financial transactions, such as sales, purchases, payments, and receipts, are appropriately documented, and no significant transactions or accounts are omitted.
Accuracy and validity	The integrity and reliability of financial records related to vendor invoices, payments, and liabilities by verifying the accuracy of data entry and coding. Accuracy and validity ensure that POs and invoices are recorded with the correct amounts, vendor details, and appropriate expense categories.
Restricted access	Preventing unauthorised access or manipulation, and maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of financial information. This includes implementing segregation of duties, user access controls, and monitoring mechanisms to prevent unauthorised modifications or misuse of financial information.
Timeliness	Adhering to Policy and guidelines, timely processing of financial transactions, and providing relevant financial information to internal stakeholders in a timely manner. Timeliness includes the efficiency of financial processes, the speed of transaction processing, and the timeliness of payment. This helps to ensure that financial information is available when needed for decision-making and compliance purposes.

Sub process 1: Use of purchase orders

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations			
All purchases over $50 have an approved purchase order. Every purchase made requires retention of a tax receipt/invoice	Discrepancies and irregularities are accurately detected when purchase orders are approved.	Only those with the delegated financial authority will approve POs.	N/A

Current controls:

C1.1 - Retrospective testing is internally conducted by the Finance Business Partner after the election. This includes testing to confirm supporting documentation is in place for each transaction, including Purchase Orders for transactions over $50 (detective, manual control).		-	-
C1.2 - All invoices are required to be independently reviewed and approved by the HQ Support Role against the PO raised (detective, manual control). `Improved Control *`			C1.3 All invoices (below $5,000) are required to be independently reviewed and approved (by the HQ Support Role) against the PO raised by the EM (detect, manual control) `Improved Control`

Control gaps:

G1.1 - The use of physical PO books in each Electorate prevents Finance from reconciling POs to the receipts and invoices until after the election.	G1.4 - Accounts payable and purchasing records are not reconciled at month-end by Finance to detect discrepancies or errors.	G1.5 - No controls in place to track changes made to POs, or to require re-approvals.	-
G1.2 - System-enabled controls are not in place within EMS to ensure supporting documentation is provided.			
G1.3 - Accounts payable and purchasing records are not reconciled at month-end by Finance to detect missing information or anomalies, such as descriptions or quantities.			

EMS controls assessment
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* **Improved Control** Control has been added or enhanced since our August 2023 fieldwork.

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Sub process 2: Creating a supplier

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations:			
All suppliers are set up in EMS and BC.	Vendors' NZBN and bank account details are set up correctly in EMS and BC. Information from the invoice is used to set up the vendor, there is no vendor set-up form.	Electorate Managers set up vendors in EMS.	N/A

Current controls:

C2.1 - Vendor setup requires the provision of proof of a bank account e.g. copy of a bank statement (preventative, automated control).

C2.2 - EFT payments cannot be processed if the bank account is not approved in BC. An error message will appear when entering a vendor payment in BC to a payment journal without an approved bank account. This error message cannot be bypassed (preventative, automated control).

C2.3 - Vendors are independently set up in EMS by the HQ Support to enforce segregation of duties from the EM (prevent, manual control). `Improved Control`

C2.3 - Vendors are independently set up in EMS by the HQ Support to enforce segregation of duties from the EM (prevent, manual control). `Improved Control`

Control gaps:

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
G2.1 - There is no designated form for suppliers to complete in order to capture essential supplier details such as NZBN, GST number and bank account information. Instead, the vendor information listed on the invoice is used for a vendor setup.	*Refer to G2.1*	G2.2 - Limited segregation of duties, as each Electorate Manager is able to create new vendors in EMS, and input invoices into EMS for payment. G2.3 – Both Electorate Manager and HQ Support both have edit access to make changes to vendor masterfile data.	G2.4 - No control to require suppliers to be set up and approved in advance. As such suppliers are often only set up once the invoice is received. This increases the risk of delays in invoice processing and making timely payments.

Sub process 3: Entering an invoice for payment

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All invoices under $5,000 are input into EMS for payment.	Electorate Managers input the Invoice name and number into EMS correctly. Mistakes are caught by the Regional Managers during their visual inspection.	Electorate Managers input invoices into EMS and these are approved by Regional Managers.	N/A
Current controls: C3.1 - All invoices (below $5,000) are required to be independently reviewed and approved (by the HQ Support Role) against the PO raised by the EM (detect, manual control) Improved Control	C3.2 - EMS automatically identifies potential duplicate invoices by matching the invoice name and number with previously paid invoices. This warning cannot be bypassed (preventative, automated control).	-	-
Control gaps: -	-	G3.2 - Limited segregation of duties, as each Electorate Manager is able to initiate and approve purchase orders (POs), execute payments by Eftpos card, record transactions in the cashbook, create new vendors in EMS, and input invoices into EMS.	G3.3 - Aging of invoices under $5,000 in EMS is not monitored against the physical PO books by Finance, which limits visibility over outstanding payment obligations.

Sub process 4: Paying a supplier

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All suppliers are either paid by Eftpos card, Accounts Payable module in EMS or paid by National Office.	Payment methods between Eftpos card, Accounts Payable and National Office are selected correctly. Receipts for Eftpos Card payments are coded correctly. Transactions are recorded in the cashbook or entered into EMS correctly.	Only Electorate Managers have access to the Electorate's Eftpos card. Electorate Managers record Eftpos transactions in the cashbook. Electorate Managers input invoices in Accounts Payable.	N/A

Current controls:

C4.1 - Finance perform a high-level check over the accounts payable transactions processed through the EMS to detect any discrepancies or anomalies. Some of the key areas of focus include accuracy of invoice details, proper coding and classification, and unusual or excessive transactions (preventative, manual control).

C4.2 - Finance performs a review of an EMS transactions listing to confirm no invoices over $5,000 are processed for payment via EMS, prior to an accounts payable pay run. Invoices over $5,000 must be sent to the National Office for processing along with supporting documentation (detective/corrective, manual control).

C4.3 - All invoices (below $5,000) are required to be independently reviewed and approved (by the HQ Support Role) against the PO raised by the EM (detect, manual control). `Improved Control`

C4.4 - All invoices should be processed for payment by Finance. Electorate Managers cannot pay invoices (noting some purchases are paid by Eftpos or expenses) (preventative, manual control).

C4.5 - Eftpos cards have an ATM daily withdrawal limit of $1,000 and a daily transaction limit of $5,000. (preventative, automated control). `Improved Control`

NOTE: Transactions over $5,000 should not be paid by Eftpos cards

C4.6 - Finance reviews the approved invoices for payment every week to check for late approved or erroneous dated invoices.

Control gaps:

G4.1 - There are no controls to notify Finance or Management when upcoming payments are due or flag payments which are overdue.

Refer to G4.1

G4.2 - Finance reviews the approved invoices for payment every week to check for late approved or erroneous dated invoices. However, this is a manual check susceptible to human error.

G4.3 - Limited segregation of duties, as Electorate Managers execute payments by Eftpos card, record transactions in the cashbook, create new vendors in EMS, and input invoices into EMS with no approvals

G4.4 - The overall limit for Eftpos card payments does not restrict Electorate Managers from spending over $5,000 on Eftpos card transactions.

Same as G4.1

Sub process 5: Transfer of data from EMS to BC

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: Data from all electorates is loaded into BC.	Reconciliation ensures data exported from EMS is the same as the data imported into BC.	Only the central Finance team conduct the data transfer.	N/A

Current controls:

C5.1 - Due to the absence of encryption, Finance performs reconciliations of the EMS file against the data in BC to confirm data integrity every time data is transferred (detective, manual control).		C5.4 - Access to downloading the EMS file and uploading it into Dynamics 365 Business Central (BC) is limited to Finance (preventative, IT-enabled).	-
C5.2 - Data from all electorates in EMS is downloaded into a single file to import into BC (preventative, IT-enabled).	C5.3 - The data transfer process has a double review, and a two level posting approval in BC (preventative, manual control).	C5.5 - User access is controlled and monitored by the technical EMS team (preventative, IT-enabled).	

Control gaps:

-	G5.1 - The manual transfer of data between EMS and BC increases the likelihood of data entry errors, such as omissions and incorrect formatting.	-	G5.2 - The manual and disconnected nature of this process increases the risk that invoices may not be paid within 10 working days, in line with Public Sector guidance.

Sub process 6: Paying invoices at National Office (NO)

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All payments over $5,000 are paid by National Office.	Duplicate invoices will be caught based on BC system controls. Finance reviews the transactions to catch unreasonable transactions.	Only National Office should be paying for transactions over $5,000.	N/A

Current controls:

C6.1 - 'EMS – System Specification Accounts Payable' documentation is in place, providing an overview of rules, functions and reports to manage the payment of invoices for each Electorate by NO (preventative, manual and IT-enabled controls).		C6.4 - There is segregation of duties as invoice payments are processed by accountants in the Finance Team but these transactions are approved by others in National Office.	-
	C6.2 - System-enabled checks in BC detect duplicate invoice numbers for the same vendor. It then warns the user that it is a duplicate to prevent duplicate payments (preventative, automated control).		
	C6.3 - Invoices are sent to National Office to be paid. Finance reviews the transactions through visual inspection to check the reasonableness of the transaction prior to payment (preventative, manual control).		

Control gaps:

-	G6.1 - Current practices lack thorough Finance verification of invoice details, including vendor name, invoice number, and amount. No review of vendor bank account details for duplicates and cross-referencing them against employee bank account details has ever been performed by Finance.	-	G6.2 - System-enabled controls are not in place to notify when upcoming payments are due or flag payments which are overdue. This increases the risk that invoices may not be paid within 10 working days, in line with Public Sector guidance.

Sub process 7: Paying an expense claim

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All expenses are attached with an expense claim form and a receipt.	Expense claim form is filled out correctly.	All expenses from those below Electorate Managers are approved by the EM. All expenses from Electorate Managers and Regional Managers are approved by the Central Finance Team.	N/A

Current controls:

C7.1 - Retrospective testing is internally conducted by the Finance Business Partner after the election. This includes testing to confirm supporting documentation is in place for each transaction, including Purchase Orders for transactions over $50 (detective, manual control).

C7.2 - Requirement to provide both a receipt and an appropriately completed expense claim is in place. However, this is not system-enforced (detective, manual control).

C7.4 - All receipts for expense reimbursements are required to be independently reviewed and approved by the HQ Support Role against the expense reimbursement form (prevent, manual control). `Improved Control`

C7.3 - Expense claims from staff members under EMs must be approved by an EM and independently reviewed by the HQ Support Role. Expense claims from EMs and Regional Managers must be processed by Finance. There is a control within Business Central, whereby an RM must approve all EM expense reimbursements (preventative, manual control).

C7.4 - All receipts for expense reimbursements are required to be independently reviewed and approved by the HQ Support Role against the expense reimbursement form (prevent, manual control). `Improved Control`

Sub process 8: Review of cashbook

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All Eftpos card transactions are recorded in the cashbook	Electorate Managers catch discrepancies between the cashbook and bank statements through visual inspection.	Electorate Managers reconcile the cashbook to bank statements	Cashbook is reviewed and reconciled with bank statements at the end of every month.

Current controls:

C8.1 - 'EMS – System Specification CASHBOOK' documentation is in place, providing an overview of rules, functions and reports to manage the incoming and outgoing cash transactions for each Electorate by NO (preventative, manual control).

C8.2 - Retrospective review ("external audit") is conducted by KPMG after the election to validate the completeness, accuracy and validity of the cashbook entries, including purchases, expense claims, and receipts (detective, manual control).

| | | - | - |

Control gaps:

| - | - | G8.1 - The absence of segregation of duties enables the Electorate Managers to both use the Eftpos card and reconcile the cash transactions. No independent review is performed to ensure reconciliations agree to the bank statements. | G8.2 - Lack of real-time monitoring by Finance impacts the Electoral Commission's ability to identify discrepancies or errors promptly, ensuring the accuracy and validity of cashbook entries. |

Sub process 9: Month-end procedures

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All Eftpos card transactions are recorded in the cashbook. All petty cash transactions are recorded in the petty cash spreadsheet.	Transactions are recorded accurately in the cashbook and petty cash spreadsheet. Reconciliations between cashbook and bank statements performed monthly.	Month-end reconciliations are conducted by Electorate Managers.	Done at the end of every month.

Current controls:

C9.1 - Cashbook transactions report is reviewed by the Regional Managers and Finance at month-end to help identify any errors or omissions in recording transactions, and confirm all transactions are assigned to the correct financial month (detective, manual control).

C9.2 - The electorate budget is reviewed by the budget holders at month-end to help monitor whether the budget is on track and that funds are being allocated appropriately (detective, manual control).

C9.3 - Retrospective testing is internally conducted by the Finance Business Partner after the election. This includes testing to confirm supporting documentation is in place for each transaction, including Purchase Orders for transactions over $50 (detective, manual control).

C9.4 - There are relevant checklists and processes in place at National Office for month-end activities (prevent, manual control).

C9.5 - Different individuals are responsible for recording transactions, reviewing financial statements, and approving adjustments to minimise the risk of errors and fraudulent activities (preventive, manual control).

C9.6 - Bank reconciliations are performed monthly by the Electorate Managers and Finance to help confirm all financial transactions are accounted for, and that there are no discrepancies between the bank statement and cashbook (corrective, manual control).

Sub process 10: Travel booking

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: National Office aims to organise all travel through the travel provider, but there are instances where the travel provider is unsuitable e.g. remote areas	Supporting documentation for all travel-related expenses are provided for all travel-related expense reimbursements.	Travel requests for those below Electorate Managers must be approved by Electorate Managers. Travel requests for Electorate Managers themselves are approved by the Regional Manager . The travel policy strictly says Eftpos cards cannot be used for travel	N/A

Current controls:

C10.1 - Travel bookings are made via the National Office, with the exception of the last-minute bookings that are organised by the Electorate Managers. The Electorate Manager approves travel for all electorate staff in advance of their travel using the Travel Request form (M39-TRAVEL). The Regional Manager must approve in advance all electoral travel where the cost is likely to exceed $500, as well as a car rental, flights or accommodation (preventive/detective, manual control).

C10.2 - Partnership with Tandem Travel is in place for corporate travel management, which allows employees to follow established guidelines, such as booking within budget limits (preventive, automated control).

C10.3 - Supporting documentation such as receipts should be provided for all travel-related expense reimbursements. These are submitted for approval to Finance as a part of the expense reimbursement process (detective, manual control).

-

C10.4 - Travel expenses are reviewed as part of month-end procedures where actual travel expenses are compared to budget to monitor and address exceptions, such as overspending (corrective, manual control).

Sub process 11: Paying koha

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness

Current policy expectations:

Policy is in place for koha payments made in relation to community engagement work. Electorate Managers are not meant to make koha payments as they are not meant to be conducting any community engagement work.

Current Controls

C11.1 - Finance review GL transactions to monitor for koha payments made by Electorate Managers and Regional Managers that are not in line with the Policy at month-end (detective, manual control)

C11.2 - Pre-approval is required to be obtained from the Chief Executive for all koha payments (preventive, manual control).

Sub process 12: Petty cash

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations: All petty cash transactions are recorded by the Electorate Managers in the petty cash spreadsheet.	All petty cash purchases must be approved by the Electorate Manager and come with a receipt.	N/A	The petty cash spreadsheet is compared against the actual petty cash amount at the end of every month.

Current controls:

C12.1 - Retrospective testing is internally conducted by the Finance Business Partner after the election. This includes testing to confirm supporting documentation is in place for each transaction, including Purchase Orders for transactions over $50 (detective, manual control).

C12.2 - M38-CASH Petty cash spreadsheet, including the date, the supplier, the amount, and the expenditure description, is used to record petty cash expenditure by the Electorate Managers as soon as it occurs. Regional Managers are expected to review the Electorate's Cashbook and bank reconciliation, and confirm they are reasonable, by last working day of the calendar month (detective, manual control).

C12.3 - Petty cash fund is capped at $300 for each electorate, and is intended for purchasing office supplies, such as milk and biscuits. After the election, Electorate Managers deposit the remaining funds into the electorate cheque account from petty cash (preventive, manual control).

C12.4 - Petty cash is kept secure in a locked tin (preventive, manual control).

Control gaps:

G12.1 - Insufficient monitoring and oversight limits Finance and Regional Managers ability to confirm the fund is being used appropriately, and that any issues or irregularities are addressed in a timely manner.

-

G12.2 - Limited segregation of duties, as each Electorate Manager is able to both spend funds from the petty cash fund and reconcile the transactions.

Same as G12.1

Sub process 13: Budgets

Completeness	Accuracy & Validity	Restricted Access	Timeliness
Current policy expectations:			
N/A	Budgets are approved by the Regional Managers before Electorate Managers input them into EMS.	After the Finance team approves the budget, the budget is locked. It cannot be changed.	Budgets are reviewed at month-end to identify electorates exceeding or deviating from the budget

Current controls:

C13.1 - EMS – System Specification BUDGETS' documentation is in place, providing an overview of the functions and reports within the finance module used by the National Office, and the fields to manage the budgets for each Electorate (preventive, manual control).

C13.2 - All budget changes raised by the Electorate Managers need to be discussed and approved by Finance prior to being finalised. Finance review and approve any budget changes raised by the Electorate Managers prior to updating the budget in EMS (detective, manual control)

C13.3 - Peer review is performed by Finance to verify the budget data entered in the spreadsheet by the Electorate Managers against the amounts loaded into EMS, prior to the budget being finalised and locked down. 'Regional Budget Summary Report' is run and reviewed by Regional Managers before they sign off budgets for their electorates. (detective, manual control).

C13.4 - Finance prepares a spreadsheet of the electorate's budget, which is reviewed and approved by Electorate Managers (Electorate Managers) and Regional Managers (Regional Manager s) (detective, manual control).

C13.5 - Once the budgets have been finalised, Finance lock the budgets in EMS, so that they cannot be edited further (preventive, manual control).

C13.6 - Spreadsheet budget is finalised by the end of June and locked down in EMS by Finance by the end of July (preventive, manual control).

Thank you

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Data platform system assurance: Te Kauhangaroa

Electoral Commission

August 2023

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Disclaimers

Inherent limitations

The information presented in this report is based on the information provided by the Electoral Commission. We have indicated within this report the sources of the information provided. This report has been prepared and is delivered by KPMG, a New Zealand partnership (KPMG, we, us, our) subject to the agreed written terms of KPMG's Consultancy Services Order with Electoral Commission (Client, you) dated 27 June 2023 (Engagement Contract).

The services provided under our Engagement Contract (Services) have not been undertaken in accordance with any auditing, review or assurance standards. The term "Audit/Review" used in this report does not relate to an Audit/Assurance/Review as defined under professional assurance standards.

The information presented in this report is based on that made available to us in the course of our work. We have indicated within this report the sources of the information provided. Unless otherwise stated in this report, we have relied upon the truth, accuracy and completeness of any information provided or made available to us in connection with the Services without independently verifying it. Nothing in this report constitutes legal advice or legal due diligence.

No warranty of completeness, accuracy or reliability is given in relation to the statements and representations made by, and the information and documentation provided by, Electoral Commission management and personnel / stakeholders consulted as part of the process.

This report was based on information available at the time it was prepared. KPMG is under no obligation in any circumstance to update this report, in either oral or written form, for events occurring after the report has been issued in final form.

Due to the inherent limitations of any internal control structure it is possible that errors or irregularities may occur and not be detected. Our procedures were not designed to detect all weaknesses in control procedures as they are not performed continuously throughout the period and the tests performed are on a sample basis. As such, except to the extent of sample testing performed, it is not possible to express an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control structure.

Third party reliance

This report is solely for the purpose set out in the Executive Summary of this report and for Client's information, and is not to be used for any other purpose or copied, distributed or quoted whether in whole or in part to any other party without KPMG's prior written consent.

Other than our responsibility to Client, none of KPMG, any entities directly or indirectly controlled by KPMG, any of their respective employees or any other member firms assume any responsibility, or liability of any kind, to any third party in connection with the provision of this report. Accordingly, any third party choosing to rely on this report does so at their own risk.

Executive summary

Overview

This review was initiated due to an incident that occurred within the Electoral Commission data platform Te Kauhangaroa in May 2023. In that incident, the data platform created approximately 5,000 duplicate records over a nine-day period which led to inaccurate data being shared with the media.

KPMG was engaged to examine to what extent the existing system of data integrity related controls are sufficient to prevent a future data integrity issue within Te Kauhangaroa.

The review was undertaken through a combination of:

- A desktop review of the system and associated processes as documented.
- Discussions with key staff and third-party providers on key processes and controls.

The review did not include any testing of the implementation or effectiveness of the existing controls. Note: the source systems, MIKE and EMS, were not in scope.

Key findings

Overall, the controls designed to be in place within Te Kauhangaroa are the types of controls we would expect to see for a data system. If these controls are operating as expected, and the recommended controls are implemented, the Board should be able to have confidence that there should be no material data integrity issues with the system.

However, a range of opportunities were identified to reduce the likelihood of future data integrity issues arising or reduce the impact should they arise.

Two key risk areas exist, which if not addressed, are likely to lead to further data integrity issues:

- **Change management**: The change management processes are not integrated or fully coordinated across the end-to-end system and the different stakeholders involved in managing and supporting the system. As a result, a change made in one aspect of the system may have unintended downstream consequences impacting the integrity, confidentiality or availability of the system and its data.

- **Third-party risk management:** A process is not in place to evaluate and manage the third-party risks posed by suppliers such as Catalyst, Deloitte, and Microsoft at an aggregate level. Ad-hoc activities are undertaken to oversee the third parties; however, these are not consistent throughout the organisation. Moreover, they do not currently cover the full breadth of risks, or the end-to-end lifecycle of a third party.

  The Commission does however take a system risk approach and complete certification and accreditation for key systems, as well as running project risk processes to identify and manage challenges with third party providers like Deloitte and Catalyst.

  As a result, the Electoral Commission is unlikely to have a full understanding of what risks it is exposed to, and therefore unable to fully manage those risks.

A third risk area exists, which if not addressed, can result in a greater impact of a future data integrity issues:

- **Incident response:** The incident response framework that has been developed for the Electoral Commission has not yet been implemented or tested. As a result any future data integrity issues would possibly have a larger impact than necessary.

Our recommendations are summarised in the table on the next page and provided in more detail within the body of this report.

Control domain	Priority	Recommendation
Change management	High	The change processes need to be updated to establish clear lines of communication between the various stakeholders including IT, Catalyst, Deloitte, and business owners.
Third-party risk management	High	A standardise third party risk management framework needs to be rolled out across the Electoral Commission. This framework should cover a variety of operational risk domains. It should be designed to manage the risks throughout the supplier lifecycle.
Incident response	High	The newly designed incident response framework should be implemented within the Electoral Commission. This implementation should include training of key staff members and exercises to test the efficacy of the framework.
Data integrity checks	Medium	The newly introduced data duplication checks should be retained, and additional data integrity checks should be implemented.
Errors policy	Medium	The Electoral Commission should implement an errors policy and align this to data management good practices and the incident response framework.

Bow tie analysis

The below bow tie diagram shows the key threats to the integrity of the data in Te Kauhangaroa. Data integrity issues can occur in one of three forms, too many records, inaccurate records, or missing records. On the following page is the table with the relevant preventative and mitigating controls that have been identified.

Bow tie analysis: desktop review of data integrity controls and implications
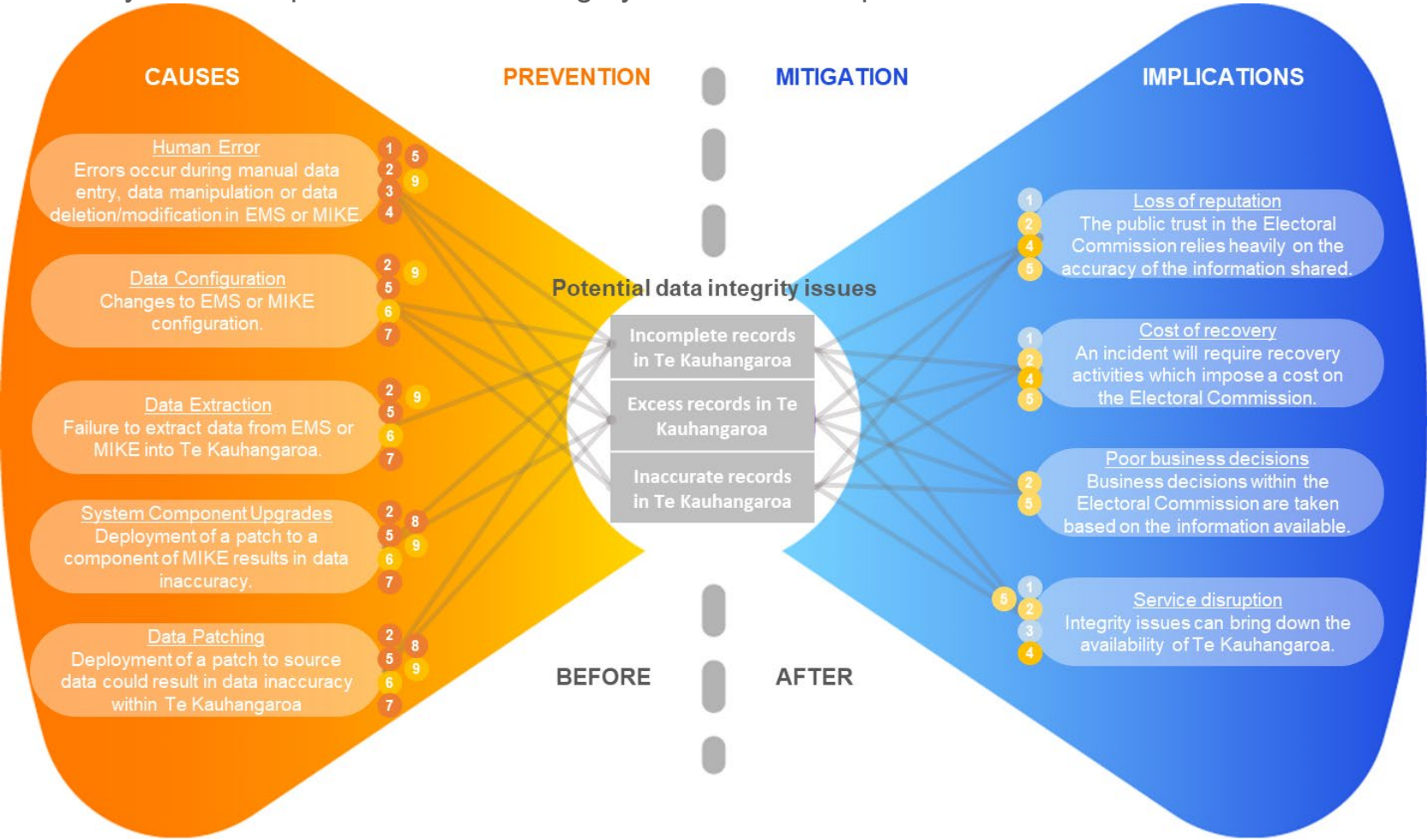
Preventative controls			**Mitigating controls**		
No.	Control	Descriptions	No.	Control	Descriptions
1	Security testing and reviews	Activities to assess the effectiveness of the Electoral Commission controls' ability to mitigate identified risks.	1	Backup and restore	Ensuring all business-critical information, configuration logs etc are recoverable and prevented from being lost, corrupted or unavailable.
2	Privileged access management	The control of privileged access rights to those who require them.	2	Errors policy	A public statement articulating how the Electoral Commission will manage the accuracy of the data it publishes and how it will handle any inaccuracies.
3	Secure authentication	Process of verifying device and authentication of permissions.	3	Event logging, alerting, and auditing	Processes to log, monitor, detect and alert security events to allow the Electoral Commission to respond to incidents.
4	Role based training and mentoring	Training and mentoring to enable users to competently perform their roles and responsibilities.	4	Incident response management	Processes to enable the Electoral Commission to respond to incidents in an effective and efficient manner that minimises the impact of an incident.
5	Standard operating procedures	Step-by-step documentation detailing how to perform tasks or processes within an organisation.	5	Data integrity checks	Automated and manual verification that the data presented meets the accuracy standards of the Electoral Commission.
6	Change management	The processes and governance structures to control change activities to prevent unintended consequences.			
7	Configuration management	Maintaining configuration of systems to provide comfort that they comply with policies, settings, and standards.			
8	Patch and vulnerability management	The processes and governance structures to control the implementation and prioritisation of patches to software and systems to reduce the risk vulnerabilities.			
9	Third party risk management	Governance and oversight over third parties supporting the Electoral Commission to verify that all required controls are in place and operating as expected within the third-party environment.			

Key

Areas with high priority changes recommended
Areas with medium priority changes recommendation

Recommendations for improvement

1.   Change management

Priority: High

Observation

Te Kauhangaroa consists of Azure Data Factory, Azure Data Lake, DBT, Snowflake and Tableau components which extracts data from the MIKE, EMS databases and other sources. As Te Kauhangaroa and the underlying databases are supported by different suppliers, communication is essential to ensure that any changes to one component do not have unintended consequences to another component.

There are existing change management processes in place for both the MIKE and EMS databases as well as Te Kauhangaroa, however, these two change processes are not currently integrated or well-coordinated with one another.

Implication

Gaps in communication regarding changes made to Te Kauhangaroa, EMS and MIKE across business units, suppliers and stakeholders can result in a disruption of services. Without proper communication, changes made can result in errors and confusion.

Recommendation

The change processes need to be updated to establish clear lines of communication between the various stakeholders.

This includes IT, third parties, business owners and functions that rely on the outputs of the various systems. This communication should be consistent, contain the information that the recipient needs and be timely. When changes are made to MIKE and EMS data structures this should be raised to the Te Kauhangaroa business owner.

It would be beneficial to explore what forms of communication are most effective for this. This could be in the form of emails, tickets, or meetings with relevant stakeholders.

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2.   Third-party risk management

Priority: High

Observation

The Electoral Commission does not have an established processes in place to evaluate and manage the third-party risks posed by suppliers such as Catalyst, Deloitte, and Microsoft.

Ad-hoc activities take place to oversee third parties, but these are not consistent throughout the organisation. Moreover, they do not currently cover the full breadth of risks, or the end-to-end lifecycle of a third party.

There are initiatives underway to improve this led by Procurement.

Implication

When relying on third parties to perform critical business services, it is important to note that the risks associated with that service cannot be outsourced. The Electoral Commission remains ultimately accountable for the performance of its statutory duties. If a third-party causes disruption to a service provided by the Electoral Commission, the Electoral Commission will need to be able to demonstrate that it took all reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of this issue occurring.

A lack of rigorous third-party risk management means that the Electoral Commission is unlikely to have a full understanding of what risks it is exposed to. Without that understanding, it is not possible to manage the risks.

Recommendation

The management of third-party risk should be standardised throughout the Electoral Commission through the establishment of a third-party management framework and related processes. These should cover a variety of relevant risk domains including, but not limited to:

- Information and cyber security.
- Business continuity.
- Data privacy.

Third party risk management should be embedded throughout the lifecycle of the third party. The key phases of this are:

- Inherent risk assessment of a service to identify the key controls that should be in place to bring the risks within appetite.
- Inclusion of risk management considerations as part of the tendering process.
- Due diligence on potential suppliers covering all relevant risk domains.
- Inclusion of key risk management clauses in third party agreements including right to audit.
- Ongoing monitoring of compliance to the clauses in the agreement as well as wider risk domain good practices.
- Exit planning for both scheduled and stressed exit scenarios.

Ownership of the third-party risk management framework would traditionally sit with a "second line" risk function, however, this does not currently exist in the Electoral Commission. It is therefore recommended to firstly identify a suitable owner.

3. Incident response

Priority: High

Observation

The Electoral Commission have recently developed an incident response framework to manage and respond to incidents to minimise their impact. This framework has been aligned to New Zealand's official CIMS (Coordinated Incident Management System) framework. Although this has been signed off by the Executive Leadership Team and the Board, it has not yet been embedded or tested.

Implication

The absence of a fully implemented and tested incident response framework increases the risks of incidents, security, or others, being mismanaged. Poorly managed incidents lead to potentially bigger damage to an organisation's operations, assets, and reputation than necessary.

Recommendation

The new incident response framework should be embedded through training of key stakeholders. It should be recognised that this is not an IT specific responsibility even though they are a critical stakeholder in any incident response.

The incident response framework needs to have clear definitions for incident categories including thresholds to determine when the incident response plan needs to be invoked. There need to be clear roles and responsibilities for relevant internal and external stakeholders.

To confirm that the incident response plan is fit for purpose, there should be tabletop exercises to test the plan and the participants. Any lessons learned should be used to improve the framework and plans. It is key that training and testing is repeated regularly to ensure that the framework continues to be embedded. There should be a particular focus to refresh this in the run up to an election.

4. Data integrity checks

Priority: Medium

Observation

After the May 2023 data duplication incident, checks have been introduced to confirm that there are no duplicate entries. However, there are no checks currently in place to confirm if there have been any unexpected deletions or modifications.

Implication

If comprehensive data integrity checks are not performed on a regular basis, the Electoral Commission will be more likely to miss data quality issues. This will lead to delays in the detection of data quality issues and can result in an exacerbation of consequences as mitigating steps cannot be taken in a timely manner.

Recommendation

In addition to the existing data duplication checks, additional data integrity checks should be implemented, such as those that would identify any deletions or alteration to the source data.

As these checks would be more complex and labour intensive, they should therefore be completed on a periodic basis to provide assurance to the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the Electoral Commission data within Te Kauhangaroa.

5.   Errors policy

Priority: Medium

Observation

The Electoral Commission does not have an errors policy.

An errors policy outlines the principles, policy, and procedures for managing errors occurring in data owned by the Electoral Commission. This includes incorrect data entry and processing errors. The policy should identify guidelines for detecting, reporting, and maintaining data and its reliability, while also providing guidance on managing errors that may occur during data management processes.

Implication

As there is manual data entry and manipulation within MIKE and EMS there is a high likelihood that small errors will occur within Te Kauhangaroa reporting in the future. The absence of an errors policy which lays out the principles, policy, and procedures for how the Electoral Commission should manage errors, means that there is a risk that small errors can have disproportionately large consequences.

Against a backdrop of reduced trust in institutions, poorly managed corrections can result in a decrease of trust by the public in the Electoral Commission's ability to produce accurate and reliable data and insights.

Recommendation

The Electoral Commission should implement an errors policy and align this to generally accepted data management good practices and the incident response framework.

The errors policy should guide the Electoral Commission in managing any errors discovered in its data both by internal and external parties. It should outline the principles that are considered when correcting an error including but not limited to:

- **Transparency:** The correction of errors and release of data ensures transparency and accountability in the handling of election data, thereby maintaining visibility and awareness of any changes made to the data.
- **Impact:** Correcting an error, it is important to consider its proportionality and materiality, as well as any potential impact on data users, the data system, and the prevailing political context.
- **Integrity:** The correction of errors is an essential aspect of ensuring the objectivity and professionalism of the Electoral Commission.

The errors policy would help to maintain the integrity, trust, and security of the Commission's data and insights while mitigating the risks associated with data errors.

Management response (draft)

The Electoral Commission are grateful for KPMG's review and recommendations. In response to the recommendations, a group of Electoral Commission staff (Kristin Leslie, James Wilcocks, Iain Henry, Beth Kreitzer and Aidan Kirrane) have reviewed the recommendations. Steph Davidson was consulted on the incident Management recommendation. We propose that ELT take the following actions. Agreed actions will be monitored on a quarterly basis as part of Assurance monitoring and reporting.

Table: Recommendations and management comment

Area	Recommendation	Management comment	Owner
1. Change management (high priority)	The change processes need to be updated to establish clear lines of communication between the various stakeholders. This includes IT, third parties, business owners and functions that rely on the outputs of the various systems. This communication should be consistent, contain the information that the recipient needs and be timely. When changes are made to MIKE and EMS data structures this should be raised to the Te Kauhangaroa business owner. It would be beneficial to explore what forms of communication are most effective for this. This could be in the form of emails, tickets, or meetings with relevant stakeholders.	This finding is consistent with the draft C&A review. We have started to implement a process where changes are notified to stakeholders and will progress this recommendation.	Aidan Kirrane, Applications Manager.
2. Third-party risk management (high priority)	The management of third-party risk should be standardised throughout the Electoral Commission through the establishment of a third-party management framework and related processes. These should cover a variety of relevant risk domains including, but not limited to: • Information and cyber security. • Business continuity. • Data privacy	We note that there is some work underway across the Commission to improve third party risk management – IE Contract management plans and a framework on when these should be done, and project risk management approaches which consider supplier risk and risk to project outcomes. We also note that as an operational risk not a strategic risk, there is no clear owner of a work programme to establish a third party risk management framework and related processes.	Kristin Leslie, Manager Strategy, Risk and Assurance.

		We recommend ELT commission a review of the various pieces of work underway to identify if existing pieces of work could be adapted to incorporate further elements of third party risk management framework, and if not, to identify a lead/home for developing a third party risk management framework. We suggest this review commence after the election, and believe this timing is appropriate as development of a framework and changing these processes would be unlikely to impact short horizon priorities and would take time to implement.	
	Third party risk management should be embedded throughout the lifecycle of the third party. The key phases of this are: • Inherent risk assessment of a service to identify the key controls that should be in place to bring the risks within appetite. • Inclusion of risk management considerations as part of the tendering process. • Due diligence on potential suppliers covering all relevant risk domains. • Inclusion of key risk management clauses in third party agreements including right to audit. • Ongoing monitoring of compliance to the clauses in the agreement as well as wider risk domain good practices. • Exit planning for both scheduled and stressed exit scenarios.	The review would include considering which of these steps are covered in other processes we have underway and how best to implement any gaps.	
3. Incident response (high priority)	The new incident response framework should be embedded through training of key stakeholders. It should be recognised that this is not an IT specific responsibility even though	Work is presently underway to roll out the new incident response approach. We have briefly discussed this recommendation with Steph Davidson, who has been leading	Steph Davidson, Principal Advisor Enterprise Services.

	they are a critical stakeholder in any incident response. The incident response framework needs to have clear definitions for incident categories including thresholds to determine when the incident response plan needs to be invoked. There need to be clear roles and responsibilities for relevant internal and external stakeholders. To confirm that the incident response plan is fit for purpose, there should be tabletop exercises to test the plan and the participants. Any lessons learned should be used to improve the framework and plans. It is key that training and testing is repeated regularly to ensure that the framework continues to be embedded. There should be a particular focus to refresh this in the run up to an election.	that work who notes that project should address all these recommendations.	
4. Data integrity checks (medium priority)	In addition to the existing data duplication checks, additional data integrity checks should be implemented, such as those that would identify any deletions or alteration to the source data. As these checks would be more complex and labour intense, they should therefore be completed on a periodic basis to provide assurance to the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the Electoral Commission data within Te Kauhangaroa.	We accept the recommendation and propose that we adopt 2 six monthly data integrity checks to be done in alternate quarters. • A full refresh rebuild of the database • A comprehensive suite of testing against the source databases The next steps to implement these will be completion of some analysis to develop our approach.	Beth Kreitzer, Principal Advisor Data and insights
5. Errors policy (medium priority)	The Electoral Commission should implement an errors policy and align this to generally accepted data management good practices and the incident response framework. The errors policy should guide the Electoral Commission in managing any errors discovered in its data both by internal and external parties. It should outline the principles that are considered when correcting an error including but not limited to:	We accept the recommendation and recommend that the EC should develop an errors policy and associated processes. We propose that the principal advisor data and insights lead the development in consultation with the data and information management committee. We anticipate, allowing for the time required for development and testing, that this would be	Beth Kreitzer, Principal Advisor Data and insights

	• **Transparency:** The correction of errors and release of data ensures transparency and accountability in the handling of election data, thereby maintaining visibility and awareness of any changes made to the data. • **Impact:** Correcting an error, it is important to consider its proportionality and materiality, as well as any potential impact on data users, the data system, and the prevailing political context. • **Integrity:** The correction of errors is an essential aspect of ensuring the objectivity and professionalism of the Electoral Commission. The errors policy would help to maintain the integrity, trust, and security of the Commission's data and insights while mitigating the risks associated with data errors.	completed in the first half of 2024.	

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Appendix A   Documents reviewed

Documents were provided by the Electoral Commission to assess and review relevant procedures and process documents that discuss the in-scope areas facing the Data within Te Kauhangaroa.

Title	Date	Version
Data Platform – CA Certificate – All Appendices – With Business Owner and Certifying Authority signoffs 09-06-23.pdf	03/06/2023	N/A
Data Ingestion Memo – EMS first changes	13/10/2022	N/A
Data Ingestion Memo – Data Platform – Additional Mike Data Fields	11/04/2023	N/A
Catalyst_ec_msa – (13_12_22)(30671061)250123	25/12/2022	6.0
Data Platform Data Ingestion EMS	31/10/2022	V2.1
Brief-Privacy-Analysis-DataPlatform	22/02/2022	N/A
Userlist_Dataplatform	N/A	N/A
Electoral Commission - Data Platform – Privacy Impact Assessment	12/09/2022	1.1
MIKE -DW Bus Matrix v1.3	N/A	1.3
EC – Data Architectural Design Principals	19/04/2022	0.1
EC Support SOW – Final	12/04/2023	N/A
Deloitte Customer Portal - INC0256393 - Comments Added	20/06/2023	N/A
Data Model process	N/A	N/A
Electoral Commission Data Ingestion Controls	March 2022	N/A
Zendesk 45211	03/05/2023	N/A
Zendesk 45149	N/A	N/A
Userlist dataplatform	N/A	N/A
IT Strategy update	22/09/2022	N/A

Appendix B Interviews conducted

The following table provides details to the interviews/meetings with staff and third-party to gather information and insight to the integrity of data in Te Kauhangaroa.

Date	Title	Attendees
28/06/2023	Kick-Off / Context Stakeholder.	Kristin Leslie – Electoral Commission.
28/06/2023	Overview of Business Context, Engagement and Oversight.	Kristin Leslie – Electoral Commission. Beth Kreitzer – Electoral Commission.
30/06/2023	Overview of Control framework and Governance in place.	Aidan █ – Electoral Commission. James █ – Electoral Commission. Ian █ – Electoral Commission.
30/06/2023	Review of Relationship with Catalyst, Controls in place.	Aidan █ – Electoral Commission. Matthew █ – Electoral Commission.
05/07/2023	Catalyst input into KPMG Te Kauhangaroa Audit.	█ – Catalyst. █ – Catalyst. █ – Catalyst. █ – Catalyst.
06/07/2023	Deloitte input to KPMG audit of EC data system.	█ – Deloitte. █ – Deloitte.
10/07/2023	Te Kauhangaroa Audit – Meeting	Leigh Deuchars – Electoral Commission.

Electoral Commission
2023 GE Cyber, Privacy
and Resilience readiness
- Executive Brief
FINAL

July 2023

CPR Readiness | Introduction

BACKGROUND

The Electoral Commission (EC) is preparing for the 2023 General Election. As part of its preparation, with the ever evolving threat landscape and the experiences of other jurisdictions in their elections, the EC understands that this general election will be taking place in a heightened risk context.

Global Incidents that have Targeted Elections

- **This year** cyber criminals unsuccessfully targeted Estonia's parliamentary elections in an attack which saw a range of threat actor activity.

- **2020** in the lead up to the 2020 U.S. presidential election, two Iranian nationals, operating in a coordinated conspiracy, accessed voter information from at least one state's voter database and disseminated false claims after the election

- **2016** an attack targeting the Philippines Commission on Elections led to the personal information of 1.3 million overseas Filipino voters being leaked in data dumps

- **2016** U.S. presidential election saw systems in all 50 states targeted by Russia in an attack that went largely undetected by the states and federal officials at the time

Additionally, recent cyber breaches in New Zealand and Australia (Mercury IT, Optus, Medicare) has highlighted that our region is not immune to being targeted by cyber attacks.

OBJECTIVE

Therefore, the EC seeks to have confidence that its:

- Cyber
- Privacy
- Resilience

capability and readiness for the election are appropriately robust and that its preparations are targeted to deliver a safe and successful election.

The EC requested Deloitte to support its readiness and preparations so that its capabilities are fit for purpose, and any required risk remediation or capability uplifts can be achieved in an effective and timely manner, at pace.

SCOPE

This Executive Brief sets out our perspectives and advice based on the point in time discovery fieldwork and analysis performed by Deloitte in collaboration with the Electoral Commission in the period 11 May to 13 July 2023.

The scope of this work includes all aspects of cyber, privacy and resilience elements associated with EC's delivery of the 2023 General Election.

The scope excludes any aspect of the EC's business or technology that has no bearing on the delivery of the 2023 General Election. It also excludes Physical Security and Health & Safety.

APPROACH

The analysis undertaken included the following:

- Taking into consideration global and national trends around cyber, privacy and resilience attacks and incidents

- Industry good practices on cyber, privacy and resilience

- Workshops and meetings with EC staff and one of key vendor (Catalyst)

- Review of documentation provided

- Walkthrough of security monitoring tooling

We have structured this deliverable as follows:

- Context
- Executive Summary
- Current State and Capability
- Key Risks
- Action Plan

Supported by a range of Appendices

CPR Readiness | Context

Much has changed since GE 2020: Changes in the external environment and within EC's domain have significantly impacted the context for GE '23 which drives the imperative for EC to have fit-for-purpose cyber, privacy and resilience measures in place and ready for GE '23.

GE '23 objective: Deliver a well-run, risk-mitigated, free and fair 2023 General Election that enables more people to take part in the electoral process, and maintains public and political trust and confidence in the electoral system and in NZ's democracy.

Geo and local political contexts

Geopolitical - Heightened geopolitical tension has seen an increase in nation-state cyber activities influencing democratic processes. Potential exists that NZ and GE '23 is seen as a strategic target for some threat actors.

NZ political context - Shifts in the NZ political climate means that GE '23 will be highly contested and potential exists that local groups/individuals may have sufficient motivation to disrupt the process or influence the outcome.

Increased use of digital channels

NZ voters are more likely to use websites to gain information on GE '23, parties etc. and engage with EC's digital channels, e.g., to enrol or vote internationally. There has been a worldwide increase in the adoption and use of digital channels. People are increasingly using digital channels to find information, engage or transact, mainly due to the pandemic and technological advancements.

EC Staff and Partners

EC has seen a significant change in its staff composition.

Core IT and security team - The core team is constrained and performing multiple roles and some new members filling key roles e.g. Security Analyst. This will likely impact the team's ability to provide an effective and sustained response in the event of one or more significant cybersecurity events in spite of best efforts.

Reliance on 3rd parties - EC is highly reliant on a small set of technology and service providers that host and support the systems and applications that underpin the delivery of GE '23 and their operationalisation of good cyber practices is largely unvalidated, e.g.,

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

Cyber vigilance

Cyber vigilance - EC and its 3rd party technology and service providers are subject to advanced cyber threats on an ongoing basis. Computer end-users do not always identify or respond effectively malicious email threats, e.g., 2022 Telnet incident and results from EC phishing exercises.

GE '23 underpinned by technology

While most of the operational processes to conduct the election are human-driven and paper-based, technology underpin and enable how the election will be run.

EC's technology landscape

Evolution of EC's technology foundations - EC's technology landscape has changed significantly since the 2020 general election. EC modernised its end-user workplace technology including productivity tools and its fleet of end-user computing systems. EC's transitioned to Microsoft's evergreen cloud platform and security services.

This enabled EC to implement and benefit from Microsoft's modern identity and access management and interconnected set of cloud-based security tools to prevent and detect cybersecurity threats.

New applications and data platforms - EC also implemented new cloud-based applications and data platforms e.g. SnapHire and Snowflake, new middleware to facilitate integration between recruitment systems , and recently upgraded its FMIS system.

Reliance on bespoke and dated systems - EC will rely on a core set of bespoke and non-standardised systems, most of which were developed before EC formalised its security and privacy risk assessments processes, and as such the risk inherent in these systems are largely unknown. EC has continued to build on and expand the functionality of these systems that will be relied on in the delivery of GE '23, e.g. local and overseas enrolment, international voting, nominations, electoral roll management and verification, and the Election Management System.

Cyber threat landscape

Nation-state entities and organised crime syndicates have increasingly turned to cyber exploitation since 2020, mainly due to the commercialisation of cyber and influencing factors as a result of the pandemic. While attack volumes are generally holding, the extent of disruption and harm caused by these attacks has significantly risen.

Focused Supply Chain and Third Party Compromise Campaigns Supply chain attacks are rampant in NZ and globally, causing severe harm. Over the last nine months, prominently in NZ, 2 Technology Providers have been compromised impacting 44, and 70+ organisations respectively including several prominent government entities. These campaigns continue to feature with crippling impacts across direct and indirect customers of these technology providers who are targeted.

Cybercriminals are now for hire. This means unskilled people/groups can now buy cyber exploits as-a-service at a relatively small fee to cause digital harm to people or to defraud/disrupt business, government or democratic processes

EC's Top 5 cyber threats for GE '23

		Threat Level
1.	Social engineering attacks against EC or 3rd party personnel e.g. phishing emails as a means to launch more advanced attacks such as Ransomware	Moderate
2.	Supply chain attacks exploiting vulnerabilities of EC's 3rd party technology or service providers	High
3.	Distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks against EC or 3rd party technology or service partner	Moderate
4.	Configuration mistakes	Moderate
5.	Accidental/intentional insider threats	Moderate

* Threat Levels aligned to Mitre ATT&CK Framework https://www.mitre.org/sites/default/files/pdf/10_2914.pdf

1. Are we exposed to a high degree of risk to delivering GE'23 Elections outcomes?

For GE 2023, EC has made a concerted effort to uplift, remediate and modernise aspects of the supporting technology environment. These efforts have been significant considering the historic underinvestment and inability to dedicate resource and specialist capability towards building a fit for need, modern, secure and resilient General Election enabling technology ecosystem. We acknowledge the effort and commitment in making the progress that has been made. However, considering the low base EC was starting from, even with the significant efforts to date, there is a high degree of risk to delivering the GE 2023 outcomes.

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

Despite the above, EC has made good progress to mitigate the overall risk through the implementation of a number of good practice measures that have significantly reduced the gross risk, including:

- Identity and access management
- End-point threat detection
- Secure configuration and hardening of user computers and devices
- Phishing simulation exercises and privacy awareness e-learning
- DDOS protection
- Malware protection (Defender)
- Agreement from NCSC to provide support
- High availability configuration of core systems
- Vulnerability detection
- Data security

2. What is the worst case if we do nothing?

Loss of public trust and confidence in the electoral system, the results and/or our democracy	Some eligible people may face challenges that mean they don't participate	Disruption/delays in electoral processes or inability to deliver the election/results within set times

In the event of one/more significant cyberthreats at critical times, in the lead up to, during or post the voting period can:

- Disrupt election processes or voting if core systems/critical data become unusable for a prolonged period, and data integrity may be compromised which can also damage public and political trust.
- Compromise or expose sensitive personal information of voters that can damage public and political trust in the electoral system and the results. Such events may also deter some voters from registering or can deter some voters from participating.
- Prevent or impede EC or its third parties from printing or distributing election materials e.g. ballots or rolls in time which would disrupt voting
- Ease of online voter registration can be affected, and in the worst case may deter/prevent some voters from participating, e.g. inability of overseas voters to upload their vote.

3. Are we able to mitigate key risks in time?

Yes, through targeted mitigation efforts the most impactful risks can be mitigated or contained, subject to urgent leadership decision and, actively managed follow through from IT and Security teams with the required specialist support.

4. Are we on track to mitigate key risks in time for GE'23?

Generally, on track for planned work, but some key gaps exist

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

5. What do we need to do differently?

For the EC Executive and Board to prioritise pragmatic and focused actions to reduce the ease of GE 2023 being targeted by threat actors and potential harm if attacked, and for EC to be in a defensible position if a disruption or compromise were to occur, we strong advise:

- **Allocate funding and support for specialist capability and dedicated resourcing** to be applied to urgently action the Prioritised Mitigation Plan on Slide 7. It is important that the already stretched technology team is not further stretched to try and accommodate what will be a reasonable amount of effort and without highly experienced, specialist capability to accelerate and be impactful in executing the mitigation measures.
- **Immediately appoint and onboard a specialist 24/7 retained Cyber Response Lead Partner** to provide cover from now and throughout the GE 2023 period as a minimum. This organisation must have **specialist Crisis Leadership, Cyber Threat Intelligence and Response – Technical and Forensics, and broader business recovery expertise and experience**. Also, it is important this partner organisation has the appropriate scale and is proven credible and trusted by EC's external stakeholders.
- **Build on-demand additional capacity** for key IT Security and Privacy personnel to augment current capacity.
- 6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)
- **Build Cyber response, recovery and leadership muscle memory for the EC Executive and Board** through carefully designed and facilitated simulations in preparation for GE 2023.

While a lot of good mahi has been done to improve EC's technology and cyber capabilities since the previous election, several areas require prioritised attention to provide confidence that EC and its key technology partners and service providers have fit-for-purpose measures in place and are ready for GE '23 as shown below.

Cybersecurity

Technology
- General cybersecurity safeguards
- Ability to detect and defend against advanced threats

People & Partners
- People defence against phishing/social engineering
- Supply chain cyber risk mitigated

Process
- Cyber Incident response process

Information
- End-to-end systems architecture view

Governance
- Core systems operated within EC acceptable risk
- CIO/CISO role compatibility

Privacy

Technology
- Protection of access to unpublished roll
- Protection of personal information across key systems

People & Partners
- Prevent/detect accidental disclosure by insiders

Process
- 6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

Information
- Personal information footprint minimised

Governance
- Personal Info. Mngt. in line with Privacy Act
- Privacy Officer/Legal/Party income role compatibility

Resilience

Technology
- High Availability for core systems

People & Partners
- Resilience measures for key IT Security & Privacy personnel
- Ability to deliver an integrated response and recovery

Process
- Validated Systems and Data Recovery processes

Information
- Current and validated Disaster Recovery plans for all core systems

Governance
- Formalisation of DR and BCM business decisions

Key:
- Fit-for-purpose capability in place and ready/adequate uplift in progress and most likely will be ready for GE '23
- Foundational capabilities in place but unlikely to be fit-for-purpose or ready in time for GE '23
- Major capability issues/gaps that will not be remediated in time for GE '23

Potential impact to GE '23 core functions

Enrolment
Online registration or call centre functionality could become unavailable and limit the ability for Kiwis to register/update their details and be informed about the election

Nomination and Party Registrations

Recruitment and Rostering
System availability/integrity issues can lead to inability to recruit in time which would impact operations

Logistics and Supplies
Inability of 3rd party provider to print ballots in time due to a cyber attack can potentially disrupt logistics and voting

Finance and Payroll
Reputational damage if payment functionality becomes unavailable or data is leaked

Results
A successful cyber attack can delay or call results into question due to data integrity concerns

Voting
Disruption of voting if systems/data compromised at critical times e.g. Inability to recover systems/data in time can prevent overseas voters from voting

Post-election Day Activities

Risk scale:
- Critical
- High
- Low

CPR Readiness | Key risks

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

Elections unable to be run or are disrupted — **H**

Confidence and trust in EC or electoral system is impacted — **H**

Integrity of the results is in question — **L**

- While there are various security concerns (i.e. the items list above) that could potentially allow for unauthorised access and thus tampering with data of key systems, due to the paper-based nature of the Elections and manual processes that exist, this risk is assessed at present to be low overall

Crisis event leadership muscle memory building simulations for the Exec and Board.

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

Theme	Key Actions	Pre GE 2023 Voting Period	To Address After Voting Period

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

To Address After Voting Period

Prior to 2026 General Election

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

CPR Readiness | Appendix A: GE '23 core functions and key systems

Key Enrolment Activities
- Ensuring eligible voters have an opportunity to enrol to vote and also check and update their enrolment details
- Processing paper enrolments

Key Systems

★ MIKE	EOL	EnrolMe	Vote.nz

CallCentre App

Key Nominations and Party Registrations Activities
- Registering parties in accordance with the process set out in the Electoral Act 1993
- Ensuring parties have accurate names, logos and candidate details for ballot papers
- Managing and responding to non-compliance

Key Systems

★ EMS	Nominations (EMS) 6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

Key Recruitment and Rostering Activities
- Advertising for and recruiting 20,000+ temporary staff members
- Creating user accounts and issuing user access details
- Training new staff members
- Creating rosters and ensuring a contingency workforce is available

Key Systems

ARTS	★ EMS	ESB	Tupu

Key Logistics and Supplies Activities
- Dispatching EasyVote and overseas packs to voters
- Securing locations for advanced, overseas and election day voting
- Delivering public information campaign to the voting public
- Equipping electorate HQs and VPs with the supplies and technology
- Delivering ballot papers for advanced and election day voting
- Printing election roll

Key Systems

★ EMS	★ MIKE

Legend
* Penetration test has been completed in the last 12 months

☆ Critical to delivery of GE '23

Managed by:

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

CPR Readiness | Appendix A: GE '23 core functions CPR lens

Key Finance and Payroll Activities
- Processing and paying invoices
- Processing timesheets for advanced and election day voting staff

Key Systems

Dynamics 365	CHRIS21

Key Voting Activities
- Facilitating voting at voting places and overseas

Key Systems

eRoll	Reconciliation App 6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)	DVP	UVP

★ OS App

Key Results Activities
- Counting ordinary votes on election day
- Counting special votes, which includes overseas votes
- Publishing results on the Election Results Website
- Feeding election results to the media

Key Systems

★ EMS	★ One NZ Network	★ Election Results Website

Key Post-election Day Activities
- Scanning rolls, performing roll reconciliation, processing special votes, processing apparent dual votes
- Producing the Marked Master Roll
- Identifying and incorporating data into the Commission's reports for Parliament, the media and public

Key Systems

★ ERSA	★ EMS	★ OS App	Data Platform

Legend
* Penetration test has been completed in the last 12 months

☆ Critical to delivery of GE '23

Managed by:
6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

1

Electoral Commission

We designed and developed New Zealand's electoral roll management system for the Electoral Commission. The system stores up-to-date registration details for all New Zealand voters, and information essential to the running of both national and local body elections.

We have also supplied the core election management system for the last four general elections, as well as a number of by-elections. This system performs MMP calculations and provides detailed voting data to all the major media organisations. In addition, we host the public results website, which plays a crucial role on election night.
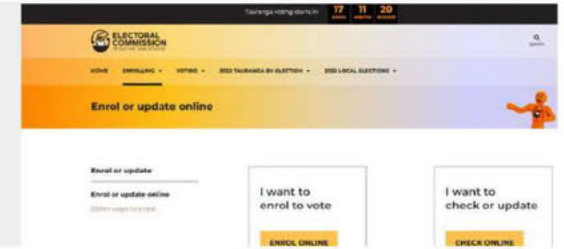
The Electoral Management System for the Electoral Commission. We have built and managed the EMS for decades, but in 2015-16, we rewrote the system from the ground up. It is now used to manage every aspect of our general elections, by-elections and referenda, from rostering staff, provisioning ballots and polling places to publishing results.

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

2

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

3

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

4

Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission is an independent Crown entity responsible for the administration of parliamentary elections and referenda. It requires an outsource provider for its contact centre operations that is well versed in security and most importantly, one that can scale operations quickly to support large, highly variable call volumes. They selected ███ as their provider following an RFP process held in 2012. ███ previous work with government agencies and, in particular, our success in managing the call centre for the 2001 and 2006 national Census were among the reasons for our success.

Some of our public sector customers

ELECTIONS — ELECTORAL COMMISSION

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Our customers

PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON TRUST, RESPECT AND AN ABILITY TO DELIVER WHAT WE PROMISE

Watercare | mico | unison | WAIKATO
PGG Wrightson | salesforce | SEALORD | Securitas
FINANCIAL SERVICES | SMITH+CAUGHEYS | ELECTORAL COMMISSION | OfficeMax

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

5
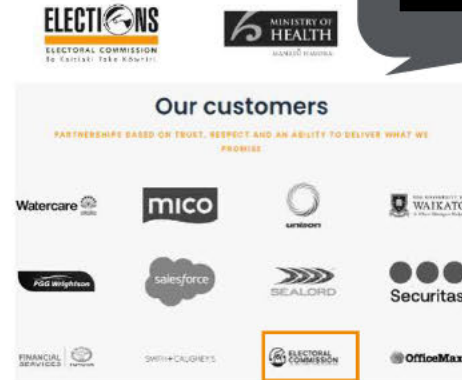
███ quickly built a close and effective relationship with the Commission and have become a trusted provider. We worked closely with senior level business stakeholders to extract and evolve the business vision, website strategy and new brand direction. We continue to contribute to a number of diverse streams of work for the Commission.

CPR Readiness | Appendix C: Controls and Measures

To provide some context around security and privacy coverage, the following tables highlight some of the key controls in place and where there are some deficient controls that need to be addressed. These controls have been mapped at a high level against the NIST cybersecurity and privacy frameworks covering the Identify, Prevent, Detect, Response and Recover domains.

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

CPR Readiness | Appendix C: Controls and Measures continued

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

- ███████████████████████████
  ████████████████

- ████████ 6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k) ████████
  ████████████████

- ███████████████████████████████
  ████████████████

CPR Readiness | Appendix C: Controls and Measures continued

6(a), 6(c), 9(2)(k)

CPR Readiness | Appendix D: Workshop attendees

Name	Title	Organisation
Adele 9(2)(a)	Principal Advisor, Voting Services	Electoral Commission
Aidan Kirrane	Manager, Applications	Electoral Commission
Allison 9(2)(a)	Senior Project Leader	Electoral Commission
Anusha Guler	Deputy Chief Executive, Operations	Electoral Commission
Emily Redmond	Programme Director	Electoral Commission
Emma Gillard	Manager, Finance & Administration	Electoral Commission
Erin 9(2)(a)	Principal Advisor, People & Culture	Electoral Commission
Grace Chian	Manager, Business Enablement	Electoral Commission
Ian 9(2)(a)	Senior Manager, IT Services	Electoral Commission
Izak 9(2)(a)	Manager, People & Culture	Electoral Commission
James 9(2)(a)	Chief Information Officer	Electoral Commission
Jeffrey 9(2)(a)	Senior Systems Specialist	Electoral Commission
Joe 9(2)(a)	Technical Specialist	Electoral Commission
Justin 9(2)(a)	Manager, Customer Services	Electoral Commission
Kristin Leslie	Manager, Strategy Risk & Assurance	Electoral Commission
Kristina Temel	Manager, Legal & Policy	Electoral Commission
Leigh Deuchars	Deputy Chief Executive, Strategy, Governance & Development	Electoral Commission
Lisa 9(2)(a)	Senior Project Manager	Electoral Commission

Name	Title	Organisation
Lucy Hickman	Deputy Chief Executive, Enterprise Services	Electoral Commission
Martin Rodgers	Director, Voting Services	Electoral Commission
Maryanne 9(2)(a)	Payroll Advisor	Electoral Commission
Morgan 9(2)(a)	Cyber Security Analyst	Electoral Commission
Natasha 9(2)(a)	Senior Project Leader	Electoral Commission
Rob 9(2)(a)	Senior Project Leader	Electoral Commission
Ross McPherson	Director, Enrolment	Electoral Commission
Sarah 9(2)(a)	Organisational Security & Resilience Senior Advisor	Electoral Commission
Steph 9(2)(a)	Principal Advisor, Enterprise Services	Electoral Commission
Suzanne Knight-Tinirau	Manager, Communications & Education	Electoral Commission
Tracy 9(2)(a)	Finance Business Partner	Electoral Commission
Vincent 9(2)(a)	Manager, IT Infrastructure	Electoral Commission
9(2)(a)	9(2)(a)	6(a)

Statement of Responsibility

Where Deloitte has provided advice or recommendations to the Electoral Commission (EC) we are not responsible for, or the manner in which, suggested improvements, recommendations, or opportunities are implemented. The management of EC, will need to consider carefully the full implications of each of these suggested improvements, recommendations, or opportunities, including any adverse effects and any financing requirements, and make such decisions, as they consider appropriate.

The scope of our work was designed to provide advice in accordance with the Statement of Work. The procedures that we performed did not constitute an assurance engagement in accordance with New Zealand Standards for Assurance engagements, nor did it represent any form of audit under New Zealand Standards on Auditing, and consequently, no assurance conclusion or audit opinion is provided.

We have prepared this deliverable solely for the use of EC. The deliverable is based on the best available information at the time of the discovery and analysis undertaken, and contains the constructive high level suggestions to improve practices which we identified in the course of our work. We would be pleased to discuss any items mentioned in this debrief and to support the corrective action implemented by management.

Our findings are based on observations from our discovery and specific analysis actions defined within scope undertaken in the time allocated (where possible).

This deliverable is not to be used for any other purpose, recited or referred to in any document, copied or made available (in whole or in part) to any other person without prior written express consent. We accept or assume no duty, responsibility or liability to any party in connection with the deliverable or this engagement, including without limitation, liability for negligence in relation to the factual observations expressed or implied in this debrief.

Suggestions for improvement should be assessed by management for their full technical and commercial impact before they are implemented.

Deloitte.

Contents

KANTAR PUBLIC

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

KANTAR PUBLIC

1

Research background and method

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Research background

The Electoral Commission commissioned Kantar Public to undertake research to inform and monitor the impact of the 2023 Māori Electoral Option (MEO) campaign. This research is comprised of two stages: an exploratory qualitative stage that took place in late 2022, followed by a quantitative stage that began in early 2023. The quantitative stage consisted of a pre-campaign survey, and has been followed by a post-campaign survey.

This report covers <u>post campaign</u> survey findings. This report measures reactions to the creative used in the campaign that were marketed from 31 March to 13 July. This report also compares changes in measures since the campaign, around:

- Understanding of the Māori Electoral Option choice

- Understanding that changing rolls can influence the number of Māori electoral seats and their boundaries

- Understanding and awareness of the election and voting process.

This research has been conducted by Mahinga Māramatanga Ahurea, Kantar Public's cultural insights practice. We are a Te Tiriti led roopū, with Māori and Pasifika researchers at our core.

This survey took place after the passing of the Māori Electoral Option Bill on 15 November 2022. The changes mean that since **31 March 2023**, Māori voters can change between the general and Māori electoral rolls at any time except in the three months before a general election and the local elections.

2023 quantitative research approach

METHOD	WHAT	WHO	HOW	FIELDWORK DATES
Online survey	Online survey with an average length of 15 minutes. The pre-campaign questionnaire was amended to include new questions and statements relevant to the creatives used in the campaign.	500 Māori aged 18 and older. We talked to a range of Māori across the motu and from a variety of iwi.	Online survey respondents were sourced from Kantar's online Flybuys panel. To boost 18 to 24 year olds responses, sample flagged as parents were asked if a person aged 18 to 24 in the household could complete the survey instead.	13th July – 10th August 2023
Face-to-face intercept interviews	Face to face survey with an average length of 20 minutes. This used the same post-campaign questionnaire as the online survey.	102 Māori based in: — Whangarei (23) — South Auckland (29) — Hamilton (25) — Tauranga (25) We talked to a range of people in terms of age, gender, and iwi.	In-street intercept interviews were done in the same four high-deprivation areas reached in the pre-campaign survey. This approach allows the research to extend beyond the digital divide, reaching people might not feel comfortable, or are not able to take part in online surveys.	20th July – 8th August 2023

Notes to reader
There are two differences reported in this research:
• Comparing between the post-campaign and pre-campaign survey, indicated by ▲▼
• Comparing subgroups in the total post-campaign population, indicated by ●●
Any differences reported in this research are significant at the 95% confidence level.
Individual percentages do not always sum to the 'Nett percentages'. This is due to rounding.

Weighting

Combined online and face to face survey data were weighted to ensure the final total sample was representative of Māori by age, gender and region. Weighting targets were calculated using Stats NZ 2018 census data.

Accuracy

Findings based on the full sample have a margin of error of +/-4% (at the 95% confidence level).

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Sample profile

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

As in the pre-campaign survey, all participants are Māori and we talked to a wide range across the motu.

Age

18-24		19%
25-29		12%
30-39		19%
40-49		18%
50-59		16%
60+		16%

Gender

Tāne	**47.8%**
Wāhine	**51.8%**
Other gender	**0.4%**

Area

Rural area or small town with a population of less than 10,000	**25%**
A larger town with a population over 10,000	**71%**
Prefer not to say	**4%**

Income

$30k or less	17%
$30,001-$70,000	26%
$70,001-$150,000	41%
Over $150,000	16%

Region

NETT North Island **86%**

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland region (includes the area from the Bombay Hills up to Wellsford)	23%
Waikato	14%
Taranaki	3%
Manawatū-Whanganui	7%
Te Tai-o-Aorere/Tasman	1%
Whakatū/Nelson	1%
Te Tai Poutini/West Coast	0.48%
Murihiku/Southland	2%
Te Tai Tokerau/Northland	8%
Te Moana-a-Toi/Bay of Plenty	12%
Te Tai Rāwhiti/Gisborne	3%
Te Matau-a-Māui/Hawke's Bay	6%
Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara/Wellington region (includes Kāpiti and the Wairarapa)	10%
Te Tauihu-o-te-waka/Marlborough	1%
Waitaha/Canterbury	7%
Ōtākou/Otago	3%

NETT South Island **14%**

Education level

No qualification	9%	**NETT High school and lower 33%**
School Certificate or NCEA level 1	9%	
Sixth Form Certificate, University Entrance or NCEA Level 2	13%	
Bursary, Scholarship or NCEA level 3 or 4	11%	**NETT Undergraduate 40%**
A Trade Qualification	7%	
A certificate or diploma that does not require a degree	16%	
A polytech degree	5%	**NETT Graduate and above 27%**
A university degree	16%	
Postgraduate qualification	9%	

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3

Summary

ELECTORAL
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TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

In summary

The MEO campaign has high levels of cut through

– The MEO campaign is highly visible with all media channels (TV, online, social, radio, outdoor, and print) punching above their weight in terms of driving reach.

– The multi-media approach ensured the campaign was successful in driving broad reach across the age groups, experienced and inexperienced voters, and across a range of geographic locations and education and income levels.

  – TVC aired on television (live or ondemand) was particularly successful in reaching more mature viewers

  – Online and social media were particularly successful in driving further reach for younger viewers

– The te reo Māori version of the main TVC was seen by nearly 3 in 10 (28%) Māori, and most (61%) feel very positive that elements of the campaign were made available in different regional dialects.

The campaign is well received by most demographics

– Overall the MEO campaign delivers key messaging about *making a choice*, that there is *mana* in that choice, and *when* the choice needs to be made. It does so in a way that is highly relevant, believable, and enjoyable to watch. Further, the campaign is highly persuasive with nearly 6 in 10 (58%) viewers saying the campaign makes them more likely to check out the electoral roll.

– Some however found the campaign difficult to understand, verbatim comments show a desire for more information about the differences between the two rolls and why people should consider the Māori electoral roll / the impact of roll choice.

– For most, the campaign is positively engaging, seen to be pleasant, soothing, gentle, and interesting to watch. There is a small minority of 18 to 29 year olds who find the ads unpleasant – verbatim comments show this is mostly driven by the belief in only having one roll. Some verbatim comments also suggest there is some disconnect with the ads for this age group, with some citing that the ads don't appeal to their generation or interest them personally.

Overall impact on understanding of the electoral system and the Māori Electoral Option

– The following slide shows the positive impact the campaign has had on key metrics including significantly increased understanding that:

  – You can change from one roll type to another

  – When you can change rolls

  – That if on the Māori roll you can only vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate

The 2023 MEO campaign has had a positive impact on key metrics ...

Understanding of the electoral system
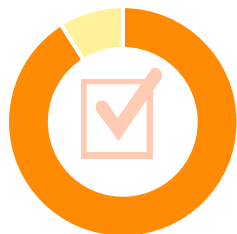
Māori can go on either the Māori Roll or the General Roll, **91%. Stable.**
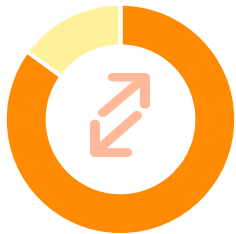
Māori can change from one roll type to another, **85% ▲ Up 11 points.**

Māori can change roll type anytime except three months prior to an election, **53%. ▲ Up 20 points.**

Understanding and sentiments towards MEO

TRUE: If you're on the Māori roll you can only vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate, **57%. ▲ Up 7 points.**

FALSE: If you're on the General roll, you can vote for a candidate in a General electorate or a Māori electorate, **47%. Stable.**

FALSE: If you're on the Māori roll you can only vote for a Māori political party, **59%. ▼ Down 7 points.**

FALSE: If you're on the General roll you can't vote for a Māori political party, **56%. Stable.**

FALSE: If the number of people on the Māori roll increases, the number of Māori electorates always stays the same, **30%. Stable.**

34% ▲ feel highly informed on how to change roll types. **Up 7 points.**

Engagement with the electoral system

8% changed the electoral roll they are on
- 5% changed from the General roll to the Māori roll
- 3% changed from the Māori roll to the General roll.

Māori to General roll — 3%
General to Māori roll — 5%
Don't know — 10%
84% — No

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4

Campaign evaluation

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TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI
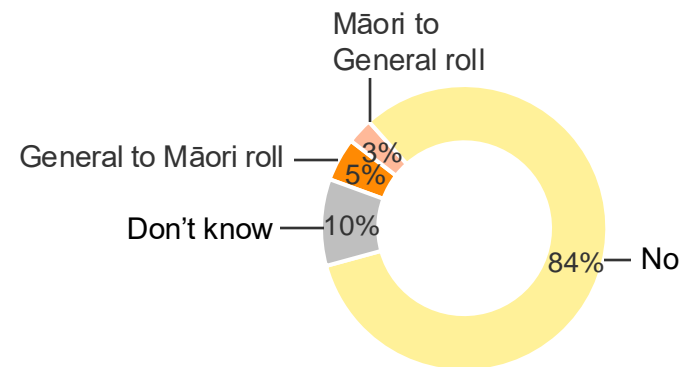
The MEO campaign is highly visible with nearly 3 in 4 (72%) Māori aged 18+ years having seen it. All media channels worked hard, achieving significantly higher than average levels of cut through. The only exception is the second 30 sec TVC which achieved lower than average cut through.

Nett Seen Any

▲ **72%**

NZ NORM
40%

30sec TVC/video with captions

▲ **55%**

NZ NORM
42%

30 sec radio ad

▲ **43%**

NZ NORM
19%

Second 30sec TVC/video with captions collage

▼ **26%**

NZ NORM
42%

Digital

▲ **29%**

NZ NORM
16%

Outdoor

▲ **26%**

NZ NORM
18%

Social Media

▲ **30%**

NZ NORM
11%

Print collage

▲ **30%**

NZ NORM
13%

KANTAR PUBLIC | ELECTORAL COMMISSION TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*
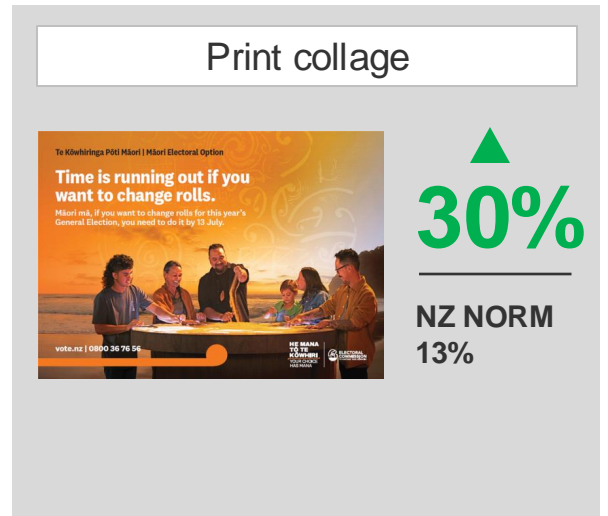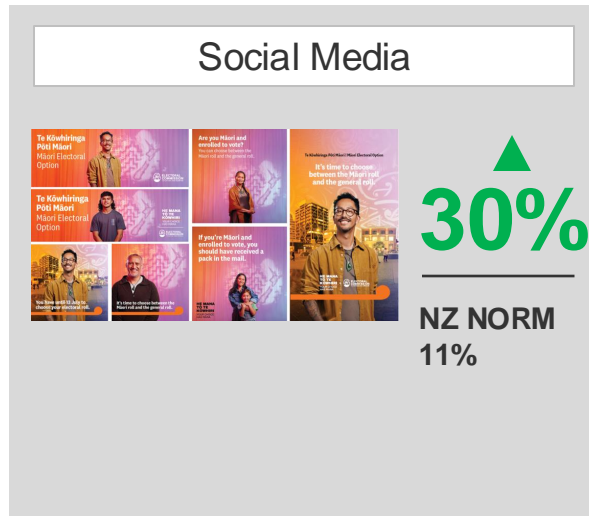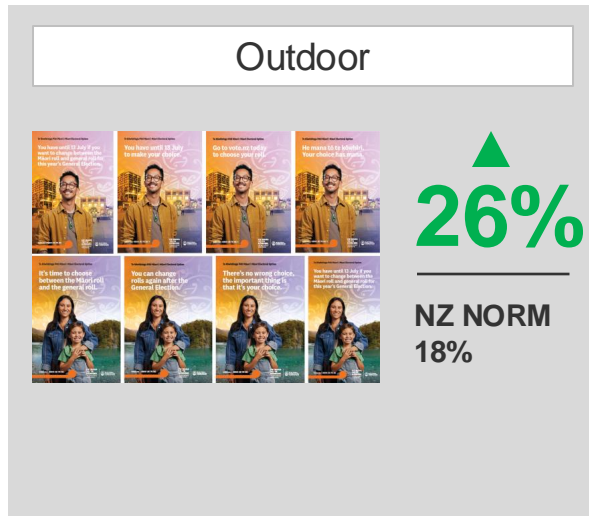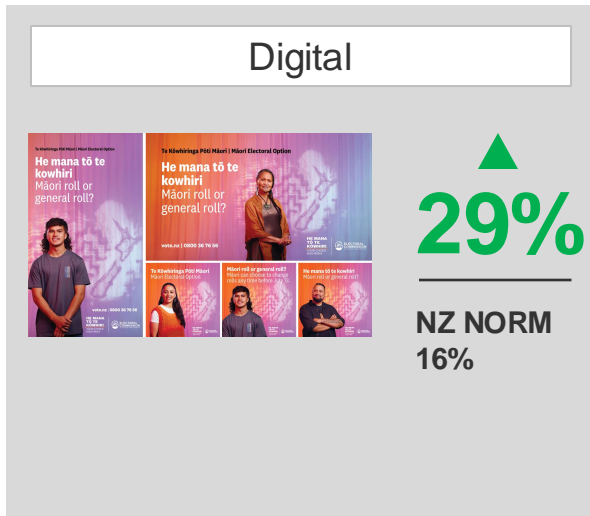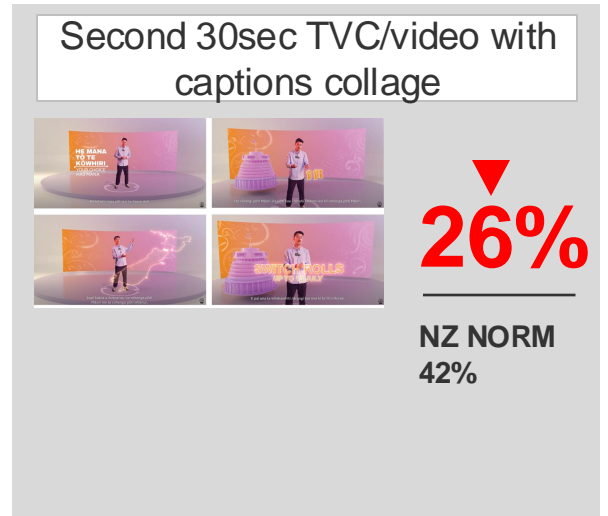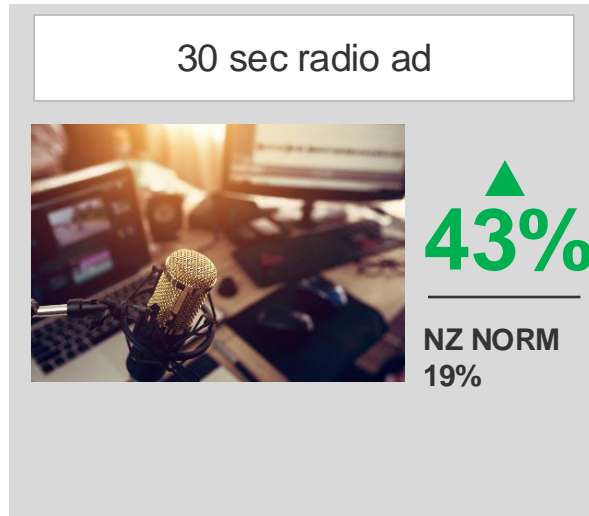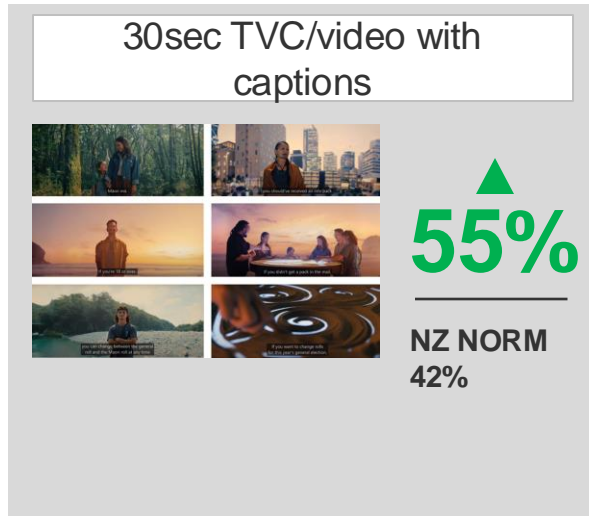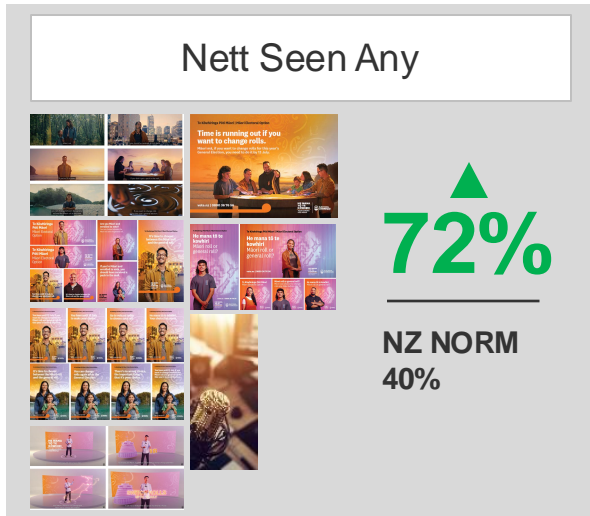
What we showed in the survey ...

Streamed the first 30sec TVC with captions
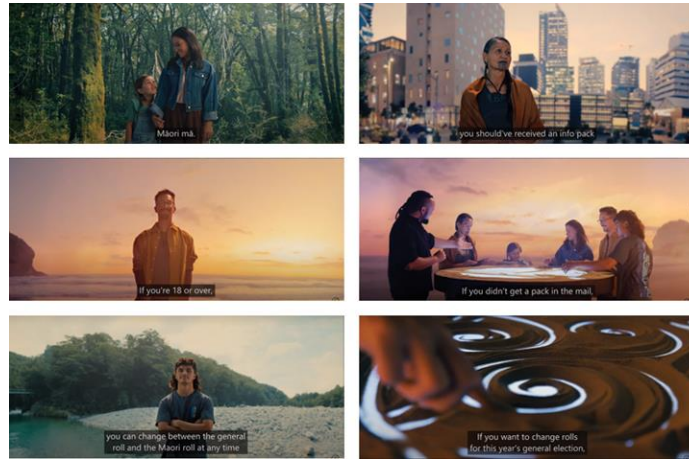
Showed the 30sec TVC 2 with captions *collage*
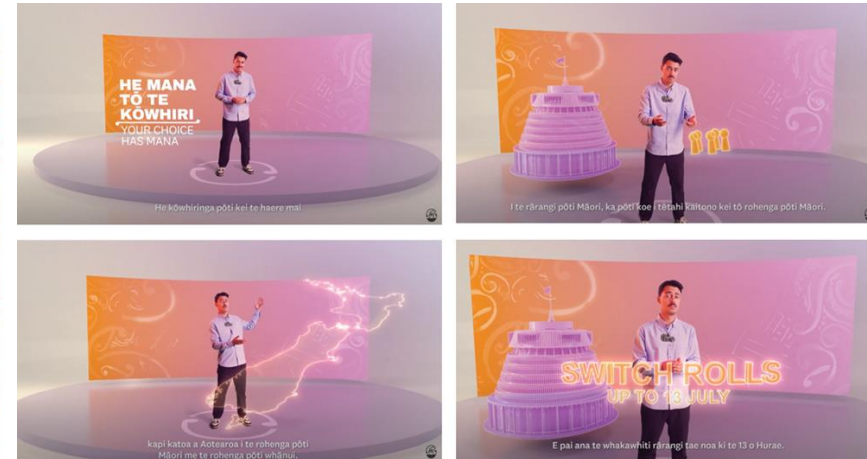
Digital collage

Social Media Collage

Outdoor collage

Print collage

Streamed the 15 sec radio ad

The campaign has successfully reached a broad range of ages, those living rural / urban, and across the different education and income levels. Only the second TVC sits below expected levels of cut through.

CAMPAIGN VISIBILITY – PRIORITY AUDIENCE GROUPS

Legend: 🟢 Sig < norm 🟠 Avg 🔴 Sig > norm

	Total	18-29	30-59	60+	Rural	Urban	High school and lower education	Undergraduate and above education	Household income $70k or less	Household income more than $70k	NZ NORM
Base	602	198	312	92	154	422	193	386	224	290	
Seen any	72%	71%	69%	82% ⦾	70%	73%	71%	72%	72%	73%	40%
30sec TVC Video	55%	45% 🔴	56%	75% ⦾	51%	58%	59%	54%	57%	57%	42%
30sec TVC 2 Video	26%	24%	25%	33%	28%	25%	28%	25%	29%	26%	42%
Radio	43%	39%	45%	47%	44%	43%	44%	43%	41%	45%	19%
Social	30%	34%	27%	34%	32%	29%	32%	29%	35%	27%	11%
Outdoor	26%	29%	24%	30%	26%	25%	29%	24%	31%	23%	18%
Digital	29%	35% ⦾	26%	26%	33%	27%	27%	29%	33%	25%	16%
Print	30%	30%	27%	38%	35%	27%	35%	26% 🔴	30%	31%	13%

🟢🔴 *Sig. different to Total population*

Q29. Have you seen this ad for the Māori Electoral Option before today?

14

KANTAR PUBLIC | ELECTORAL COMMISSION TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Among those who have seen the first TVC, most saw it on TV (79%), followed by Facebook (15%) and Youtube (14%). 18 to 29 year olds are less likely to have seen the ad, and are more likely than average to have seen it on Instagram or www.Vote.nz.

WHERE SEEN THE 30 SEC TVC VIDEO WITH CAPTIONS

% Seen Video:	Total	18-29	30-59	60+	Rural	Urban	High school and lower education	Undergraduate and above education	Household income $70k or less	Household income more than $70k
Base	602	198	312	92	154	422	193	386	224	290
	55%	45%	56%	75%	51%	58%	59%	54%	57%	57%

Where Seen:	Total	18-29	30-59	60+	Rural	Urban	High school and lower education	Undergraduate and above education	Household income $70k or less	Household income more than $70k
Base	329	88	173	68	78	241	111	208	125	162
On TV (live, catch up or on demand)	79%	63%	81%	91%	78%	79%	80%	79%	77%	82%
YouTube	14%	14%	17%	4%	10%	15%	8%	17%	10%	17%
Facebook	15%	21%	11%	18%	17%	15%	14%	16%	18%	14%
Instagram	5%	17%	1%		9%	3%	4%	5%	3%	4%
Other social media	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%	6%	6%	7%	3%	10%
Website (not social media)	2%	3%	3%		2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	3%
www.vote.nz	3%	7%	1%	1%	3%	2%	4%	2%	3%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%			1%		1%	1%	1%
Don't know	7%	10%	7%	3%	5%	7%	6%	7%	8%	7%

Xx Sig. higher than Total population
Xx Sig. lower than Total population

Of those that have seen the first TVC, nearly 3 in 10 (28%) saw the te reo Māori version of the ad and two thirds (64%) only saw the English version. Just over 1 in 4 (27%) were aware that different parts of the campaign were available in different te reo Māori regional dialects, and most (61%) felt positively about the regional dialects being available.

VERSION SEEN

The English version *only*
64%
Don't know 8%
Seen both versions 23%
Te reo Māori version *only* 5%

AWARE OF DIALECTS

Yes 27%
Don't know 10%
No 63%

REACTION TO AVAILABILITY

- Very positive 36%
- Quite positive 25%
- Neither positive nor negative 29%
- Quite negative 2%
- Very negative 2%
- Don't know 6%

NETT positive **61%**

NETT negative **5%**

Q31. There was a te reo Māori version and an English version of the ad. Which version of the Māori Electoral Option ad did you see?
Base: Those that had seen the 30 sec TVC (n=329)
Q31a. Before today, were you aware that different parts of the Māori Electoral campaign were available in different te reo Māori regional dialects?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)
Q31b. Which of the following best describes how you feel about the Māori Electoral Campaign being available in different te reo Māori regional dialects?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)

Viewers find the MEO campaign highly relevant and enjoyable to watch. The campaign delivers new information about the MEO in a strongly credible way that makes viewers more likely to check the MEO out. For some however, the campaign is difficult to understand, particularly for 25 to 29 year-olds, tāne, and those living in lower income households.

EMOTIONAL AND RATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CAMPAIGN

The ads were believable
87% Agree
NZ NORM 62%
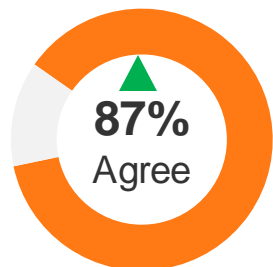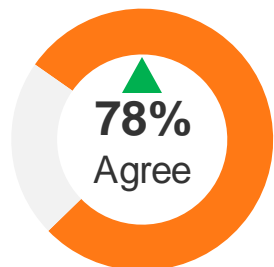
Enjoyment
78% Agree
- On the Māori roll 85%
- On the General roll 73%

NZ NORM 47%
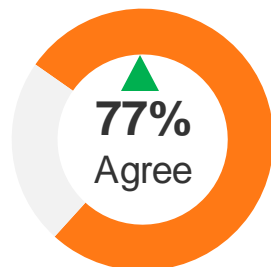
Relevant to me
77% Agree
- On the Māori roll 87%
- Household income $30k or less 86%
- On the General roll 70%

NZ NORM 39%

Contained new information about MEO
74% Agree
- Aged 40-49 82%
- Aged 50+ 64%
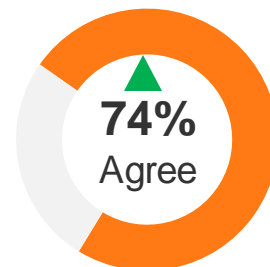
NZ NORM 42%

More likely to check out MEO
58% Agree
- Household income $30k or less 70%
- On the Māori roll 66%
- Urban 54%
- On the General roll 48%
- Aged 50+ 47%
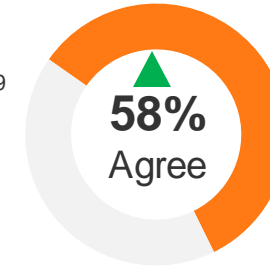
NZ NORM 33%

Would talk about ads
50% Agree
- Household income $30k or less 62%
- On the Māori roll 61%
- On the general roll 40%
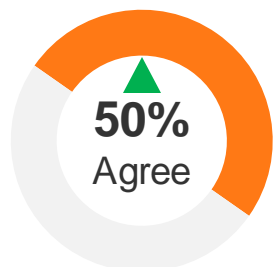
NZ NORM 20%

Made me reconsider roll I'm on
46% Agree
- Aged 40-49 55%
- Aged 50+ 34%
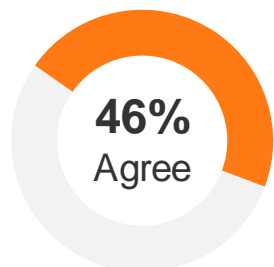
NZ NORM n/a

Made me think differently about MEO
43% Agree
- Household income $30k or less 54%
- On the General roll 38%
- Aged 50+ 32%
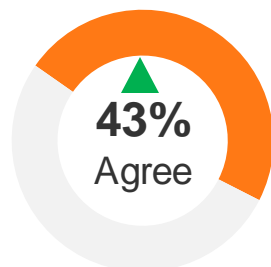
NZ NORM 29%
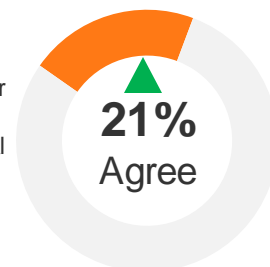
Difficult to understand
21% Agree
- Household income $30k or less 38%
- Aged 25 to 29 - 34%
- Tāne 27%
- Aged 50+ 15%
- Wāhine 16%
- On the General roll 17%

NZ NORM 16%

*I'm getting fed up with seeing them
28% Agree
- Tāne 38%
- Wāhine 19%
- Graduate and above education 18%

NZ NORM 28%

Q32. Thinking about all of the ads together for the Māori Electoral Option, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements.
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)

▲▼ Sig. different to NZ Norms
Xx Sig. higher than Total population
Xx Sig. lower than Total population

17

The campaign successfully delivers key messages about *making a choice*, that there is *mana* in that choice, and *when* the choice needs to be made.

MESSAGE TAKEOUT

	Main message	Other message	NZ NORMS MAIN	NZ NORMS TOTAL
I have a choice to make	24%	53%	28%	51%
There is mana in my choice. He mana tō te kōwhiri	20%	43%	21%	45%
If I want to change the roll I'm on, I can do it before midnight 13 July	20% ▲	42% ▲	13%	35%
It's quick and easy to enrol	10%	36%	-	-
The roll I'm on decides my voting area and the candidates I can choose from in elections	7%	27%	-	-
If I'm not enrolled, I can do it now to vote in the 2023 election	9%	25%	-	-
None of these	11% ▼	25% ▼	20%	37%

■ Main message   ■ Other message

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

Most viewers are aware that the campaign is for the Māori Electoral Option.

BRANDING

NORM

You couldn't fail to remember the advertising was for the Māori Electoral Option
31% ▲
19%

83% ▲
Aged 40 - 49 93%
64%

The advertising is quite good at making you remember it is for the Māori Electoral Option
51% ▲
45%

The advertising is not all that good at making you remember it is for the Māori Electoral Option
7% ▼   High school and lower education 11%
12%

The advertising could have been for any publicity around voting, political parties, candidates or lobby groups
5% ▼
14%

The advertising could have been for almost anything
5%   Tāmaki Makaurau 10%
7%

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

Q33. There are some ads that people remember but they never know what they are for. Which one of the phrases below applies best to the ads for the Māori Electoral Option?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)

Xx Sig. higher than Total population
Xx Sig. lower than Total population

Overall, the campaign is positively engaging, seen to be pleasant, soothing, gentle, interesting and engaging.

ENGAGEMENT – TOTAL POPULATION

NEGATIVE ACTIVE

Pleasant ▲

Disturbing

Soothing ▲

POSITIVE PASSIVE

Unpleasant

Gentle ▲

30

17

27

3

4

35

▼Irritating

Interesting ▲

10

25

20

50

27

40

▼ Weak

Distinctive

NEGATIVE PASSIVE

POSITIVE ACTIVE

▼ Dull

Involving ▲

▼ Boring

—Total Population —NZ NORM

Pretty good, not too short or long and gives enough detail to understand what the ad is about. Great ad –
Wahine, Urban, high school and lower education, aged 25-29

Significantly higher among: Highschool and lower education

I love the colour design of them! The pink/orange hues are gorgeous. The whole design creates a really positive warm feeling.
– Wahine, urban, graduate and above education, aged 40-49

Significantly higher among: Aged 40-49

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Q34. Please select one word from each of these three lists that applies most to the ads.
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

20

For most 18 to 29 year olds the MEO campaign is positively engaging. There is a small minority who find the campaign unpleasant, this tends to be driven by their belief that there should not be two electoral rolls.

ENGAGEMENT – AGED 18 - 29
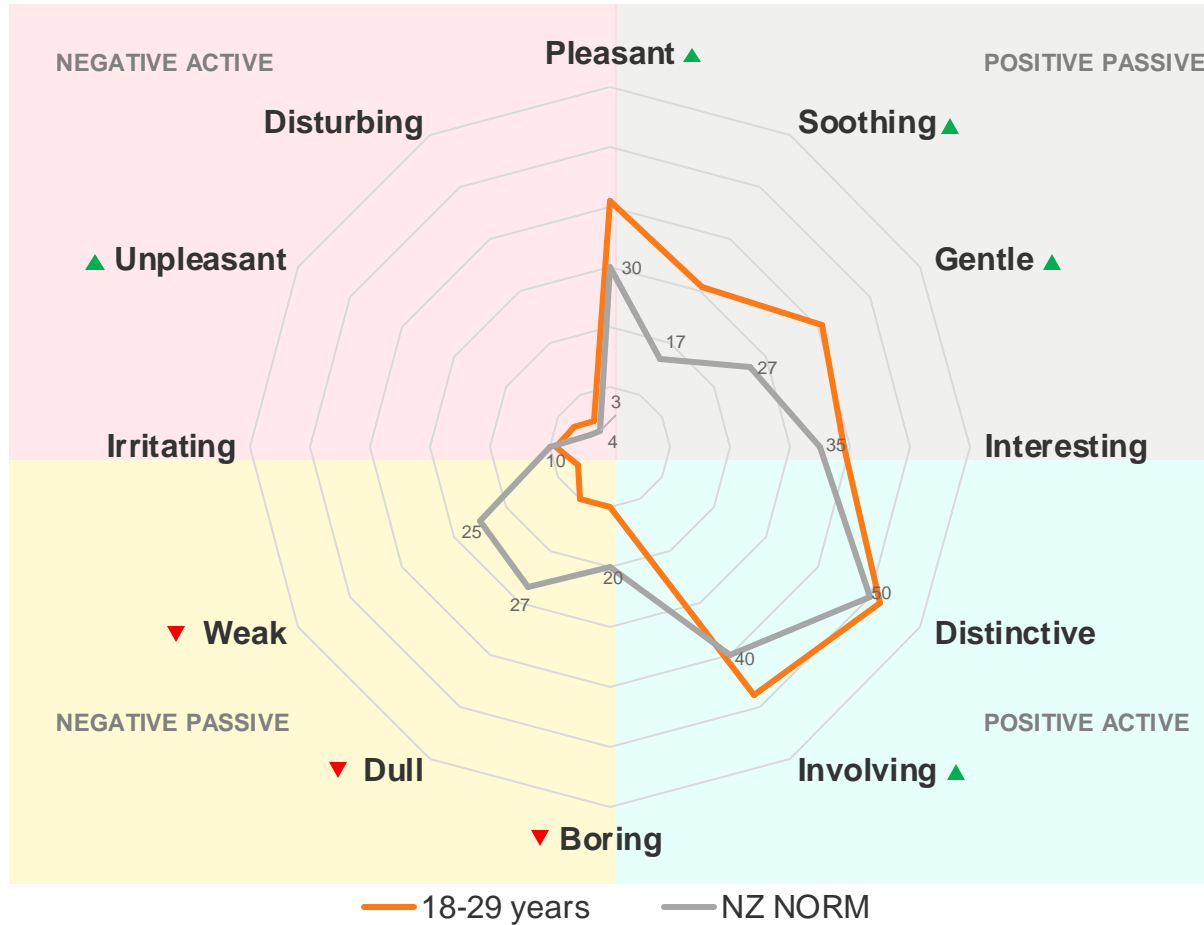
> I feel that having 2 different rolls is a form of people culture separation. We are supposed to be one nation but we certainly don't behave, act or manage our country as such. Instead we have created a nation of differences. The past is the past and it is now time to move forward. –
> *tāne, urban, graduate and above education, aged 20 to 24*

> I'm disgusted in the division created in New Zealand and these ads make me hate being a New Zealander. –
> *tāne, aged 18 to 24*

> Good message and clear to understand for someone like me who knows nothing about politics. –
> *tāne, urban, graduate and above education, aged 25 to 29*

NEGATIVE ACTIVE
POSITIVE PASSIVE
POSITIVE ACTIVE
NEGATIVE PASSIVE

Pleasant ▲ Soothing ▲ Disturbing ▲ Unpleasant Gentle ▲ Irritating Interesting ▼ Weak Distinctive ▼ Dull Involving ▲ ▼ Boring

Values: 30, 17, 27, 3, 4, 35, 10, 25, 20, 27, 40, 50

— 18-29 years   — NZ NORM

Q34. Please select one word from each of these three lists that applies most to the ads.
Base: aged 18 – 29 (n=198)

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

KANTAR PUBLIC | ELECTORAL COMMISSION TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

21

The campaign is positively engaging for most 30-59 year olds.

NEGATIVE ACTIVE

POSITIVE PASSIVE

Pleasant ▲

Disturbing

Soothing ▲

Unpleasant

Gentle ▲

30
17
27
3
4
35

▼ Irritating

Interesting ▲

10
25
50
20
40
27

▼ Weak

Distinctive

NEGATIVE PASSIVE

POSITIVE ACTIVE

▼ Dull

Involving ▲

▼ Boring

—— 30-59 years   —— NZ NORM

> *Great work, easy to understand, with good information. –*
> *tāne, urban, undergraduate education, aged 40 to 44*

> *The colours are great. Good vibe in the videos. Nice and simple. –*
> *Wahine, urban, high school and lower education, aged 50 to 54*

KANTAR PUBLIC | ELECTORAL COMMISSION TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

Q34. Please select one word from each of these three lists that applies most to the ads.
Base: aged 30 - 59 (n=312)

22

For those aged 60 and over, the campaign is also positively engaging, seen to be soothing and interesting to watch.

ENGAGEMENT – AGED 60 AND OVER

I think they are positive and encouraging Māori to get involved in the elections. They are not over-powering and come across as respecting people's mana. –
tāne, rural, graduate and above education, aged 66 to 75

— 60 and over   — NZ NORM

Q34. Please select one word from each of these three lists that applies most to the ads.
Base: aged 60 and over (n=92)
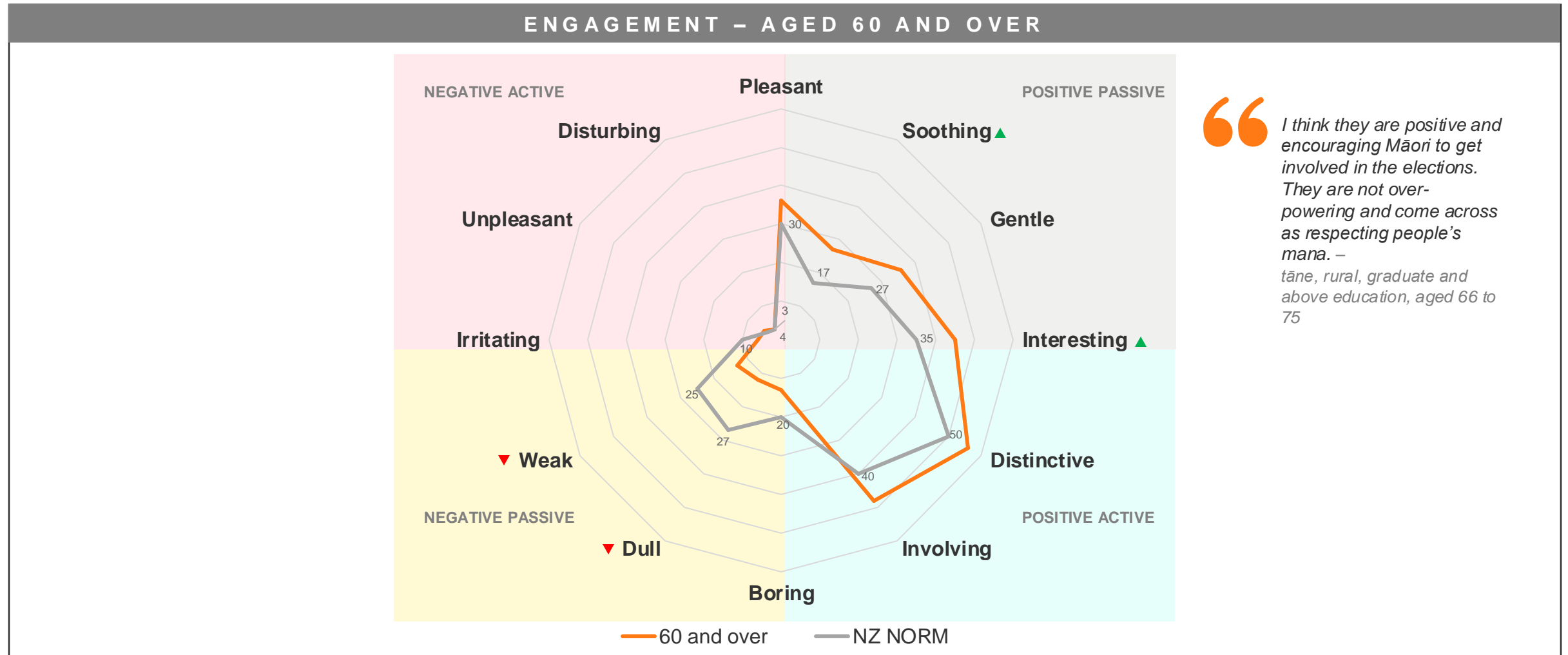
Those living in an urban place find the campaign to be strongly positively engaging and they find the ads to be strongly distinctive.

ENGAGEMENT – URBAN

NEGATIVE ACTIVE

POSITIVE PASSIVE

Pleasant ▲
Disturbing
Soothing ▲
Unpleasant
Gentle ▲
30
17
27
3
Irritating
4
35
Interesting ▲
10
25
50
20
Distinctive ▲
40
27
▼ Weak
NEGATIVE PASSIVE
POSITIVE ACTIVE
▼ Dull
Involving ▲
▼ Boring

—— Urban   —— NZ NORM

Q34. Please select one word from each of these three lists that applies most to the ads.
Base: Living in an urban setting (n=422)

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

For those living rurally, the MEO ads come across as soothing, gentle, interesting and involving.

ENGAGEMENT – RURAL

NEGATIVE ACTIVE — Pleasant — POSITIVE PASSIVE
Disturbing — Soothing ▲
Unpleasant — Gentle ▲
Irritating — Interesting ▲
Weak ▼ — Distinctive
NEGATIVE PASSIVE — POSITIVE ACTIVE
Dull ▼ — Involving ▲
Boring ▼

Values shown: 30, 17, 27, 3, 4, 35, 10, 25, 20, 27, 40, 50

—— Rural —— NZ NORM

▲▼ *Sig. different to NZ Norms*

KANTAR PUBLIC | ELECTORAL COMMISSION TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

25

Over half (56%) say the campaign has improved their understanding of the Māori Electoral Option. Those with a high school and lower education, and household income of $70k or lower, are most positively impacted.

CAMPAIGN'S IMPACT ON UNDERSTANDING OF MEO

	Total	18-29	30-59	60+	Rural	Urban	High school and lower education	Undergraduate and above education	Household income $70k or less	Household income more than $70k
Much better understanding	26%	24%	26%	29%	25%	26%	34% 🟢	22% 🔴	32% 🟢	22% 🔴
Slightly better understanding	30%	34%	29%	26%	34%	29%	28%	32%	24% 🔴	34% 🟢
Same understanding	41%	36%	43%	44%	37%	43%	35%	44%	39%	42%
Slightly worse understanding	2%	4%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Much worse understanding	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1% 🔴	1%	1% 🔴	3%	1%
Base:	602	198	312	92	154	422	193	386	224	290

- ■ Much better understanding
- ■ Slightly better understanding
- ■ Same understanding
- ■ Slightly worse understanding
- ■ Much worse understanding

🟢🔴 *Sig. different to Total population*

Viewers of the campaign enjoy the visuals of the sand and colour designs, finding the delivery of the ads engaging. Many viewers are also supportive of the kaupapa, and find it informative.

"

Enjoy the visuals, and the engaging delivery

"I enjoyed the nostalgia and similarity to some old election ads."
-tāne, aged 18-24, Te Tai Tokerau

"I think they are positive and encouraging Māori to get involved in the elections. They are not over-powering and come across as respecting people's mana."
-tāne, aged over 60, Te Tai Tokerau

"I love the colour design of them! The pink/orange hues are gorgeous. The whole design creates a really positive warm feeling."
- Wahine, aged 40-49, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

"Using the visual of the sand picture is a good way to engage people. We need more visual ads like this one."
- Wahine, aged over 60, Murihiku

Awhi the kaupapa of the MEO campaign

"I would thank them for getting out there and encouraging our Māori people to get in there and vote and for giving information regarding the Māori roll."
- Wahine, aged 18-24, Tāmaki Makaurau

"They have Māori values at heart."
-tāne, aged over 60, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

"They cater to whānau that are not very willing to vote."
- Wahine, aged 18 to 24, Waikato

"Awesome mahi, passionate and dedicated to putting Māori first."
- Wahine, aged 50-59, Waikato

Informative message

"Good message and clear to understand for someone like me who knows nothing about politics."
- tāne, aged 25-29, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

"The ads are clear and outline important points that make it easy to understand the voting options available."
- tāne, aged over 60, Tāmaki Makaurau

"I like them and they are a good start point for bringing understanding about enrolling."
- Wahine, aged 18 to 24, Whakatū

"Very interesting information especially as I was unaware of the Maori Roll."
-tāne, aged 18 to 24, Waikato

Q38. Thinking about the ads, if you could talk back to the people that made these ads, what else would you say about them?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)

27

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However, some 18 to 24 year olds would like a campaign that feels specifically targeted towards them. Some would like more diverse representation of Māori, more information about the difference between the rolls, and why people should consider the Māori electoral roll. Others would like the advertising to have a bit more energy and suggest a bit of humour and having recognised actors in everyday settings delivering key messages.

Disconnect for some 18 to 24 year olds

"They aren't appealing to millennials."
-Tāne, aged 18 to 24, Manawatū-Whanganui

"[For the ads to] pack a punch so us rangatahi will stand up and take notice!"
-Tāne, aged 18 to 24, Tāmaki Makaurau

"I think there should be ads targeted towards young people who are new to the voting procedure as well as those who are leading up to the voting age."
-Wahine, aged 18 to 24, Te Matau-a-Māui

Showcase a diversity of Māori

"Not all Māori are brown, my niece is blond and has blue eyes and korero Māori anake."
-Tāne, aged over 60, Te Tai Tokerau

"What about Māori deaf or disabilities?"
-Wahine, aged 30-39, Taranaki

Include more information about the rolls

"Not enough information about what it means to be on the Māori roll."
- Tāne, aged 18 to 24, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

"Perhaps add in a bit of history of the Māori roll."
-Tāne, aged 50-59, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

"Tell us the difference between the Māori roll and general roll."
-Wahine, aged 40 to 49, Waitaha

"Let me know how this choice will actually help to change the statistics for Māori."
-Wahine, aged 50-59, Te Moana-a-Toi

"Slightly more information could be given in the ads with talking [the TVC], the difference between the General vs Māori roll would be interesting to know."
-Wahine, aged 18 to 24, Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara

Interest in distinct, punchier advertising

"Add a little more attitude and humour to them in order to engage all ages."
-Tāne, aged 30 to 39, Te Moana-a-Toi

"They are a little tame."
-Wahine, aged 18 to 24, Te Whanganui-a-Tara

"Make them a bit more punchy."
-Tāne, aged 40-49, Waitaha

"Use recognised actors and different settings - marae, on the bus, in a factory etc."
-Tāne, aged 50 to 59, Tāmaki Makaurau

"Keep it fresh each election year."
-Wahine, aged over 60, Manawatū-Whanganui

"Be more concise and straight to the point."
-Tāne, aged 30 to 39, Tāmaki Makaurau

KANTAR PUBLIC | ELECTORAL COMMISSION TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Q38. Thinking about the ads, if you could talk back to the people that made these ads, what else would you say about them?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)

28

KANTAR PUBLIC

5

Understanding and engagement in the electoral system

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

On par with the pre-campaign read, just over half (53%) are highly informed about the steps to take to enrol and vote in a general election. This has not significantly changed since the campaign.

How informed you are about enrolling and voting in a general election

Post-campaign: 4% | 13% | 30% | 53%

Mean 7.25

- Don't know
- Low (0-4)
- Mid (5-7)
- High (8-10)

▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

Q7. Now thinking about the steps you must go through to enrol, and to vote in a general election. How informed would you say you are about the steps you have to go through to enrol, and to vote, in a general election?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)
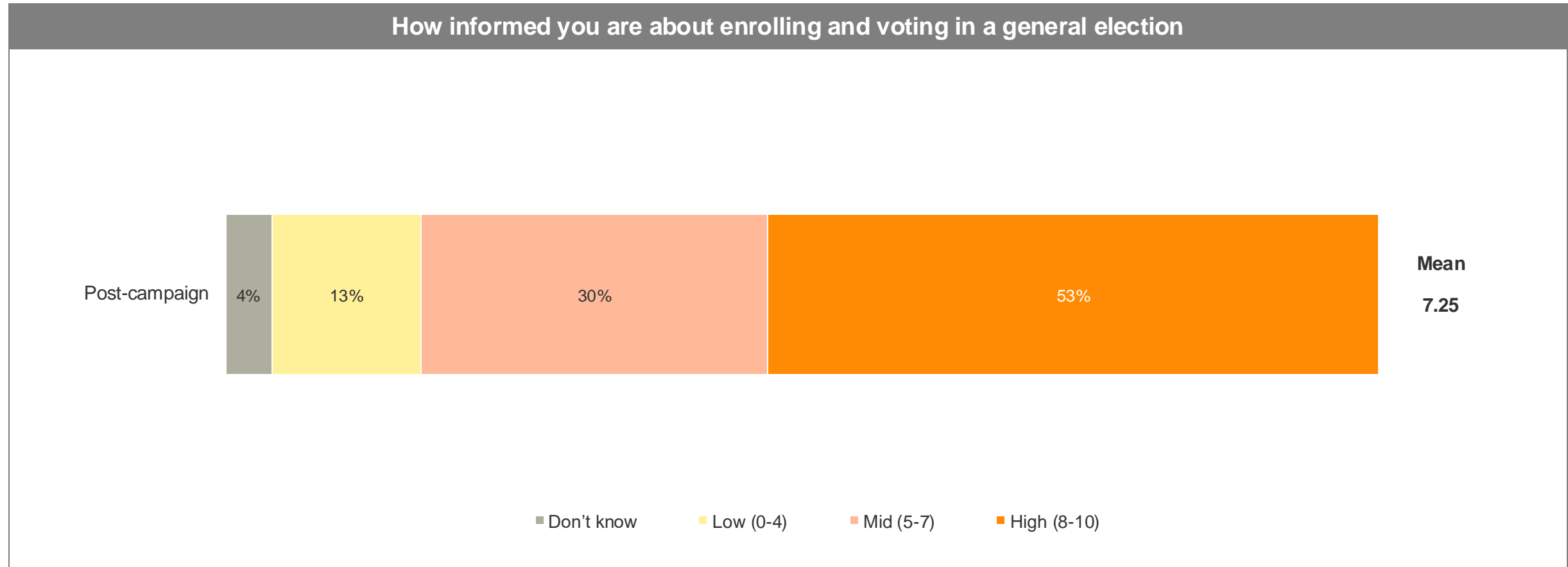
93% are aware of both the Māori and General roll, and 86% are aware of both the Māori and General electorates. This is stable with pre-campaign levels.
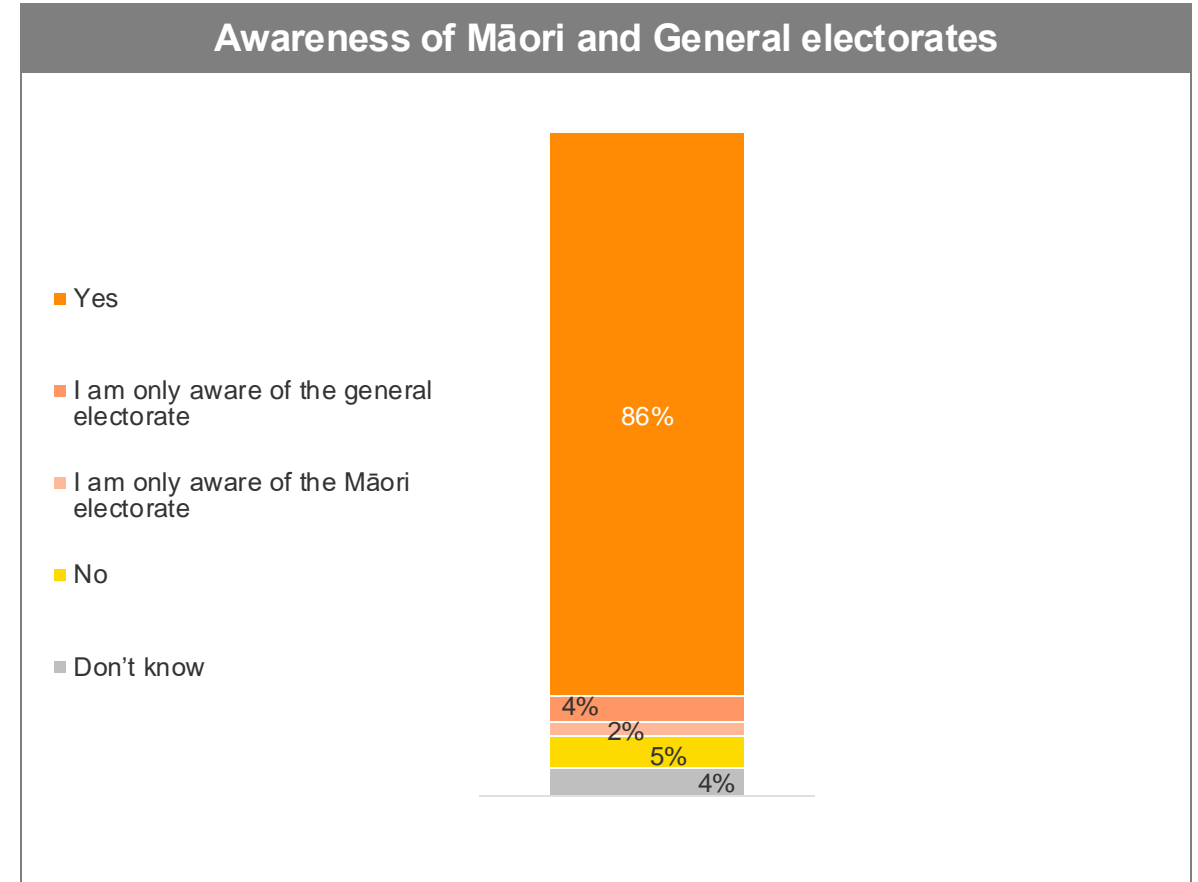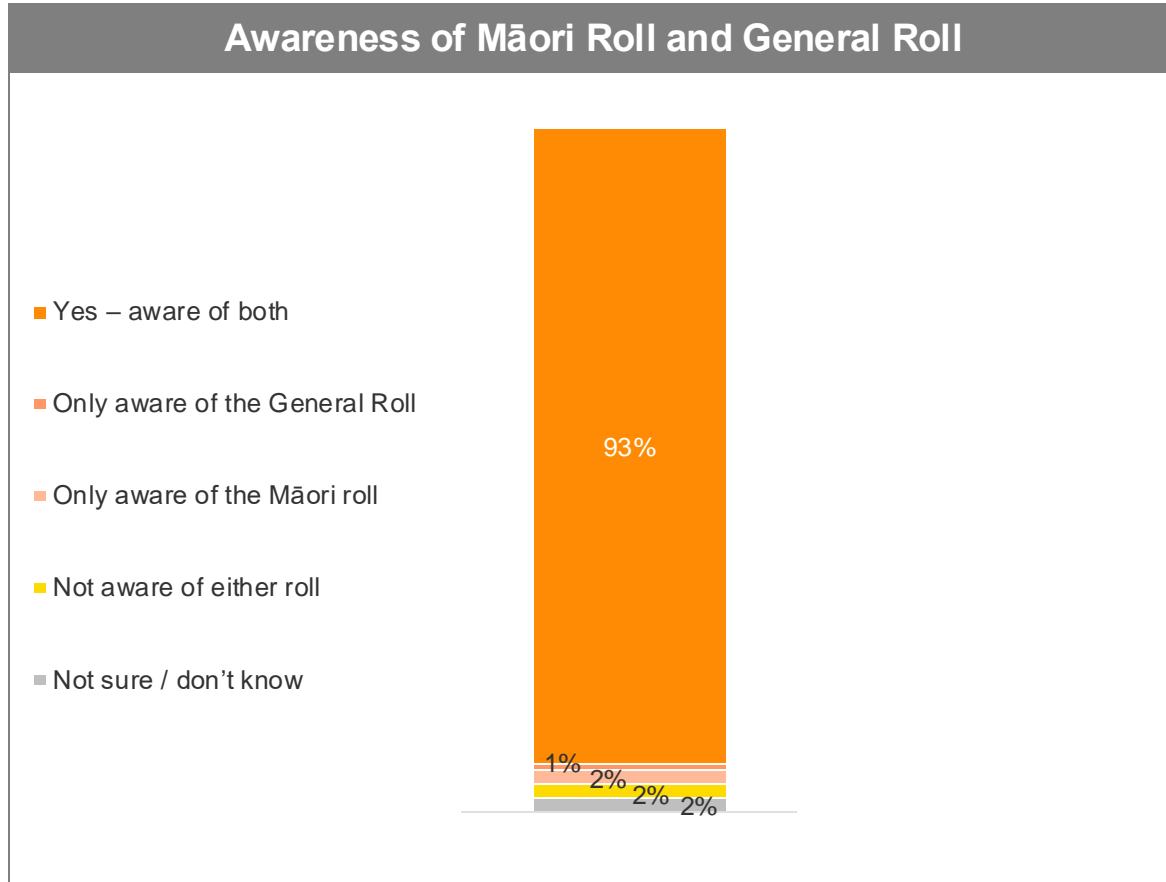
Awareness of Māori Roll and General Roll
- Yes – aware of both
- Only aware of the General Roll
- Only aware of the Māori roll
- Not aware of either roll
- Not sure / don't know

93%
1%
2%
2%
2%

Awareness of Māori and General electorates
- Yes
- I am only aware of the general electorate
- I am only aware of the Māori electorate
- No
- Don't know

86%
4%
2%
5%
4%

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population

▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

Nine in ten (91%) are aware that Māori can enroll on either roll type. This strong awareness is comparable to pre-campaign levels.
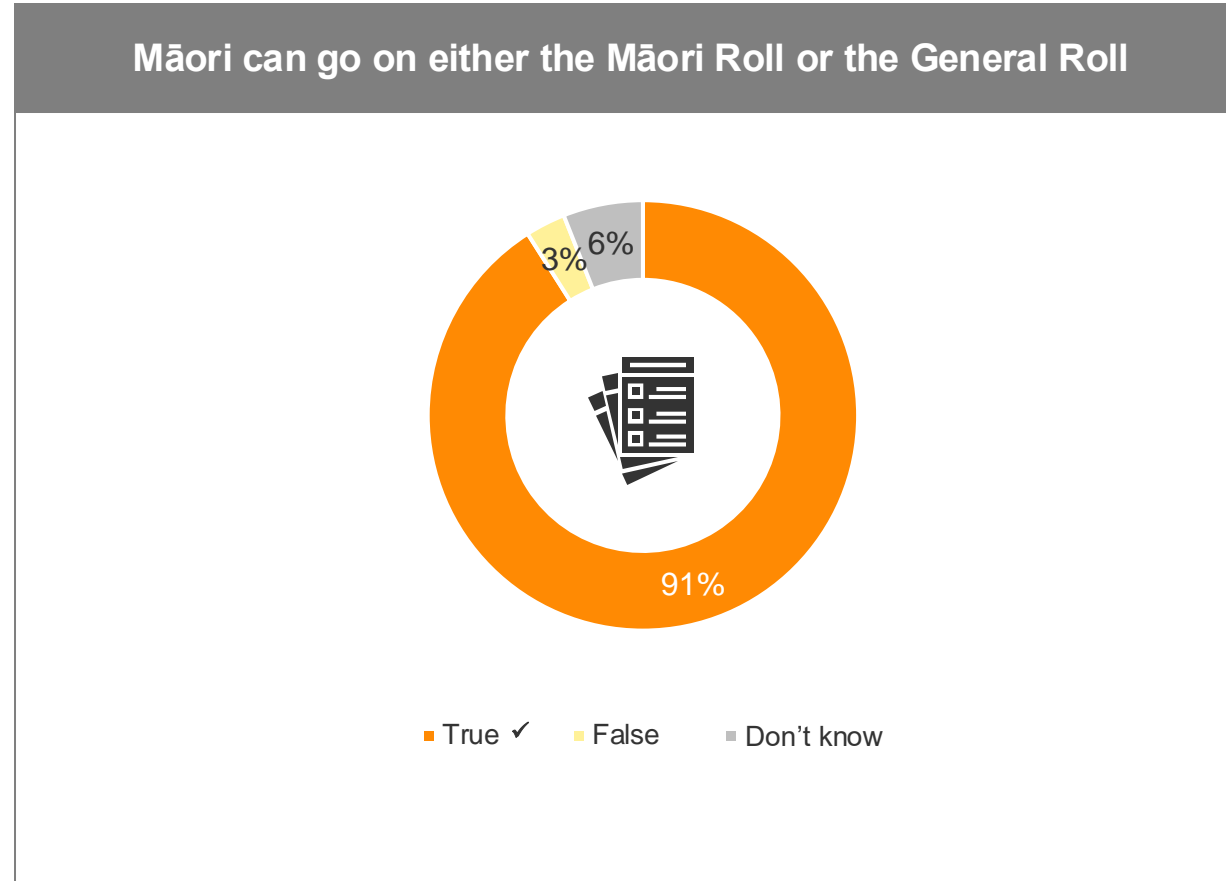
Māori can go on either the Māori Roll or the General Roll

3% 6%

91%

■ True ✓   ■ False   ■ Don't know

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Q11. Please tell us, for each statement, if you think it is true or false.
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602) l Precampaign Total sample (n=601)
Note: ✓ in data legend indicates which statement is correct.

Since the campaign, awareness of the option to change roll type has significantly increased 11 points to 85%. The greatest increases in awareness are among wāhine, North Island outside of Auckland and Wellington, South Island, and those with undergraduate and lower education qualifications.

Awareness of being able to change from one roll type to another

Don't know   11% ▼ (-10pts)

NETT Don't Know/Not Aware
15%▼
(-11pts)

No – Not aware   5%

Yes - Aware   85% ▲ (+11pts)
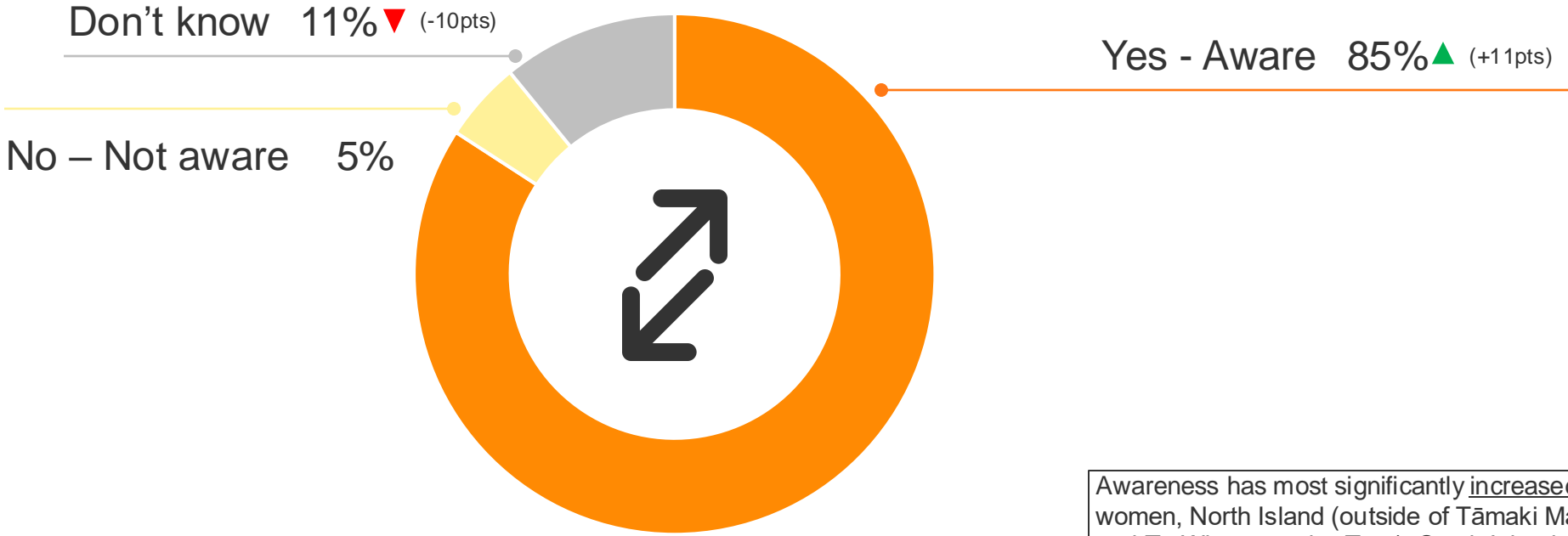
Awareness has most significantly <u>increased</u> among: women, North Island (outside of Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara), South Island, and those with undergraduate and lower education.

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population
▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

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Q13. Once you're on the Māori Roll or the General Roll, can you change from one roll type to the other?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602) | Precampaign Total sample (n=601)

Awareness that you can change roll type anytime except three months prior to an election has also significantly improved, up 20 points to 53%. Awareness has increased most among those that voted in 2020, and those living in North Island outside Auckland and Wellington.

When to change roll type

Anytime except three months prior to an election* 53% ▲ (+20pts)

Before an election 21%

Whenever I want 8% ▼ (-5pts)

When I go to vote 4%

After a census 2% ▼ (-3pts)

Don't know 11% ▼ (-8pts)

NETT Incorrect

47% ▼

(-20pts)

Correct awareness has most significantly <u>increased</u> among: North Island (outside of Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara), and those that voted in 2020.

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population
▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

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Q14. When can you change from one roll type to the other?
Base: Those aware of the Māori Electoral Option Postcampaign (n= 511) I Precampaign (n= 441)
*Note: This statement is correct.

34

92% of Māori are enrolled to vote, in line with pre-campaign levels. Of those that are enrolled, most (84%) did not change electoral roll for the 2023 General Election.

92% of Māori are enrolled to vote.

Changed electoral roll

8%
Changed roll

Changed from Māori to General roll — 3%

Changed from General to Māori roll — 5%

Don't know — 10%

No — 84%

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Q6. Are you enrolled to vote in New Zealand general elections? Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602)
Q21g. Did you change the electoral roll you are on this year for the 2023 General Election? Base: Postcampaign sample enrolled to vote (n=552)
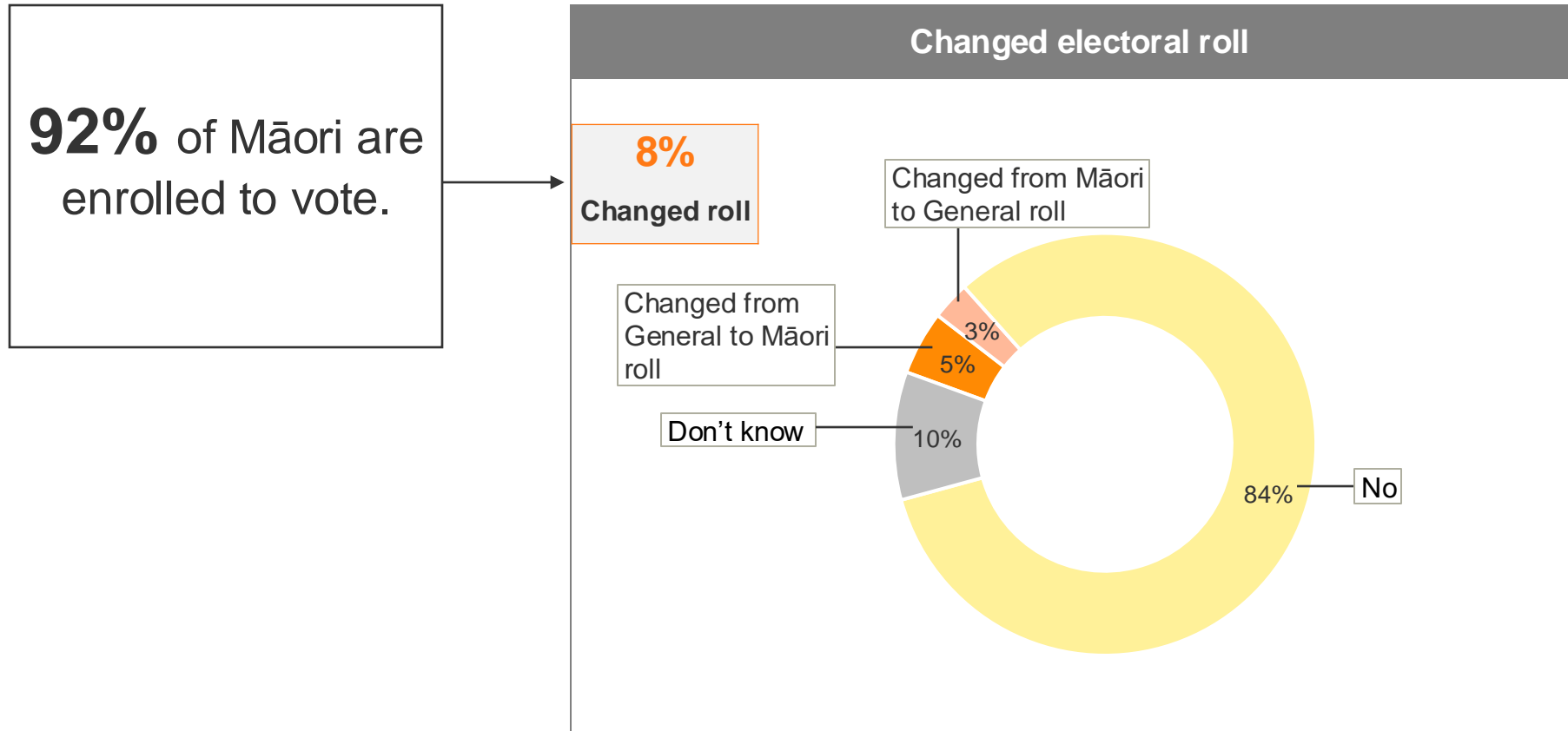
Among the 8% who did change roll, the main reason for doing so is to represent their whānau / hapū / iwi / community.

Reason for changing roll

Reason	Percentage
To be able to vote to represent our whānau/hapū/iwi/community	16%
More choices for people to vote for	12%
To vote for the political party whose policies I like	11%
To add to the Māori voice	10%
Moved back to the General Roll	7%
Decided to move to the Māori Roll	7%
To vote for the candidate I prefer	7%
To strengthen Māori representation in government	5%
Moved to a different electorate	4%
The local candidate I preferred was not on the Māori Roll	4%
Other	19%
Don't know	33%

Xx Sig. higher than Total population
Xx Sig. lower than Total population

Of the 84% who did not change rolls, most commonly this is because of being happy on their current roll (43%).

Reason for not changing roll

- I'm happy with the roll I am on — 43% **Aged 50 and over**
- I don't care — 6%
- More options and influence on the General roll — 5% **Graduate and above education**
- I prefer the Māori roll / it gives more Māori seats / representation — 5%
- Preferred the candidates in this roll — 4%
- It is divisive / should be one roll — 4%
- My vote will make more of a difference — 2%
- I meant to change rolls — 2% **Aged 30-39**
- Other — 14%
- Don't know — 25% **Aged 18-24. Highschool and lower education.**

Xx Sig. higher than Total population
Xx Sig. lower than Total population

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Q28. What was the main reason you decided not to change rolls? Base: Enrolled to vote and decided not to change roll this year (n= 463). Responses less than 2% included in NETT Other.

37

6

Understanding and sentiments towards MEO

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Understanding that being on the Māori roll means you can only vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate has improved by 7 points, up to 57%. However, there is more confusion around the Māori roll's implications for political party voting options. These messages are similar and both have significantly impacted tāne and those aged 30 to 49.

Knowledge about MEO (% correct) ✓

If you're on the Māori Roll you can only vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate

- 22% Don't know
- 57% ▲ (+7pts) True ✓
- (-7pts) ▼ 21% False

■ True ✓ ■ False ■ Don't know
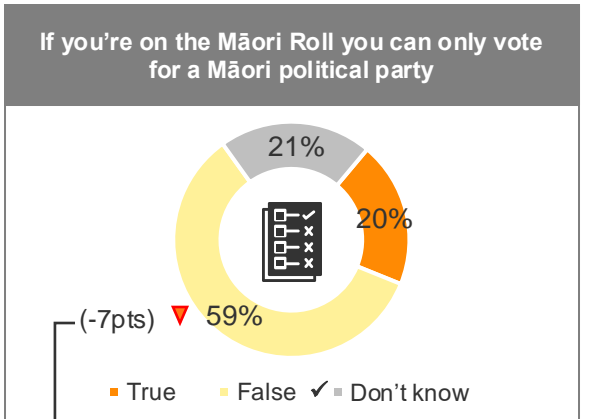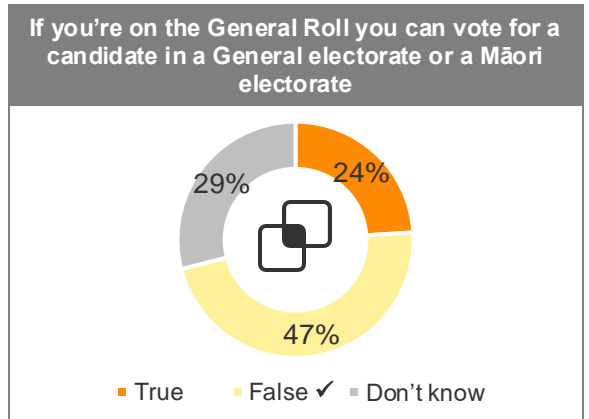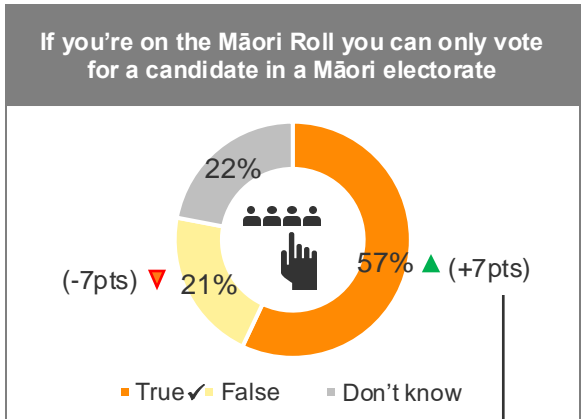
Correct awareness has most significantly <u>increased</u> among: aged 30-49, tāne, North Island (outside Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara), those that voted in 2020.

Correct awareness has significantly <u>decreased</u> among: aged 30-49, tāne, on the General roll, urban, highschool and lower education, and household income less than 70k.

If you're on the General Roll you can vote for a candidate in a General electorate or a Māori electorate

- 24% True
- 29% Don't know
- 47% False ✓

■ True ■ False ✓ ■ Don't know

If you're on the Māori Roll you can only vote for a Māori political party

- 21% Don't know
- 20% True
- (-7pts) ▼ 59% False ✓

■ True ■ False ✓ ■ Don't know

If you're on the General Roll you can't vote for a Māori political party

- 19% Don't know
- 24% True
- 56% False ✓

■ True ■ False ✓ ■ Don't know

If the number of people on the Māori roll increases, the number of Māori electorates always stays the same

- 24% True
- 46% Don't know
- 30% False ✓

■ True ■ False ✓ ■ Don't know

Number of correct answers

- ■ 5 correct answers — 11%
- ■ 4 correct answers — 19%
- ■ 3 correct answers — 19%
- ■ 2 correct answers — 23%
- ■ 1 correct answer — 17%
- ■ 0 correct answers — 12%

Mean 2.5

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population
▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

More Māori feel highly informed on how to change roll type, with a 7 point increase to 34%. Those that feel significantly more informed include people living in North Island outside of Auckland and Wellington, those aged over 50, and with an undergraduate or lower education.

How to change roll type

Mean

2023   5%   19% ▽ (-7pts)   42%   34% ▲ (+7pts)   **6.28** ▲ (+0.62)

■ Don't know   ■ Low (0-4)   ■ Mid (5-7)   ■ High (8-10)

How informed people are has significantly <u>increased</u> among: aged 50 and over, in North Island (outside Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara), undergraduate and lower education.

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population
▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

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Q17. How informed would you say you are about how you enrol on the Māori or General roll, or how you change from one roll type to another?
Base: Postcampaign Total sample (n=602) l Precampaign Total sample (n=601)

57% rate the MEO's importance highly, in line with pre-campaign levels. The main reason continues to be tino rangatiratanga. Those that rate the MEO as low importance most commonly cite that there should only be one roll, or it is not important to them personally.

Importance of MEO

How important it is to be given the option to change rolls

Rating	%
High (8-10)	57%
Mid (5-7)	28%
Low (0-4)	8%
Don't know	7%

- Don't know
- Mid (5-7)
- Low (0-4)
- High (8-10)

Top 5 reasons given for rating

Reason	%
Tino rangatiratanga	55%
Depends on my views	17%
Gives you more options	10%
To influence from a Māori perspective	6%
Important to me/whānau	4%
Other	22%
Don't know	2%

n= 343

Reason	%
There should only be one roll	33%
Not important to me	31%
Tino rangatiratanga	7%
I identify with my Māori heritage	5%
Other	25%

n= 50

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population ▲▼ Significantly higher / lower than 2023 benchmark survey

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7

Engagement with information sources

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Two in five did not go anywhere to find out more information on how to change rolls. For those that did, most went online at www.Vote.nz (14%), waited for MEO forms (10%), or went on Google (9%). Of those that used www.Vote.nz, 35% found it very or extremely helpful.

Where people went to find out more information about changing rolls

Went online at www.vote.nz	14%
Waited for MEO forms to arrive in the mail	10%
Went on Google	9%
Contacted my whānau	6%
Contacted someone I know	5%
Called the Electoral Commission 0800 number	3%
Contacted or went to the local library	2%
Talked to an enrolment information person at a kiosk, etc.	2%
Contacted my marae	2%
Contacted the Registrar of Electors	2%
Other	3%
None	42%
Don't know	2%

www.vote.nz: Voted in 2020
Aged 60 and over, voted in 2020, or on Māori roll. Aged 18-24, did not vote in 2020, and highschool and lower education.

Contacted my whānau: Aged 18-24 Did not vote in 2020

Contacted or went to the local library: Live rurally, and live in North Island (outside Auckland and Wellington)

Contacted the Registrar of Electors: Aged 60 and over

None: Aged 40 to 49

Helpfulness of www.Vote.nz

- Extremely helpful — 9%
- Very helpful — 26%
- Quite helpful — 54%
- Not very helpful — 4%
- Not at all helpful — 8%
- Don't know

NETT very/extremely helpful 35% — Māori roll

Xx / Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population

Just over half who are enrolled to vote say they received the MEO information pack. Those aged 50 and over are more likely to have received it, as well as those living in Wellington, those that voted in 2020, earn $70k and over, and living in an urban place.

Received MEO information pack

Don't know   15%

NETT
No/Don't
Know

43%

No   28%

Yes   57%

Aged 50 and over, living in Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara, voted in 2020, earn over $150k, and urban. Awareness of the information pack and having received it are both higher among those that voted in 2020.

Aged 18-29 and living in North Island (outside Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara).

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population

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Q21a. Did you receive a Māori Electoral Option pack in the mail?
Base: Postcampaign sample enrolled to vote (n=552)

Among those that received the MEO pack, half read most or all of it. Those aged 60 and over and those that voted in 2020 were more likely to do so. While those with a graduate or higher education or a household income of $30 to $70k are more likely to not have opened it.

Response to receiving the MEO pack

I read most / all of it — 51%
Aged 60 and over.
Voted in 2020.

I read a bit of it — 30%
Aged 30 to 39.
Household income $70k or more.

I opened it but didn't read any of it — 7%

I didn't open it — 10%
Graduate and above education.
Household income $30-70k.

I never received a pack — 1%

Don't know — 2%

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population

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Q21b. What did you do when you received the pack?
Base: Those that received a Māori Electoral Option pack (n=316).

45

35% rate the MEO pack as very or extremely useful. In their own words, people suggest improving the MEO pack by providing more information on the benefits or impacts of changing rolls, and using simple language.

Usefulness of the MEO pack

- Extremely useful — 8%
- Very useful — 27%
- Quite useful — 49%
- Not very useful — 8%
- Not at all useful — 5%
- Don't know — 4%

NETT very/ extremely useful 35%

Māori roll

NETT not useful 13%
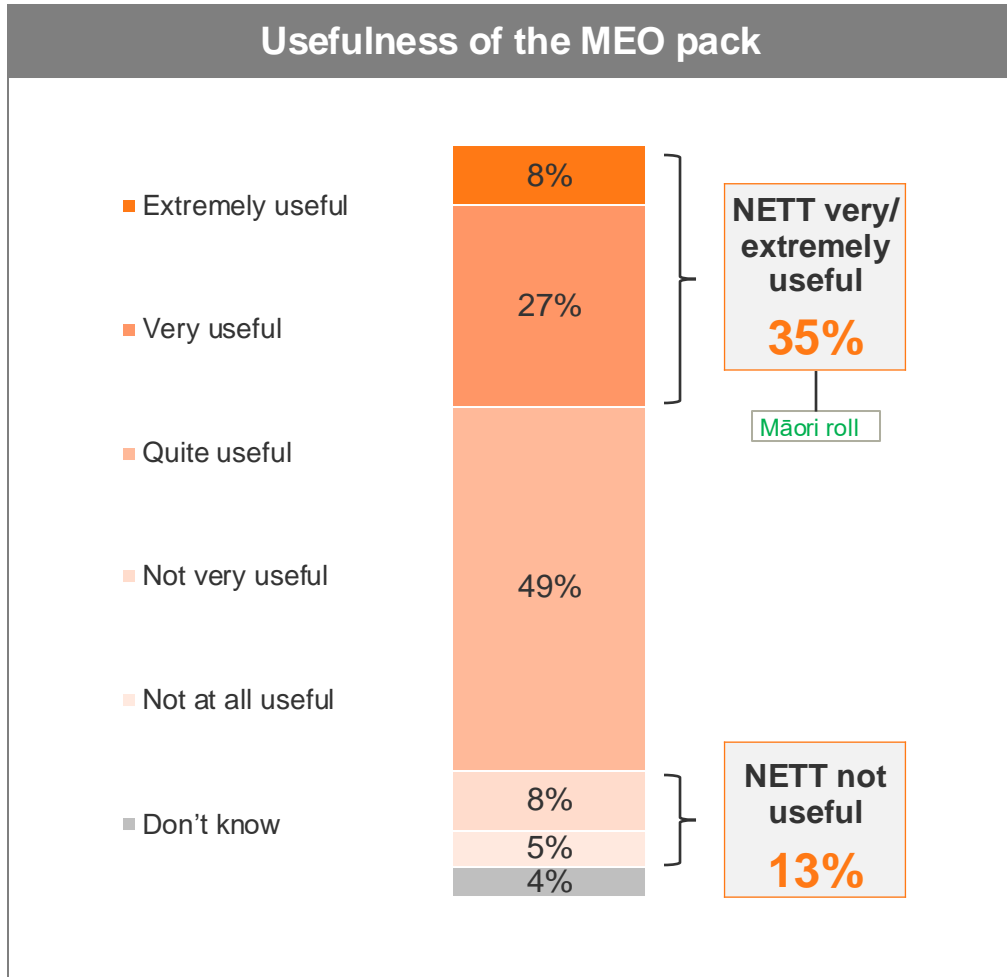
Suggested improvements for the MEO pack

"I understand from social media that there are negative outcomes if the Māori roll numbers drop too much, but I don't understand how this works or what happens. If the pack had explained this and given more context that would have been helpful."
-*Wahine, aged 25 to 29, Te Whanganui-a-Tara*

"Explain what the point of having a Māori Electoral roll is for, and why it matters, and how it has impacted Māori in helpful ways in the past."
-*tāne, aged 30-39, North Island (outside Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanganui-a-tara*

"Make it more simple to read and understand."
-*Wahine, aged 25 to 29, North Island (outside Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanganui-a-tara*

"Highlight real benefits."
-*Wahine, aged 50 to 59, North Island (outside Tāmaki Makaurau and Te Whanganui-a-tara*

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population

Q21c. How useful did you find the Māori Electoral Option pack?
Base: Those that received a Māori Electoral Option pack and read most / all of it / a bit of it (n=256).
Q21d. How could the Māori Electoral Option pack be made more useful?
Base: Those that received a Māori Electoral Option pack and read most / all of it / a bit of it and found it not at all useful / not very useful (n=34).

Of those that remember what they did with their MEO pack, 53% say it did not prompt them to do anything, while 38% made a decision on which electoral roll to go for. In the future, people would also find it useful to be contacted via digital communication or text.

Actions prompted by the MEO pack

Action	%
Decided which electoral roll to go on	38%
Sought more information about the MEO, or how to change rolls	9%
Something else	2%
It did not prompt me to do anything	53%
Don't know	2%

Alternative preferred contact methods

" "An email would be good since mail services aren't always reliable."

"Email because it is cheaper and less physical rubbish"

"Email. Text."

"Digitally."

"Social media."

"Email would make it so much easier, especially when I move house."

"Email / through an online portal - posting is a waste of money and resources."

"Email, or in person visit."

"I am always happy to have a digital option, a website ran like IRD or MSD but for your electoral information would be ideal."

Xx/ Xx Sig. higher / lower than Total population

███████████ & █████████

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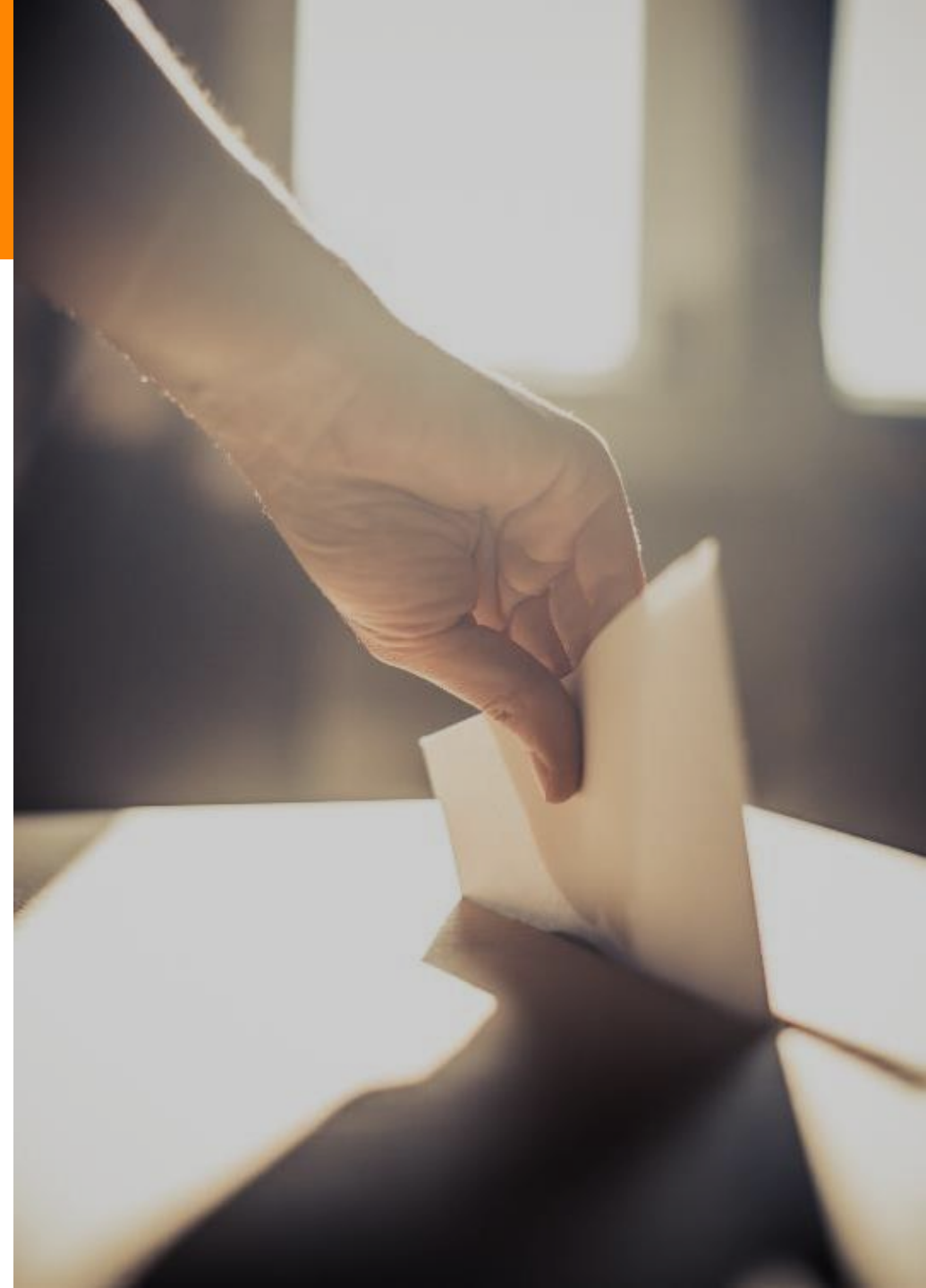
Independent Quality Assurance Report

General Election 2023 Programme

February & March 2023

Caravel Group

Contents

PROGRAMME INDEPENDENT QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

Programme Name:	General Election 2023
Organisation:	Electoral Commission
IQA Completed By:	███████ and ███████ Caravel Group (NZ) Ltd
IQA Date:	February/March 2023

Interviewees

Adele ██████	Principal Advisor Voting Services
Martin Rodgers	Manager, Voting Services
Andrew ████	Programme Manager Technology Workstream
Lisa ████	Senior Project Manager People
Janna █████████	Senior Project Manager Communications & Education
Samantha ███████	Senior Project Manager Enrolment & Community Engagement
Brett █████	Senior Project Manager GE Technology
Emily Redmond	GE 2023 Programme Director
Dame Marie Shroff	Board Chair
James ██████	Chief Information Officer
Ross McPherson	Manager Enrolment & Community Engagement Operations
Shane Whitfield	Director Strategic Engagement & Partnerships
Leigh Deuchars	DCE, Strategy and Governance and Development
Lucy Hickman	DCE Enterprise Services
Kristina Temel	Manager Legal & Policy
Jeremy ███████	Regional Manager
Mark Lawson	Chief Electoral Advisor
Peter █████	Regional Manager - Auckland and North
Sarah Lerwill	Senior Project Manager Voting Services
Anusha Guler	DCE Operations
Hone Matthews	Chief Advisor Māori
Izak ████	People and Culture Manager
Anne ███	Regional Manager - Southern
Suzanne Knight-Tinirau	Manager Communications & Education
Karl Le Quesne	Chief Electoral Officer and Programme Sponsor

Management Summary

Scope of this IQA Review

The scope of this IQA review of the General Election 2023 Programme includes:
- Communications and Education
- Enrolment and Community Engagement
- Voting Services (including field)
- Technology
- People
- Programme Management

The scope excludes the Māori Electorate Option project.

The review approach is shown in Appendix 3.

Statement of Accountability by Senior Responsible Owner

I accept the findings of this Independent Quality Assurance Report.

Name: Karl Le Quesne
Title: Chief Executive and Chief Electoral Officer
Signature:
Date:

Note: IQA is a management and governance review to consider whether everything is in place for the programme team and the Programme Board to plan, deliver, guide and control the programme. We use interviews and document appraisal. It is not a forensic audit involving detailed examination and confirmation of all activities or process compliance. If we find anomalies or gaps, we look for management or governance causes and solutions so that specific instances can be used to improve the programme as a whole.

Focus Area Ratings

Focus Areas	Current Health Check Rating	Interim Target Rating	Action to achieve target rating
Business Benefits & Target Operating Model	3	2	To improve this score, define the programme benefit metrics and include benefits realisation in the programme scope,
Programme Organisation	2	1	To improve this score, define the EC Board's expectations of the programme and standardise the Project Managers' line reporting.
Programme Team	2	1	To improve this score, clarify roles and rights of Project Managers and BAU managers, explore ways to retain project and field management staff between elections.
Programme Methodologies	3	2	To improve this score, complete and approve all Project Management Plans, set minimum standards for project documentation, and provide support and specialist expertise for process mapping.
Scope Management	1	1	
Actions & Timescales	4	2	To improve this score, complete and baseline the Project Schedules, providing support as needed to the Project Managers and Project Coordinators.
Budget & Cost Management	3	2	To improve this score, apply the capabilities of the new FMIS to tighten budgets, apply contingencies and improve the timeliness of programme financial reporting.
Risk and Issue Management	2	1	To improve this score, conduct regular risk workshops and include risk mitigations in Programme and Project Schedules.
Quality Management	4	2	To improve this score, create a Quality Management Plan and gather lessons learned throughout the programme.
Communications	3	2	To improve this score, finalise the communications and stakeholder management plans to support prioritised delivery and status reporting, and ensure that status reports show the real status not an "improved version."
Change Control	4	2	To improve this score, create a change control register and baseline the project attributes which underpin the change control process.
Total:	28		

(Total Score Indicator: 11-22 Healthy, 23-38 Remedial action required, 39-55 Unhealthy

Note that this is only an indicator and it should not mask problems with individual elements of the programme. The criteria for the scores are shown in Appendix 2)

Delivery Confidence Rating

Our assessment of the Delivery Confidence Rating is: (Highly Likely / **Likely** / Possible / Unlikely / Highly Unlikely)[1]

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[1] Refer to Appendix 4 for a description of the Delivery Confidence Ratings

Summary of Recommendations[2]

Business Benefits & Target Operating Model

1. The PMO Manager should work with DCE Strategy, Governance and Development to define requirements for business cases and benefits realisation processes. (Medium Priority)

2. The Programme Director and the DCE Strategy, Governance and Development should finalise the set of programme benefits metrics and include them in the Programme Management Plan. (Medium Priority)

3. The Programme Director should consider extending the scope of the programme to include measurement and reporting of achievement of the programme objectives and benefits. (Medium Priority)

4. The Programme Director, in coordination with the ELT, should develop a benefits realisation plan as part of the planning for the 2026 General Election. (High Priority)

5. A programme approach should be taken to the review and update of the Target Operating Model after GE2023, and the planning and management of the prioritised projects. (High Priority)

Programme Organisation

6. The EC Board should document its expectations of the programme to ensure that the programme fully aligns with EC governance. (Medium Priority)

7. The Programme Director should standardise the line reporting of the Project Managers for the GE2026 cycle (Low Priority)

Programme Team

8. The SRO, Programme Director and DCE Operations should explore ways to retain programme, project and regional/electorate staff throughout the electoral cycle. (High Priority)

9. The Programme Director and Manager PMO in coordination with the ELT, should define and communicate the relative rights and roles of the Project Managers and the BAU Managers. (High Priority)

Programme Methodologies

10. Project Managers should all complete their Project Management Plans and receive approval. (High Priority)

11. The PMO Manager should set expectations of minimum documentation standards for programmes and projects. (Medium Priority)

12. The Programme Director should restate the case for a process mapper as part of the programme to deliver the 2026 election. (Medium Priority)

Actions and Timescales

13. The Programme Director should ensure that the Project Schedules are completed and baselined. (High Priority)

14. The Programme Director should consider having a Project Scheduler to provide support and mentoring for the Project Managers and Project Coordinators. (High Priority)

Budget and Cost Management

15. When the new FMIS is available, the Programme Director should arrange for the project budgets to be tightened, while applying a controlled contingency system. (High Priority)

Continued on next page

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[2] Refer to Appendix 4 for a description of the Recommendation Priority Ratings

Risk and Issue Management

16. The Programme Director and Project Managers should conduct risk workshops with key programme/project stakeholders every quarter. (High Priority)

17. The Programme Director and Project Managers should include risk mitigations in the Project Schedules. (High Priority)

18. The Programme Director and PMO Manager should consider introducing an Issue Summary Form to inform the governance groups about new issues and the resolution plans. (Low Priority)

Quality Management

19. The Project Managers should each produce a Quality Management Plan for their project. (Medium Priority)

20. The Programme Director should formalise the process for gathering and prioritising Lessons Learned during the programme, to reflect that it does not only happen at the end of the Programme. (Medium Priority)

Communications

21. The Programme Director should ensure that the Communications project is working to approved communications and stakeholder engagement plans and is reporting progress against those plans. (High Priority)

22. The Programme Director should issue communications across Business Managers to clarify that every Project Manager is able to report the true status of their project. (High Priority)

Change Control

23. The Programme Director should create a change control register and populate it with previous approved changes. (Medium Priority)

Key Comments on Programme Health

<u>Preface</u>

We have drawn our conclusions from interviews, reading programme documents, and our experience of programmes and projects. For many of our statements there wasn't full consensus among those interviewed. Also, there was some "talking the talk" but reportedly not fully "walking the talk".

Most people interviewed were very complimentary about the programme and the benefit that it has provided in planning and management of the election. The programme is well led and well governed.

Overall, there is full commitment to delivering a successful election and supporting the electoral system. There is a lot of support for the programme management approach, and an understanding that early planning and managed implementation can help to reduce the "crisis mode" operation that has frequently been a feature of previous elections. However, there is still some contention with BAU about the management mechanism and how decisions should be made. In some parts, the Project Managers are seen as just a reporting mechanism - which misses the point of a lot of the value they can provide.

<u>Governance</u>

The Programme Board (PB) and Steering Group (SG) structure works well, with the SG looking down at the projects and the PB dealing with strategy and more major issues. While some repetition of material between the two groups is inevitable, they are presenting to different audiences.

The connection between the Steering Group and Programme Board is not completely clear, raising some questions about information flow between the two, although judgement seems to be sensibly applied.

The presence of an independent member provides a valuable addition to the Programme Board by providing an alternative voice and perspective.

There were previously two Steering Groups. Joining them together was the right thing to do.

"Taking the reports and documents as read" is important to set expectations of the governance members and to get through the agenda in a reasonable time. It needs to be regularly repeated as the documents are not always read in advance.

<u>Business Cases</u>

There is no business case for the GE Programme – partly because it is a regular BAU process. However, there is also no apparent policy about when a business case is applied. For example, the new Enrolments system was approved with a Project Brief. This means that there is less of a focus on benefits and benefits realisation than there should be.

<u>Target Operating Model</u>

A programme normally includes a Target Operating Model (TOM) as it supports a prioritised path towards that future model with managed realisation of benefits along the way. We understand that a TOM was created for the Electoral Commission and resulted in the organisation re-structure. After the election the programme should work with the DCE Strategy, Governance and Development to manage an update to the TOM, and the subsequent gap analysis, prioritisation, and initiation of the initial projects.

<u>Programme Organisation</u>

The structure of the programme and projects is appropriate - with the projects matched to the key BAU groups. This mostly works well but there is a need for further definition of the decision-making rights of the Project Managers and the BAU managers.

Continued on next page

Programme Team

The programme is very well led and has a group of experienced and dedicated Project Managers, but the team would be considerably enhanced by the addition of a couple of roles:

- Process mapper: Election processes are documented in an operations manual which needs continuous improvement. The HQ processes are not documented. Documenting them would provide the basis for consistent practice and innovation.
- Project scheduler: There is a considerable variation in the Project Schedules (Gantt Charts). This causes problems and inefficiencies across the programme as there is no master schedule or project baselines, and there is a manual approach to dependencies and an uncertain critical path. It means that the programme can not readily do "what if" analyses e.g. 'if this task is delayed, what is the flow-on effect?'

The programme team frequently needs to work with subject matter experts (SMEs), but there are few of them who have experience of previous elections and they have a lot of demands on their time. There has been substantial staff turnover and strategies are needed to improve this. It is likely that some of the turnover is due to the high workload and stress in the run-up to elections. Programme management can reduce this if there is full understanding and acceptance.

Programme and Project methodologies

Methodologies are generally working for the programme, but not all are followed through. For example, not all of the Project Management Plans have been completed, and some that are substantially complete are not signed because of the difficulty in getting approval.

There is still considerable scope for tuning existing methods and templates and documenting expectations as well as implementing new templates, including a Quality Management Plan.

Actions and Timelines

As mentioned earlier, considerable improvements could be made to the Project Schedules. Some of this is due to a lack of BAU ownership of a planned path and timings, and the value of transparency.

The critical path chart operated at programme level is useful to set expectations about critical milestones but is not integrated into the scheduling system.

Inter-dependencies are important. They receive a lot of attention through the programme team meetings. However, there are still occasions where actions with inter-dependencies are changed without reference to the other project. Also, they are not automated through the Project Schedules and a master schedule so full "what if" checks cannot be quickly run. This is a significant gap in a fast-moving programme where a decision in one area can have unanticipated effects in other areas.

Several of the Project Managers run a KanBan board with their BAU teams. This is a visual tool that gives an overview of the current work status and simplifies team communication. It is effective for agreeing and communicating forthcoming tasks, and to show what everyone is doing.

Reporting

Apart from the financial reporting, the project and programme reporting is suitable and reflects a fairly accurate position. It addresses the key items.

However, there are attempts by some BAU managers to water down negative messages – even though the SG and PB can be engaged to help in the troubled areas.

Financial reporting against the programme budget has been poorly supported by the old FMIS. It is starting to improve with the incoming FMIS but reports are still not current.

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Risk Management

There is good attention to risk management. The major risks and their mitigations are regularly reviewed. For some risks there appears to be too much optimism about how much the risks will be reduced by the proposed mitigations. This could affect decisions about whether the mitigations are sufficient or whether more needs to be done.

Over time, we would like to see the mitigation actions "mainstreamed" by inclusion in the Programme and Project Schedules rather than being managed separately. Also, periodic checking of the more minor risks is required to make sure their status hasn't changed and that they are mitigated appropriately.

Risk workshops at programme and project level should be held quarterly, preferably including regional or electorate staff.

Information Technology

Critical technology platform upgrades (MIKE, EMS, ERSA) appear to be on track with end-to-end testing and simulation programmes being implemented. Although not a focus of our review, there appears to be suitable attention to the security of the systems. The relationship with the key IT supplier Catalyst has improved recently and their contract has been extended.

A digital strategy development process is underway but there is no timeline for its completion.

Communication

There are several communications and stakeholder strategies and plans in various stages of completion. Although not complete, these documents provide a fairly extensive view of the communications and stakeholder engagement elements for GE 2023. However, they don't provide assurance that the deliverables are fully planned, resourced and on track to meet agreed dates. The Project Schedule is incomplete, and we did not see an alternate tracking spreadsheet. We understand that the communications team is very stretched for resource with roles that have not been able to be filled.

Quality Management

There is no quality management framework for the Programme or Quality Management Plans for the projects. This doesn't mean that quality isn't considered in the programme, but there is some lack of formality about setting, approving, and meeting standards and acceptance criteria.

We would like to see a formal process for gathering lessons learned during the programme.

Siloes

We were asked to look at whether organisational siloes were adversely affecting the programme. We did not see undue evidence of siloes during our review, although they no doubt exist. It seems that previous silo effects have been reduced by:

- Having programme and project planning and implementation management
- Regular CEO zoom staff meetings
- The ELT supporting a cross-organisational culture
- Internal communications
- Visibility across groups in the Programme Board and Steering Group (and the associated reports and documents)
- Programme and project team meetings
- Managing dependencies between groups/projects

Interviewee comments

We sometimes find it useful to collect and present unedited (and anonymous) comments that were made by people during the interviews. These comments can help to provide a flavour of opinions that get lost in formal reporting. We have included some interviewee comments in Appendix 1.

Electoral Commission Management Comment

This report is welcomed by the Commission. The main findings and recommendations align with the Programme view and appear both appropriate and achievable.

The Commission will reprioritise the 23 recommendations, taking into consideration our operating context and where we are at in the election cycle. We will ensure that those recommendations that directly contribute to the success of the 2023 election are progressed first, and others that are good programme management practice that will help us in the future will be progressed post-election.

The Programme Director will create a comprehensive Action Plan and progress towards closing actions will be reported on monthly in the programme status report.

Areas of Focus

The programme was assessed in the following key areas with each area rated 1-5 (excellent - poor) as follows. Note that this is only an indicator, and it should not mask problems with individual elements of the programme. The criteria for the scores are shown in Appendix 2.

Business Benefits and Target Operating Model		
Rating:	3	*To improve this score, define the programme benefit metrics and include benefits realisation in the programme scope.*
Comments:	- There is no business case or benefits realisation process for the programme or the composite projects. The Electoral Commission does not have formalised requirements for when a business case is required. For example, the new Enrolments system just had a Project Brief. A definition of the requirements for business cases and benefits realisation processes is needed. - There is a very clear alignment between the organisation's objectives and the programme. Despite the lack of a business case and a benefits realisation plan, there is also a clear understanding of the business benefits, objectives and deliverables within the programme team. - The objectives of the programme are to ensure: - All voters feel, and are, safe to vote in the 2023 General Election - Commission staff feel, and are, safe to work for the General Election - Parliamentary election results are delivered on time, with integrity - All voters have the opportunity to enrol and cast a vote, and that the Commission has done all it can to ensure voters: - Are enrolled - Have the confidence they need to vote (e.g., by receiving information when needed, in a format that is accessible to them) - Have convenient and accessible places to enrol and cast their vote - Have trust in the electoral process - All voters have confidence that their vote will be counted - The organisation is resourced appropriately to deliver these services. - All stakeholders (including parties and candidates) are confident that the election has been delivered with integrity - The Programme Management Plan states that "The Programme Director is working with the DCE, Strategy, Governance and Development to review our current Accountability documents and to produce a set of GE Programme Benefits. This section will be updated once this work is completed." - The scope description in the Programme Management Plan does not include measurement of achievement of the programme objectives or benefits. The measurements may be done by surveys and by tracking election data, but they should be included in the programme scope. - We note that benefits are difficult to attribute because there are many influencing factors, not all of which are within the control of the programme or the Commission. A benefits realisation plan would define what levers should be used and would gain formal approval for the extent of effort to be applied to improvement of the programme outcomes or project efficiency and effectiveness. In our view, development of this plan would not add sufficient value for the 2023 election but should be created and approved as part of the initial planning for the 2026 General Election.		
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Business Benefits and Target Operating Model continued	
Comments:	**Target Operating Model** • A Target Operating Model (TOM) was developed in 2020. It has a horizon to 2030 and was intended to be progressively reviewed and updated. Several of the short-term changes have already been put in place, including the reorganisation. Culture and leadership changes have been started but there is still more to be done. There needs to be a roadmap for the implementation and upgrade of key systems. The model encourages continuation of the programme approach for the General Election. • After the election there should be a review and update of the TOM to inform both BAU and Programme planning. This should help to get past the electoral cycle limitations where previously the Commission has been good at tweaking things but not effecting major change. In our view, the Programme and Programme Board should be continued to update the TOM, do a gap analysis, create a roadmap for changes, and initiate the prioritised projects. • The TOM review may be informed by the findings of the DCEs Operations and Enterprise Services who are going to look at some Australian systems.
Actions:	1. The PMO Manager should work with DCE Strategy, Governance and Development to define requirements for business cases and benefits realisation processes. (Medium Priority) 2. The Programme Director and the DCE Strategy, Governance and Development should finalise the set of programme benefits metrics and include them in the Programme Management Plan. (Medium Priority) 3. The Programme Director should consider extending the scope of the programme to include measurement and reporting of achievement of the programme objectives and benefits. (Medium Priority) 4. The Programme Director, in coordination with the ELT, should develop a benefits realisation plan as part of the planning for the 2026 General Election. (High Priority) 5. A programme approach should be taken to the review and update of the Target Operating Model after GE2023, and the planning and management of the prioritised projects. (High Priority)

Programme Organisation		
Rating:	**2**	*To improve this score, define the EC Board's expectations of the programme and standardise the Project Managers' line reporting.*
Comments:		<u>Organisation structure</u> • EC has just had an organisational change with new DCE roles being filled. This appears to be going well, but there are still many who are not clear on who does what and who owns what. Ongoing management of the understanding of the changes is required. • The role of the Project Managers is becoming clearer to EC staff, but they are often still seen as task-driven and focused on delivery dates without understanding some key realities. There is a tendency for people to go straight to line managers to get an update on progress or if plans are changing. • The interworking between the Project Managers and the line managers or advisors is variable. While all communicate between each other well, some line managers do not make full use of the Project Manager's capabilities and want to keep them subordinated. There is a small amount of ongoing doubt over the need to "projectise" the election. Also, there is confusion about reporting to the Steering Group where the Project Manager presents the report, but some of the line managers insist on editing the message before and during the Steering Group meeting. • There are inconsistent reporting lines for the Project Managers. Some report to the Programme Director, while others report to BAU managers. In the interests of consistency of support, practice and standards it would be preferable if they all reported to one place such as the programme or the PMO. <u>Siloes</u> • We were asked to look at siloes within the organisation as it had previously been a problem. It appeared to us that siloes between organisational groups were no more apparent than other organisations. The siloes seem to have reduced with the programme cross-cutting processes and the new management team but we are told that it still exists. There are also disconnects between HQ and the Field staff. More direct engagement is required between the new HQ managers and the Field staff. • The silo effect has been reduced by: ▪ Having programme and project planning and implementation management ▪ Regular CEO zoom staff meetings ▪ Internal communications ▪ Visibility across groups in the Programme Board and Steering Group (and the associated reports and documents) ▪ Programme and project team meetings ▪ Managing dependencies between groups/projects <u>Programme governance</u> • There are three levels of governance structures that affect the programme – the EC Board, Programme Board (PB), and Steering Group (SG). We initially questioned the need to have both the PB and the SG but there is a clear differentiation of roles and purpose. The roles of each are generally understood and seen as working, and the delegated authorities are described in the Programme Management Plan. Administration for both is good with (most) documentation provided in advance and minutes and action registers maintained. *Continued on next page*

Programme Organisation continued

Comments:	**Electoral Commission Board**
	
	• The EC Board wants to see a focus on strategy, risk management, and assurance. There are some improvements that could be made for the programme interaction with the Board, as follows.
	
	  ▪ Not enough information being provided to give confidence of "no surprises", making sure that nothing endangers trust by the electorate.
	
	  ▪ From information provided to the Board it is sometimes hard to see what has changed since previous reports and what the Board needs to focus on and help with. A summary sheet would be useful, providing a concise summary with a risk focus to show why and how the Board is able to respond. For example, the programme assumptions, a critical foundation of the programme planning, should be provided to the Board for endorsement. Similarly, significant management decisions should receive a confirmation of strategic alignment from the Board.
	
	  ▪ Although some risk and disaster scenario planning has been proceeding in the programme, it has not been apparent to the Board.
	
	Programme Board
	
	• The PB Terms of Reference (ToR) document is fit for purpose with good content and messages. A possible improvement would be a clear statement on the limits of the Board's authority. The authorities are implied in Appendix A – Artefacts for the Programme Board and the tolerances are better covered in Appendix 4 of the PMP. The PB ToR appendix mentions a "Programme Tolerances and Delegations" document, but we have not seen a copy of this document. If it were approved by the EC Board, it would define the extent of the Programme Board's authority.
	
	• The Programme Board has an independent member from Stats Dept to provide a wider perspective, share knowledge and experience. Their presence and inputs have been favourably received.
	
	• The Chair (CEO and Programme Sponsor) makes decisions if there is no consensus. This is appropriate as they are accountable for the success of the General Election. A programme is not a democracy.
	
	• We were told that the PB is maturing. It previously delved into areas not necessarily in their domain. Also, better information is now sought and is being provided for informed decision making.
	
	• The Programme Board is currently moving from monthly to fortnightly meetings. This is good practice as the programme moves into a more intensive time where issues can have more immediate effects on the lead-up to the election.
	
	Steering Group
	
	• The SG Terms of Reference document is fit for purpose. The SG specifically looks at the progress and operation of the projects.
	
	• The reports and papers are taken as read in order to get through the agenda items in a reasonable time. This puts an appropriate expectation on the projects to deliver their inputs on time and on the governance members to read and assimilate them, arriving at the meeting ready to explore the gaps, risks and issues.
	
	• Project Managers briefly present their projects to the SG. Reports are prepared in collaboration with the BAU manager related to their project.
	
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Programme Organisation continued

Comments:	- The SG does not look for project management collateral e.g., Project Brief, PMP, baselined Gantt etc. This is an area for increased maturity when the PMO Manager sets expectations about minimum levels of standard for programme or project planning and management. In addition to SG surveillance, line managers will need to understand their responsibilities to review and endorse or approve the programme documents. - There were previously two steering groups, with a lot of participants and very long meetings. They have recently been combined into one, more streamlined, meeting. Meetings are well controlled to keep to about 2.5 hours' time while dealing with seven projects. - Although there is some lack of clarity about how SG feeds into PB, this is covered by the judgement of the co-Chairs. We were not made aware of any problems in this regard. Any small gaps can be covered by the co-Chairs who are also on the PB and the Programme Director who is a member of the SG and an attendee at the PB. - Some SG members haven't read their documents before the meeting, others have and want to get into too much detail. Due to scale and pace of change, some SG members use the meeting to better understand the business. - The SG is intended to make decisions, but not to solve problems. When there is a project issue, it should be presented to the SG with a recommended solution. If no solution is presented, then an action point is created and tracked. - Some of the IT projects don't go through the SG. Consequently, there is less visibility of these projects even though other GE2023 projects may be dependent on them (e.g., the Recruitment system). Programme Roles and Responsibilities - The description of roles and responsibilities in the Programme Management Plan is good, but there could be more emphasis on reducing siloes. The Programme Director role includes "coordinating interdependencies" and the SRO's role includes delivering a "coherent capability". The Project Manager's role includes "ongoing integration of all work undertaken to ensure across programme issues and dependencies are catered for". However, the Board and Steering Group members' role does not include a cross-organisation integration focus. We note that this is a comment about the documentation only. In our interviews we did not perceive any insular viewpoints among the members of those two governance groups. - The projects are aligned with the EC organisational groups and the functions they provide for the election. The Project Managers have to clearly define roles and responsibilities for their projects as they vary between BAU groups. For example, translating, printing or distributing material may be done by different groups depending on the subject matter. The responsibilities appear to be based on historical scoping rather than an economic clustering of skillsets.
Actions:	6. The EC Board should document its expectations of the programme to ensure that the programme fully aligns with EC governance. (Medium Priority) 7. The Programme Director should standardise the line reporting of the Project Managers. (Low Priority)

Programme Team		
Rating:	**2**	*To improve this score, clarify roles and rights of Project Managers and BAU managers, explore ways to retain project and field management staff between elections.*
Comments:	•	The programme has a good team of experienced Project Managers and Project Coordinators. However, the team would be considerably enhanced with the addition of an experienced scheduler who could help the Project Managers with Gantt Chart development and standards, and support rolling up to a Master Schedule (see Actions & Timescales) and a process mapper (see Programme Methodologies).
	•	There are too few people on the programme team and in associated BAU groups who have experience with previous elections. While not much can be done about this for the current election, avenues should be explored for retaining Project Managers, Project Coordinators and Regional or Electorate Managers.
	•	A lot of reliance is placed on advisors and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who have been through one or more election cycles. There are too few SMEs, and they are overburdened. In some cases, they tend towards a "have to do it myself" approach, resulting in bottlenecks and deviation from agreed timelines and schedules.

Programme Director role

• We received a lot of praise for the Programme Director and her ability to lead the programme and remove or reduce roadblocks.

• The Programme Director is generally referred to by her first name and has high visibility with Head Office and Field staff. This indicates both acceptance of her role and her accessibility.

• The role includes the need to encompass the contextual and strategic setting of the programme as well as ensuring the Project Managers are supported to manage the risks and details of their projects.

• The Programme Director is supported by a Programme Coordinator – a valuable resource for increasing the Programme Director's efficiency as well as for supporting the programme's governance processes.

Project Manager role

• We found all of the Project Managers had a good understanding of their expected role and are suitably experienced, but they aren't always able to carry it out. The relative rights and roles of the Project Manager and the BAU manager are not adequately resolved. The Project Manager is often seen as a reporting resource, rather than a management function that can make the work smoother and reduce risks. The value of a Project Manager is not always recognised or appreciated.

• The number of Project Managers appears to be about right, with challenging but achievable projects. Project Coordinators have recently been engaged. They are mostly shared between two projects.

Resources

• The possibility of losing one or more key SMEs is a 'major' risk for the programme. This is included in the Risk Register (#39), but only for Voting Services and it is only shown as a 'medium' risk whereas the risk is more organisation wide and of higher significance. This risk was evident from the recent staff engagement survey. SMEs are valuable not only for providing direction and detail, but also for challenging assertions and assumptions.

Programme Team continued	
Comments:	• Almost no-one in HQ has been in the regions for an election. None have been an Electorate Manager. Regional Managers are engaged on 2-year contracts. Many don't return for the next election so there is a loss of experience and knowledge. Opportunities should be sought to make them permanent and engage them on improvement initiatives when they are not needed for an election – for example as part of the programme following GE2023.
	• Some areas of EC are critically understaffed, e.g., Communications and Education are 8 people down from their budgeted complement of 22. Despite two recruitment rounds they have been unable to get people with the right skillsets. Similarly, there is contention for resources in the IT group. Two key staff have left, and IT is having difficulties in finding capable replacements.
	• Catalyst IT is a key supplier, providing EC's main IT systems and supporting data storage. The relationship has improved recently with a new 6-year contract just signed. The contract includes the requirement for Catalyst to maintain a guaranteed number of resources.
	<u>Team Meetings</u>
	• At the time of the review the Programme Director was starting a new set of regular meetings with the Project Managers. This includes a weekly meeting to review work in the forthcoming month. Another weekly meeting will progressively revolve the subject week by week around risks, dependencies, critical path and the whole schedule. This, along with improvements to the Project Schedules (see Actions & Timescales), should create improvements to the planning, control and team coordination.
Actions:	8. The SRO and Programme Director should explore ways to retain programme, project and regional/electorate staff throughout the electoral cycle. (High Priority)
	9. The Programme Director, in coordination with the ELT, should define and communicate the relative rights and roles of the Project Managers and the BAU managers. (High Priority)

Programme Methodologies		
Rating:	**3**	*To improve this score, complete and approve all Project Management Plans, set minimum standards for project documentation, and provide support and specialist expertise for process mapping.*

Comments:		Programme Management Plan and Project Management Plans
		
		• The Programme Management Plan is fit for purpose. It is clear and concise and makes sensible use of links to other documents rather than trying to fit everything into one document. We note the following for future versions or for the next plan following GE 2023:
		   ■ Consider creating a vision statement for the programme
		   ■ The scope of future programmes could be broader than just one election in order to use the programme to deliver the Target Operating Model
		   ■ Include the attributes of cultural changes that are needed to join the programme and BAU management elements together for best results.
		
		• The Project Management Plan template is fit for purpose and has been well applied for some of the projects. Plans for the projects vary from non-existent to substantially complete. It is difficult to tell whether any of the plans are fully approved because their update progress is recorded through to being ready for approval, but the actual approval is not included.
		
		Programme and Project Document Standards
		
		• The Electoral Commission does not have standard programme or project standards and templates. A set of templates has been introduced by the Programme Director. They provide a good basis for the programme but there are some gaps (e.g., Quality Management Plan, Communications and Engagement Plan). We received comments that some of the templates need updating or are too detailed. In our view, it is acceptable for templates to be more detailed or extensive than is needed for all projects as long as there is guidance or support on how to adjust them to be fit for purpose. We would like to see expectations of the minimum documentation standards for programmes and projects.
		
		Decision making
		
		• Decision making rights are described in the Programme Management Plan. The descriptions are clear and provide a balance between agility and control. However, several of the decisions refer to things that are set out in project plans – not all of which have been completed and approved.
		
		• The Programme Director is currently mapping out the key decisions leading up to and during the election and when they should be made.
		
		• Decision making rights at the project level are not clearly documented. There is provision for roles, responsibilities and rights to be included in the Project Management Plans, but where the plans exist the way in which the decision rights are presented is variable.
		
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Programme Methodologies continued

Comments:	<u>Recruitment</u> • There are split responsibilities for recruitment – Enterprise Services do recruitment for core Electoral Commission roles while Voting Services do it for the approximately 20,000 temporary roles for the General Election. • The new Applicant/Recruitment Management system will make the recruitment of temporary election staff much easier and more efficient, including automation of the screening of applicants with the Ministry of Justice. This will allow all applicants to be screened where previously only about one third were checked. At the time of this review, the progress of the new system was being closely monitored as its timely delivery is important to the success of the programme. <u>Business Processes</u> • Business processes need to be mapped in order to control and improve the processes, develop Gantt charts and maintain the operations manuals. The Programme Director proposed that a Business Process Mapper should be engaged but we understand that it was not included in the budget, so the processes have to be drawn up anyway with no extra resources and very variable process mapping skillsets. • Resources have been applied to Business Continuity Planning (BCP) recently, but it is later than it should be. Preferably, the programme would have been testing the BCP now, not developing it.
Actions:	10. Project Managers should all complete their Project Management Plans and receive approval. (High Priority) 11. The PMO Manager should set expectations of minimum documentation standards for programmes and projects. (Medium Priority) 12. The Programme Director should restate the case for a process mapper as part of the programme to deliver the 2026 election. (Medium Priority)

Scope Management	
Rating:	**1**
Comments:	• The programme scope is adequately described in the Programme Management Plan. It doesn't have a great deal of detail as more of the detailed scope boundary definitions are within the projects. • The programme scope does not include benefits realisation. We would have expected to see this in the scope because a significant difference between a programme and a project is that the programme is responsible for outcomes and benefits whereas the project creates outputs which are handed over for the Business Owner to achieve the outcomes and realise the benefits. • The scope of each project is described in its Project Management Plan, if it exists. The plans that we saw had a good description of the project scope. They also included the out-of-scope items, which is important for defining a crisp scope boundary. • We did not get any indications that the programme or the projects were working outside of their scope.
Actions:	Nil

Actions & Timescales		
Rating:	**4**	*To improve this score, complete and baseline the Project Schedules, providing support as needed to the Project Managers and Project Coordinators.*
Comments:	\[cont.\]	Planning

Planning

- Programme planning started early – in about June 2022. While this is better than previous elections, most people agreed that it could be earlier still. It appears that timings are on track, but in many cases people don't seem to care because they know that in the past they have got there by heroic action. While this may indicate a very committed workforce, it is an approach that carries a lot of risk and is likely to be the cause of a lot of staff turnover.

- The Voting Services and GETP projects have major logistics components. The early start to these projects has helped to keep things on track.

- There was a comment that the programme should have 3-year plans and schedules, not 1½ year plans. This is valid and is something to consider for immediately post-election.

- We were told of a reticence among some BAU staff to commit to specific dates as they might be attached to a failure if the date wasn't achieved. This is perhaps understandable, but when the times and actions are put into a plan the staff don't use the plan to prioritise and manage their work, so consequently end up in crisis mode and/or miss milestones. There is work to be done in helping the BAU managers to understand the value of transparency in the work and resource requirements – to address risks early rather than allow them to become issues.

Current status

- Programme and project progress and outlook is reported each month to the Steering Group (projects) and the Programme Board (programme). This includes work carried out in the previous month and planned for the next month, and progress against key milestones.

- At the time of the review the current outlook is reported as being satisfactory, but there is no room for complacency, and we did not detect any.

Gantt Chart

- Gantt charts have been developed by most Project Managers. They are not integrated with the Programme Director's version which is based on key milestones. The top-down approach is valid when certain key dates must be met, as in this case for the election requirements. We could not determine whether the project Gantt charts were correlated with those dates due to the poor state of many of the Gantt charts.

- The Gantt charts are very variable. Some are just a list of dependencies and milestones, meaning they are not being used as an active management tool. Most lack a record of predecessors and successors, meaning a critical path cannot be derived from the Gantt charts. This is important because the critical path does not always run through the most obvious line. It also means that the Project Managers cannot do "what if" checks on the effects on the overall schedule if one element changed. It appears that scheduling assistance is required.

- None of the Gantt charts are baselined and there is no roll-up to a Master programme version.

Actions & Timescales continued

	• At the time of our review, there is a concerted effort to improve the state of the schedules. Project Managers and Project Coordinators have received MS Project training and a minimum viable product expectation is being set for the Project Schedules. In addition, an application named One Pager has been purchased to roll the Project Schedules up into a programme view. It also provides a mechanism for confirming the alignment of dependencies between projects. These actions, along with the added resource of Project Coordinators, should result in a considerable improvement. **Critical Path** • To be clear, a critical path is a path that connects the tasks which take the greatest amount of time for completion. By implication, a delay to any task (large or small) on the critical path will threaten the final milestone – a successful election in this case. • The programme's critical path roadmap is partially based on the milestones that were considered to be critical in 2020. The milestones are not all necessarily on the critical path, but they are the best that can be done at this stage. The programme can't get a true critical path because the Gantts are not all complete, or baselined and rolled up to a master. There is no automated inter-project dependency linkage. It isn't realistic to get real critical paths for this election, but it should be in place for the 2026 election. • In some cases, BAU staff provide activity timespans which include hidden contingencies. While contingencies are a useful management tool, they should be declared and transparently collated by the Project Manager. There is a natural tendency for people to leave work until they think it is absolutely necessary. If that is done, any hidden contingency is immediately consumed. • The new ARTS recruitment system is live for BAU recruitment and is planned to go live on 26 April for electoral staff. It is reportedly on the critical path, although if it doesn't happen then it is possible to revert to the previous manual system, but as before not everyone will get screened against the Justice system. The DCE Enterprise Services is getting weekly updates on progress. **Dependencies** • A Dependency Register is maintained, and the Programme Director reviews it with the Project Managers every month. This provides a manual control due to the lack of automated dependencies in a master schedule. Even with this coordination and regular reminders of the significance of dependencies, some Project Managers have changed dependency dates without reference to the effect on inter-dependent projects. • Also see comment above about lack of predecessors/successors, and the improvements being made to the programme scheduling system. **KanBan** • Several of the Project Managers use a KanBan board to present the project plan and track progress with their BAU teams. They review their KanBan boards with the teams weekly. This appears to work well as the whole team participates and gets the full picture of project progress and associated BAU work. It is also easier for team members to understand than a Gantt chart.
Actions:	13. The Programme Director should ensure that the Project Schedules are completed and baselined. (High Priority) 14. The Programme Director should consider having a Project Scheduler to provide support and mentoring for the Project Managers and Project Coordinators. (High Priority)

Budget & Cost Management

Rating:	3	*To improve this score, apply the capabilities of the new FMIS to tighten budgets, apply contingencies and improve the timeliness of programme financial reporting.*
Comments:		• The current budget and financial management system is not well set up to support the programme, although a new Financial Management System (FMIS) is being implemented at the time of this review. The new system is expected to be a significant improvement. • The financial management systems are split between the Electoral Management System (EMS) and the FMIS. The EMS is owned by Voting Services. It provides a parallel budgeting tool to track Field expenditure, whereas the FMIS provides for organisation-wide budgeting and financial management. <u>Budget Management</u> • The programme does not have direct budget control as the budgets for most of the projects are held by the associated business owner. As a result, Project Managers have little visibility of the budget. The Project Managers have to update budget forecasts via the business manager every month. • One exception is the GETP project which has its own budget. The Project Manager updates the budget forecasts himself. • The budget is not well set up to compartmentalise budgets, costs and contingencies. Using the new FMIS, budget control would be improved if budgets were tighter to provide more oversight of costs. This should be balanced by a controlled contingency system to provide for cases where assumptions prove to be wrong e.g., the election date is later than assumed, causing higher costs for maintaining the election team. <u>Financial reports</u> • With the current system, financial reports can't be run by the budget owner. They have to be requested from the finance team. They are often late. This means that timely reporting is not available for the governance groups. • There is an incomplete view of the full costs of an election as costs are buried in BAU budgets and reports. The election-based budget reporting shows the direct costs for the event, but not the BAU costs and resources applied to it. BAU costs could be estimated on a pro-rata basis. The new FMIS is unlikely to change this situation as time-sheeting would be required to accurately capture the BAU costs.
Actions:		15. When the new FMIS is available, the Programme Director should arrange for the project budgets to be tightened, while applying a controlled contingency system. (High Priority)

Risk and Issue Management

Rating:	2	*To improve this score, conduct regular risk workshops and include risk mitigations in Programme and Project Schedules.*

Comments:	**Risk Management**

- The programme recognises that risk management is a critical component of the programme's management. The programme risk management approach aligns with the Electoral Commission's risk framework.

- Critical and medium risks are presented to the Steering Group and Programme Board.

- A risk workshop was held during initial planning when the risk register was started. No further workshops have been held. Even though risks are regularly reviewed in the programme team and governance group meetings, it is good practice to hold further risk workshops at least quarterly. This helps to identify new risks, discard those no longer relevant, and to maintain a balanced risk view across the programme and projects.

- The Electoral Commission is engaging a Risk and Assurance Manager. This role will consider strategic risks. Significant programme risks will roll up into the strategic view, and also some strategic risks may influence programme risks.

- A Risk and Security Committee has just had its first meeting. A similar committee operated during the 2020 election and was found to be worthwhile. Meetings will be held monthly initially. This committee is likely to provide an overview of key risk and security items as they affect the programme and should help to inform and support the programme's risk management, as well as aligning with the Chief Electoral Advisor's responsibility for overseeing security matters.

Risk Register

- The risk register is suitable for programme use, but arguably too complex for wider communication. For example, there are three columns of status – Unmitigated, Current and Post Mitigation. There is some debate about whether both the Current and Post Mitigation columns are needed. Our view is that it is useful for the programme to know how much of the planned mitigation has taken effect. The important thing is that the mitigations are carried out - in which case Current and Post Mitigation should be the same. The Programme Director uses the Unmitigated and Current views in the report to the Programme Board.

- The risk register is frequently reviewed, updated and reported, but it still needs further work. There are anomalies. Some of the changes in risk rating from unmitigated to mitigated status seem very optimistic given the minimal mitigations proposed. For some risks, the likelihood or consequence is shown as being reduced even when the mitigation does not appear to address it.

- A lot of risks are focussed internally rather than externally. For example, Catalyst is very important for EC's IT systems. The risk of Catalyst failing is not included in the risk register. Also, the unavailability of suitable people to employ in the electorates and voting stations due to the high current employment rate was mentioned during the interviews as a significant risk but is not included in the risk register. It may be useful to include Regional Managers in future risk workshops.

- There is a focus on moving risks from RED to AMBER rather than reducing the risk as much as is practically and economically possible. Low level risks often don't get reviewed as the focus is on the more prominent ones. This underlines the need to do regular risk workshops – at both project and programme levels.

Continued on next page

Risk and Issue Management continued

Comments:	Risk Mitigations
	- Mitigations are monitored by Project Managers through regular reviews as part of preparing monthly reports. In some cases, it is hard to get Managers to accept ownership of risk mitigations, but if they do accept then the mitigation normally gets done. However, it is not always easy to tell if the mitigations have been done. - Rather than having mitigation actions managed via the risk register, we would like to see them fully integrated into project planning and control. The mitigation actions should be included in the Project Schedules – just like any other project action. In this way it is owned, monitored, controlled and reported on an everyday basis instead of intermittently in a risk review or for reporting. In addition, all mitigations are covered, not just the ones for the critical and medium risks that are included in reporting. - Larger programme or organisation risks may have multiple mitigations. The current system does not work well for this as it is hard to break the mitigations into composite parts and get reporting on them. Putting the mitigations into one or more Project Schedules should help to solve this problem. - Some risks affect the whole programme and parts of the Electoral Commission. For these risks it may be worth developing a Treatment Plan and managing them as work packages. Disaster Recovery and Security - Scenario planning is underway to consider the effects and responses if major events adversely affect the election, including floods, earthquakes, and road damage etc. A set of "what-ifs" has been established. A decision tree is being developed in case of crises (large and small), covering the first 24 hours after an incident. This is good to see, although there was a general view that it should have started earlier. At this stage it is still not included in the electorate plans. - While we did not review this in detail, we understand that the IT systems relating to the election receive comprehensive security testing (using expert contractors), including penetration, load, phishing, DDOS repelling and DR testing. Issue Management - The programme maintains an Issues Log. It is actively used with relevant issues included and tracked through to completion. The management of the issues appears to be effective as few issues remained open at the time of this review. - Open issues are included in the reports to the Steering Group and Programme Board, as applicable. The programme should consider using an Issue Summary Form to inform the relevant governance group of any new issue, its implications, and the action plan to resolve it.
Actions:	16. The Programme Director and Project Managers should conduct risk workshops with key programme/project stakeholders every quarter. (High Priority) 17. The Programme Director and Project Managers should include risk mitigations in the Project Schedules. (High Priority) 18. The Programme Director and PMO Manager should consider introducing an Issue Summary Form to inform the governance groups about new issues and the resolution plans. (Low Priority)

Quality Management

Rating:	4	*To improve this score, create a Quality Management Plan and gather lessons learned throughout the programme.*
Comments:		<u>Quality Management Plan</u> • There is no complete Quality Management Plan for the programme or projects, although a framework for quality management is included in the Programme Management Plan. We would encourage the development of a Quality Management Plan for each of the projects to make sure that critical quality elements are identified, acceptance criteria and processes are owned, and evidence of successful delivery is provided. • Despite the lack of a plan, there is good attention to detail in the programme. There is a wide recognition that good systems and training are essential to deliver a successful election that maintains a high level of trust in the electoral system and in the Electoral Commission. • Material produced for the field staff is "quality assured" through reviews and checking. This can be time consuming and apparently inefficient, but the implications of mistakes that are visible to the public are significant. Overall, it is of good quality and effective. However, there is no similar handbook for HQ staff. This results in more variability and reliance on SMEs. As mentioned in the Programme Team and Risk Management sections, this is a risk as there are insufficient experienced SMEs. The Programme Director is convening a group to define HQ processes and the associated system checks and balances. <u>Document control</u> • There does not appear to be a standard for document control. With project related documents it is sometimes hard to tell who has reviewed and accepted them. It also seems to be hard to get documents through all of the signoffs for formal approval. Consequently, some documents are used without full approval. Some attempts at improving control, such as with a coversheet have been rejected. <u>Lessons Learned</u> • The current Lessons Learned process after the election is good. It involves staff at electorate, regional and HQ levels, and the lessons are taken seriously. However, we were told that some lessons from the 2020 election are expressed in generic terms and are hard to fully understand without knowing the context. This has limited the extent to which they have been used for the current programme. • There is no formal documented process for gathering lessons during the programme, although there is a Lessons Learned Log which has gathered lessons as a result Project Managers running lessons learned sessions. The Log is discussed at the project management meetings and the Project Managers are encouraged to enter information into it on a regular basis. There is also a GE2026 ideas document that gets populated with improvement suggestions. In general, lessons should be collected throughout the project – not just at the end. By the end of the project people tend to forget useful things from the start. <u>Recommendations from the Review</u> • We understand that actions responding to recommendations from this review will be tracked by the PMO Manager. Progress will be regularly reported to the Programme Board. This is a good way to keep visibility of the potential improvements, especially those that may take longer to implement. <u>Future IQAs</u> • We have considered when future IQA reviews should be held. In our view there wouldn't be sufficient value in having another IQA review before the 2023 election. Our recommendation would be to have a review during the planning process for the next election cycle, potentially including a longer-term programme view towards the Target Operating Model.

Quality Management

Actions:	19. The Project Managers should each produce a Quality Management Plan for their project. (Medium Priority)
	20. The Programme Director should implement a process for gathering and prioritising Lessons Learned during the project and programme, not just at the end. (Medium Priority)

Communications

Rating:	3	*To improve this score, finalise the communications and stakeholder management plans to support prioritised delivery and status reporting, and ensure that status reports show the real status not an "improved version."*
Comments:		

- There are several communications and stakeholder strategies and plans in various stages of completion:
  - EC Communications and Engagement Strategy which provides the principles for the whole organisation.
  - Public Information and Education Strategy for GE2023. This includes a stakeholder engagement plan which is still being worked on.
  - 2023 General Election Internal Communications Approach. This includes the phases, channels and messages for keeping EC staff informed. It is still in draft.
  - External Communications Plan (Public Education and Information Campaign Strategy) for accessing all New Zealanders through multiple channels.
  - Organisation wide Stakeholder Engagement Plans are being developed for each of 6 major stakeholder groups (with an election focus)
  - Stakeholder analysis and engagement register. This is not complete but is being updated as capacity allows.
  - GE2023 (communications) Deliverables register. This includes a list of over 200 communications deliverables, of which only 11 have dates allocated to them. They are nearly all shown as "must do" but only 2 are marked as complete.

- Overall, these documents, while not all being complete, provide a fairly extensive view of the communications and stakeholder engagement elements for GE 2023. However, they don't provide assurance that the deliverables are fully planned, resourced and on track to meet agreed dates.

- We understand that the communications team is very stretched for resource. Despite an uplift in FTEs for the team, all of the necessary roles have not been able to be filled.

- An advertising agency is used to access all of the external communication channels. A workshop was held with the agency (including the EC Board) to determine messages and strategies. Social media is a major focus for the election as it creates threats to the perception of the election, the electoral system and the Electoral Commission. The aim for the communication is to be proactive, not reactive.

- There is a lot of focus on communication to Māori, both for the Māori Electoral Option and for the General Election. A Māori strategy was approved in late 2022 and is being followed. For this election, translations will vary so that each of the 7 Māori electoral areas can accommodate different Reo dialects.

Communications continued	

Comments:	• A strategic message that we received in our interviews was that there needs to be a broadening of communications focus:
	
	  ▪ towards building relationships with influencers, not just about the "orange guy"; and
	
	  ▪ extend beyond the individual voter to the strategic education focus on democracy and education, and the integrity of the Electoral Commission
	
	Programme and Project reports
	
	• Project monthly status reports go to the Steering Group and the programme report goes to the Programme Board. Both use the same template, which is fit for purpose. The programme report includes links to the project reports.
	
	• For some projects the monthly report has to go via the BAU Manager and Advisor before being sent to the Steering Group. Wording that may be seen as negative is sometimes diluted to reduce concerns and make it look more positive. This is counter to the purpose of project reporting where transparency is vital, and the governance group should be aware of any issues so they can help the project reduce project issues or risks in a timely fashion.
	
	• Some Project Managers have to work hard to get the content from their BAU teams for the report. This may imply a disengagement between the Project Manager and their BAU teams and a consequent reduction in the day-to-day value that the BAU team is getting from the Project Manager.

Actions:	21. The Programme Director should work with the DCE Operations to ensure that the Communications project is working to approved communications and stakeholder engagement plans and is reporting progress against those plans. (High Priority) 22. The Programme Director should ensure that every Project Manager is able to report the true status of their project. (High Priority)

Change Control

Rating:	4	*To improve this score, create a change control register and baseline the project attributes which underpin the change control process.*
Comments:		• The Programme Management Plan provides a set of principles for managing changes and a table of tolerances and change control actions.
		• Good change control relies on approved plans, delegations and tolerances as well as a process for gaining approval for changes that exceed the tolerances. The main attributes to which change control applies are budget, times, quality, scope. For each of these, the basis for change control is as follows:
		▪ Budget. This is quite well controlled but, as mentioned in the "Budget and Cost Management" section above, the control is mainly through the Programme Director and the BAU manager not the Project Manager – who has no cost delegation.
		▪ Scope. This seems to be adequately controlled. However, it lacks formality because project scope should be approved as part of the project management and several of the projects do not have an approved Project Management Plan.
		▪ Time. There are no baselined Project Schedules, and several are a long way from being adequate for controlling actions and times. In addition, each part of the business follows its own process, which often results in dates being altered without oversight or approval.
		▪ Quality/Design. Apart from requirements specifications for purchased products or services, quality is not well enough defined to be the basis for change control.
		• The above shows that the attributes lack the approved baselines that are needed for a fully formalised change control system. Despite this, we did not get any indications that the programme or projects were working outside known tolerances without suitable escalation.
		• Change approvals may be minuted in governance group meetings, but there is no change control register to provide an easily accessible history of requested changes.
Actions:		23. The Programme Director should create a change control register and populate it with previous approved changes. (Medium Priority)
		(Also, note recommendations above for defining and baselining scope, actions and times, and quality.)

Appendix 1 Comments from Interviewees (unattributed)

The following comments were made in the interviews. They don't all fully align with our overall review conclusions, but they help to provide an informal flavour of some opinions.

- The 2020 election looks good on the results, but it was a mess internally.
- Emily is great at getting things done or fixed. This has helped a lot to reduce bottlenecks and emergencies.
- My team is positive about programme management because it keeps other teams on track for work towards the election.
- Need to have a programme that can deliver transformative change sitting alongside the electoral cycle.
- ELT should do more prioritisation instead of just listing things to be done. No-one says "What won't we do if we do this new thing?". The General Election should be No.1 priority this year.
- Managers don't want their teams' actions put into a Gantt chart (or other plan). There is an attitude that "if we put this in the plan and we don't deliver, everyone will know that we failed".
- The risk register is too complex for many BAU people. It may be better to keep the complete register for the Project Managers but have a simplified view for the BAU teams.
- New people are working across the siloes, older ones not so much.
- The organisation is undergoing significant structural and systems changes – the bandwidth for quality improvements is limited.
- There are plenty of opportunities for improvement, for example you can enrol for the election online then a confirmation letter is posted to you (instead of by email).
- There is a new level of comfort that we are going to be given the things we need to do in the field.
- The Electoral Commission has a different definition of critical path i.e., everything they want to have for the election.
- Project documents should have links to other documents as people have difficulty finding way through SharePoint and Teams.
- "Everything is a priority"
- People provide dates but don't have a full commitment to meeting them.
- People change their priorities without finding from the Project Manager the implications of the change.
- Lots of good ideas are floated at ELT, but nothing is removed to make room for them. Interdependencies and precedents are not always understood or acknowledged.
- There needs to be more prioritisation of IT (and other) work, so that the focus is primarily on the things that are need for the election.

Appendix 2 Programme Health Check Assessment Criteria

Business Benefits and Target Operating Model		
Standard to Attain	**Moderate Problems Exist**	**Significant Problems Exist**
There is a clear alignment between the programme objectives and the organisation's objectives. And: There is a clear understanding of the business benefits, objectives, and deliverables within the programme team. And: Business benefits are monitored, or systems are being set up to monitor them. And: The programme has a blueprint which is a model of the future organisation, its working practices, information requirements, and its supporting technology. And: The gap between current and future state is analysed.	There is a moderate level of either uncertainty or misalignment between the programme objectives and the organisation's objectives. Or: There are moderate gaps in understanding of the business benefits, objectives, and deliverables within the programme team. Or: Not all business benefits are monitored, and systems are not being set up to monitor them. Or: The programme has an incomplete blueprint which partially models the future organisation, its working practices, information requirements, and its supporting technology. Or: The gap between current and future state is not completely analysed.	There is a significant level of either uncertainty or misalignment between the programme objectives and the organisation's objectives. Or: There are significant gaps in understanding of the business benefits, objectives, and deliverables within the programme team. Or: Business benefits are not being monitored, and systems are not being set up to monitor them. Or: The programme does not have a blueprint.
1 — 2	3	4 — 5

Programme Organisation		
Standard to Attain	**Moderate Problems Exist**	**Significant Problems Exist**
The organisation of the programme, including governance and management, is clearly documented in the approved programme management plan. And: The governance and management structure is appropriate to the programme. And: Suitable advisory groups have been set up and are operating well. Members have the skills necessary to add value. And: Governance, advisory, programme team, and workstream roles are documented, understood and performed.	There is a moderate lack of clarity about the programme organisation. Or: There are moderate weaknesses in the programme governance and management structure. Or: Some gaps exist in the advisory groups, either in the availability, membership, or operation. Or: There are moderate gaps in the documentation, understanding, or performance of governance, advisory, programme team, and workstream roles.	There is a significant lack of clarity about the programme organisation. Or: There are significant weaknesses in the programme governance and management structure. Or: No advisory groups have been set up, although they would add value to the programme. Or: There are significant gaps in the documentation, understanding, or performance of governance, advisory, programme team, and workstream roles.
1 — 2	3	4 — 5

Programme Team

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
The programme team is appropriately resourced, with the right level of skills, knowledge and experience. And: Roles are documented, understood, and performed. And: The programme team works well together to achieve the programme goals.	There are moderate gaps in the programme team resourcing, or in the level of skills, knowledge or experience. Or: There are moderate gaps in the documentation, understanding or performance of programme roles. Or: There are moderate difficulties in the way the programme team works well together to achieve the programme goals.	There are significant gaps in the programme team resourcing, or in the level of skills, knowledge or experience. Or: There are significant gaps in the documentation, understanding or performance of programme roles. Or: There are significant difficulties in the way the programme team works well together to achieve the programme goals.

1	2	3	4	5

Programme Methodologies (programme management, systems development, procurement, commercial management)

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
The programme is following appropriate methodologies. Where applicable, the methodologies are in keeping with PMO toolkit, templates, review and approval processes.	The programme has specified appropriate methodologies, but is not always following them. Or: The programme has not specified appropriate methodologies for all applicable activities. Or: The PMO toolkit is being applied inappropriately or incompletely.	Methodologies are not specified. Or: The PMO toolkit is not used.

1	2	3	4	5

Scope Management

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
The programme scope is well defined and documented to a suitable level of depth. And: The programme team is working within the approved scope.	There are moderate gaps in the definition or documentation of the programme scope. Or: The programme team is working beyond the approved scope to a moderate extent.	There are significant gaps in the definition or documentation of the programme scope. Or: The programme team is working beyond the approved scope to a significant extent.

1	2	3	4	5

Actions and Time scales

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
Actions and timings are well planned, managed, monitored, and reported. And: Current timings are in line with the approved programme plan. And: The forecasted milestone completion timings are in line with the approved programme plan.	There are moderate weaknesses in the planning, management, monitoring and reporting of actions and timings. Or: There are moderate delays in some current actions compared to the approved programme plan. Or: The forecasted milestone completion timings indicate moderate delays compared to the approved programme plan.	There are significant weaknesses in the planning, management, monitoring and reporting of actions and timings. Or: There are significant delays in some current actions compared to the approved programme plan. Or: The forecasted milestone completion timings indicate significant delays compared to the approved programme plan.

1	2	3	4	5

Budget & Cost Management

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
Costs are well planned, managed, monitored, and reported. And: Current costs are in line with the approved budget plan. And: The forecasted completion cost is based on good forecasting practice. And: The forecasted completion cost is in line with the approved programme budget.	There are moderate weaknesses in the planning, management, monitoring, and reporting of costs. Or: Current costs moderately exceed the approved budget plan, or the budget plan is not approved. Or: There are moderate weaknesses in the forecasting practice used to determine the forecasted completion cost. Or: The forecasted completion cost moderately exceeds the approved programme budget.	There are significant weaknesses in the planning, management, monitoring, and reporting of costs. Or: Current costs significantly exceed the approved budget plan, or there is no budget plan. Or: There are significant weaknesses in the forecasting practice used to determine the forecasted completion cost. Or: The forecasted completion cost significantly exceeds the approved programme budget.

1	2	3	4	5

Risk and Issue Management

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
Programme risks and issues are identified, analysed and documented using a "good practice" process. And: Appropriate risk response plans are in place. And: Appropriate issue management and monitoring systems are in place.	Moderate gaps exist in the identification, analysis or documentation of programme risks and/or issues. Or: There are moderate weaknesses in the risk response plans. Or: There are moderate weaknesses in the issue management and monitoring systems.	Significant gaps exist in the identification, analysis or documentation of programme risks and/or issues. Or: There are significant weaknesses in the risk response plans. Or: There are significant weaknesses in the issue management and monitoring systems.

1	2	3	4	5

Quality Management

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
A suitable quality management plan has been approved and is being followed. And: Stage and final acceptance criteria have been approved by the Sponsor and have been incorporated into programme plans.	The quality management plan is incomplete or has not been approved. Or: Parts of the quality management plan are not being followed. Or: The stage and final acceptance criteria have not been approved by the Sponsor.	There is no quality management plan (or equivalent). Or: The quality management plan is not being followed. Or: There are no stage or final acceptance criteria.

1	2	3	4	5

Communications

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
A suitable communication plan has been approved and is being followed. And: Programme reports are received at agreed time and contain accurate, relevant information. And: The Programme Manager has a good working relationship with programme stakeholders and the PMO.	The communication plan is incomplete or has not been approved. Or: Parts of the communication plan are not being followed. Or: Programme report deadlines are often missed. Or: Reported information is not accurate, complete, or relevant. Or: Moderate difficulties exist in the relationship between the Programme Manager and some stakeholders.	There is no communication plan. Or: The communication plan is not being followed. Or: Programme reporting is intermittent or non-existent. Or: Significant difficulties exist in the relationship between the Programme Manager and some stakeholders.

1	2	3	4	5

Change Control – Time, Budget, Scope, Quality

Standard to Attain	Moderate Problems Exist	Significant Problems Exist
The programme Attributes (Time, Budget, Scope and Quality) are well defined and documented. And: Attribute changes, if any, have been well controlled, generally including; definition, implications, approval, and consequent planning.	There are moderate gaps in the definition or documentation of the programme Attributes. Or: Some small Attribute changes have occurred and have not been well controlled.	There are significant gaps in the definition or documentation of the programme Attributes. Or: Some significant Attribute changes have occurred and have not been well controlled.

1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 3 Programme Independent Quality Assurance Approach

Caravel's approach to an IQA assignment is as follows:

(1) Agree the IQA Statement of Work. This will involve discussion and agreement on a precise description of the IQA scope, services, assumptions, dependencies, milestones, reporting approach and fee structure. We prepare an IQA Plan which includes the scope, resources, timescales, details of the review, stakeholders, processes, and reporting.

(2) Document Review. We review the key programme and project documents in order to understand the business requirements, the deliverables, critical success factors, and expected outcomes and benefits. We consider the programme and programme management documents to assess whether basic programme and programme controls are in place. We will pay particular attention to risk and issue registers to ensure they are up to date, and that the risks identified are relevant to the scope of the programme or project, and have been appropriately mitigated, and residual risk has been considered. In addition, they will focus on the specific elements of the programme or project phase including the adequacy of governance and advice structures. The documents that we generally review are:

- Business Case
- Programme Management Plan
- Programme Schedule
- Programme registers (risk, issue, change control, assumptions, dependencies)
- Programme status reports including financial reports
- Steering Committee agendas and minutes

- Programme team meeting agendas and minutes
- Resource estimation, planning and allocation programme
- Procurement plan
- Implementation map
- Communications plan
- Quality Management plan

The document review informs us on the stakeholders who should be interviewed, and on the range of questions that should be asked.

(3) Interviews. We interview and meet with relevant stakeholders, programme and project staff and vendors. Where appropriate we will use Caravel checklists and questionnaires that are based on best-practice programme and project management and technical standards. In some cases, these may be provided for programme and project staff self-assessment prior to the review. The interviews provide assurance not only that the programme and project plans and controls are being applied, but also that they are effective in practice.

Each interview is conducted by two Caravel Directors, and typically requires up to one hour for completion. A list of interview topics is prepared beforehand and is used as a template to record each interviewee's responses.

We may attend governance and programme or project management meetings, in an observing capacity, as necessary. We will comment on the effectiveness of the governance structure, and whether the appropriate focus is being maintained.
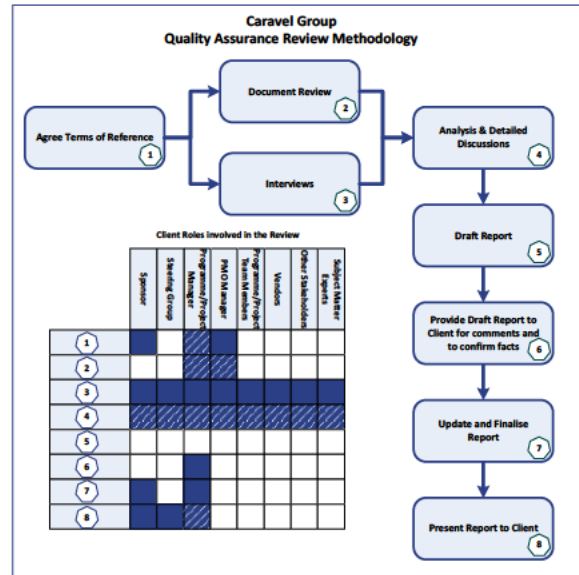
(4) Analysis. During and after the document review and interviews we consider the strengths and weaknesses of the programme management and governance. Where potential issues are uncovered, we will discuss them immediately with the appropriate people to ensure that we have the facts correct, that we understand the context and the risks, and to provide the opportunity to explore potential solutions.

The major areas we assess include:

- Clarity that the business benefits, objectives and deliverables of the programme is clearly understood by all stakeholders, including members of governance and programme teams.
- Assurance that programme governance, advisory, and management structures are appropriate, fully documented, and working effectively.
- That the programme team is appropriately resourced with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience, and all roles are documented and understood.
- That appropriate programme methodologies are been applied and adhered to in accordance with the organisation's toolkit and templates, and review and approval processes.
- That the programme scope is clearly defined, documented and managed.
- That actions and timescales are planned, managed, communicated and reported.
- That budget and cost management principles are embedded in the management process, and all costs are planned, managed, monitored and reported
- That programme risks and issues have been identified, analysed, documented and updated on a regular basis, with appropriate risk and issue management plans in place.
- Quality management actions and planned and implemented.
- Communications are planned and applied to support the programme and to reduce risks.
- Change control systems are in place to manage any deviations from agreed tolerances for cost, time, scope and quality.

Caravel has developed a unique health rating system to support our assessment and reporting process. The ratings help to put our comments and recommendations into an objective context, and provide a basis for the Delivery Confidence Rating. The ratings also provide a benchmark for subsequent reviews. The areas that are rated include:

- Business Benefits
- Programme Team
- Scope Management
- Budget & Cost Management
- Quality Management
- Change Control

- Programme Organisation
- Programme Methodologies[3]
- Actions & Timescales
- Risk and Issue Management
- Communications

In addition, for go-live readiness reviews, we may assess and rate specific review items such as security, testing, or change management. The definitions of the attributes that indicate rating scores are shown below.

Where there are areas that require improvement, we provide prioritised recommendations on how these improvements could be achieved.

(5) — (8) Reporting. We prepare a draft IQA report which describes the programme or project elements reviewed, our findings, and our recommendations. We write a report that is concise and to the point. It includes an assessment of the Delivery Confidence Rating. We provide the report to the Programme Manager (and others who may be affected by any issues) to ensure that facts are correct.

Following any agreed modifications, we present the final report to the Programme SRO. In addition, it is our preference to present the IQA report to the Governance Group, but this will be subject to the agreement of the Sponsor.

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[3] Includes procurement methodologies

We will provide advice as requested on the programme or project assurance findings, options for improvement, and the recommendations.

Appendix 4 Description of Delivery Confidence Ratings and Recommendation Priority Ratings

Description of Delivery Confidence Ratings

Delivery Confidence Rating	Description
Highly Likely	Successful delivery of the Project or Programme appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that significantly threaten achievement of the next key milestone.
Likely	Successful delivery of the Project or Programme appears likely. Attention will be needed to ensure that risks do not materialise into issues threatening achievement of the next key milestone.
Possible	Successful delivery of the Project or Programme appears possible. However, issues exist in key areas that require management attention in order to achieve the next key milestone. Issues appear to be resolvable at this stage if addressed promptly.
Unlikely	Successful delivery of the Project or Programme appears unlikely with major risks or issues in key areas that require urgent management attention. Achievement of the next key milestone is in doubt.
Highly Unlikely	Successful delivery of the Project or Programme appears to be highly unlikely due to significant issues which do not appear to be resolvable at this stage. The Project or Programme may need to be re-baselined or its overall viability re-assessed.

Description of Recommendation Priority Ratings

Priority Rating	Description
High	Issue is having or could have a significant impact on the achievement of the next key milestone. Action should be taken immediately and the impact on the next decision gate should be formally assessed by the governance body if the recommendation is not implemented within the assigned due date.
Medium	Issue is having or could have a moderate impact on the achievement of the next key milestone. Action should be taken be taken at the earliest reasonable opportunity but be completed by the assigned due date.
Low	Issue is having or could have a minor impact on the achievement of the next key milestone. If addressed, it will improve the overall project / programme management control environment and/or efficiency and effectiveness. Implementation is recommended.

KANTAR PUBLIC

Māori Electoral Option Qualitative Report

DRAFT report

Dec 2022

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

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01

Research background and approach

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Research background

The Electoral Commission commissioned Kantar Public to undertake research to inform the campaign strategy for the upcoming Māori Electoral Option (MEO, the Option) in 2023.

The need for research comes in anticipation of the recently passed Māori Electoral Option Bill. The changes mean that from 31 March 2023, Māori voters will be able to change between the general and Māori electoral rolls at any time except in the three months before a general election and the local elections. So, there is a greater need than ever to gauge Māori attitudes towards the MEO, and all it entails.

The research also looked to uncover general perceptions towards voting in the general election.

To inform the upcoming campaign strategy, three ads from the previous 2018 campaign were shown to participants to find out what still resonates with Māori and pull out which elements will be most engaging and informative for next year's MEO.

This research is being undertaken in two stages. This report outlines the results from the exploratory qualitative stage only. The following quantitative phase will take place in early 2023.

Contextual factors that may impact the findings:

- The passing of the Māori Electoral Option Bill on **15 November 2022.**

- New Zealand Supreme Court releases decision regarding the current voting age on **21 November 2022.**
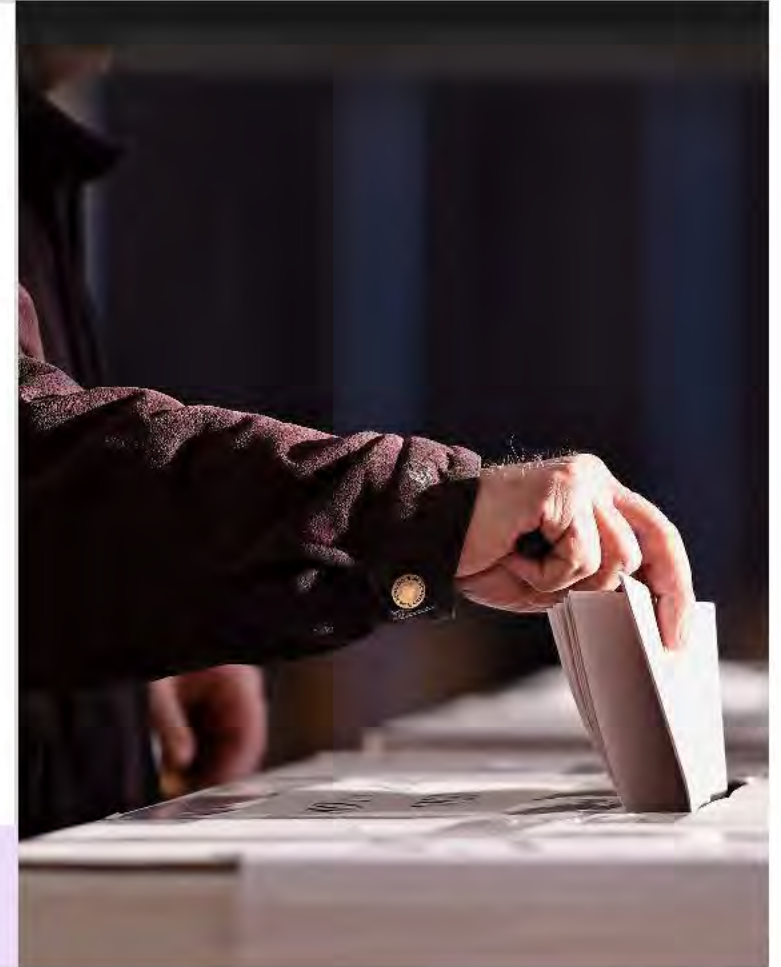
Qualitative research approach

This research was conducted by Mahinga Māramatanga Ahurea, Kantar Public's cultural insights practice. We are a Te Tiriti led roopū, with Māori and Pasifika researchers at our core.

We conducted 8 x 2 hour focus groups (6-8 participants in each) with Māori, both online with participants across the motu via Zoom and kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) in Tairāwhiti and Kaitaia.

Fieldwork was undertaken between **21st November – 2nd December.**

Participants were recruited in a range of ways, including through:

– *Whānau and other personal connections*
– *The community engagement team at the Electoral Commission*
– *Dialogue Partners networks*

Our key audience were Māori who self-identified as being less engaged with the MEO and general elections. A smaller group of those who identified as being more engaged were also included, and any significant differences between the attitudes are mentioned throughout.

Across all participants, there were a range of age groups, genders, socio-economic backgrounds and locations represented. A full sample breakdown can be found on slide 44.

All participants received a **$100** koha to thank them for their time and whakaaro.

Participants who attended kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, received an additional **$20** *koha to cover transport costs.*

Māori live in diverse cultural worlds

As expertly summarised by Sir Mason Durie in his 1995 'Ngā Matatini Māori Diverse Māori Realities' report:

"Māori live in diverse cultural worlds. There is no one reality nor is there any longer a single definition which will encompass the range of Māori lifestyles."

Although we engaged with a range of participants across the motu, we want to acknowledge that Māori realities are diverse and nuanced, and vary across whānau, hapū and iwi.

This report represents the whakaaro, thoughts and experiences of the 51 Māori participants who took part in this research. While we refer to 'Māori' throughout, we recognise this only represents a small intersection of Māori experiences, and in no way aims to homogenise, or represent 'one' Māori perspective.

*Durie, M, Ngā Matatini Māori 1995
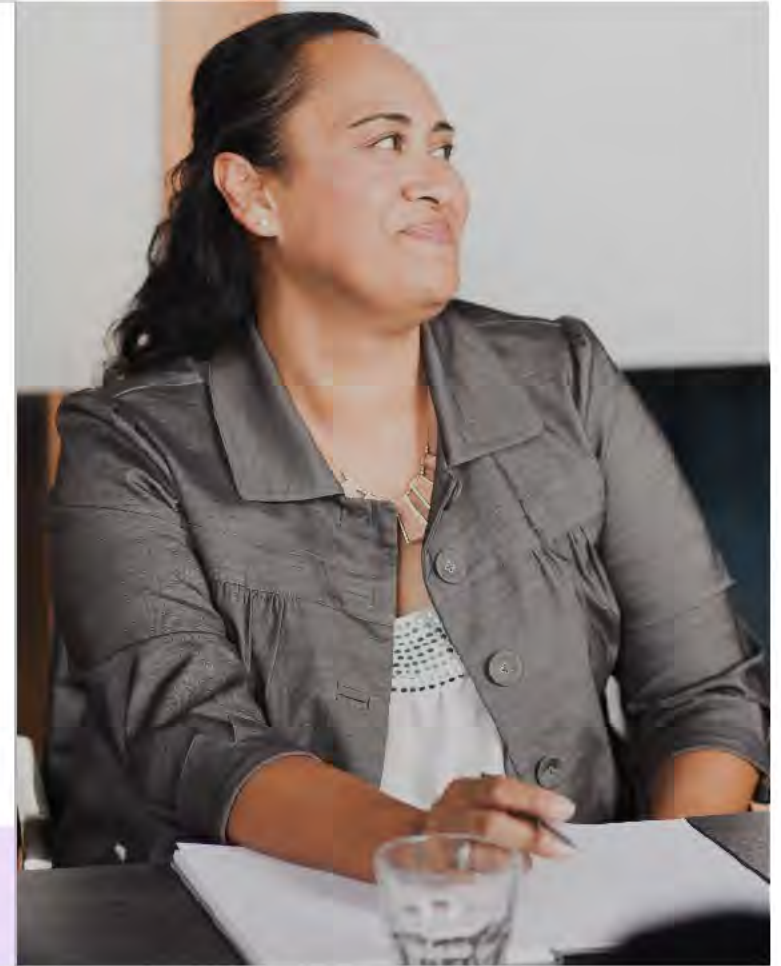
Executive summary

- Many Māori across the motu have a limited understanding and awareness of the MEO, general election and overall voting process. (Slide 16)
- Perceptions of the general election and MEO are impacted by past experiences, both personal and within whānau. (Slide 17)
- Although, confidence grew throughout the sessions, with those less engaged walking away feeling empowered. (Slide 8)
- Most Māori view the changes to the MEO as positive, although some are unsure the impact the changes will make. (Slide 22)
- The previous sand art creative, while visually appealing, lacks a clear connection to the MEO kaupapa. A new direction, to signal change is needed. (Slides 29-31)
- For many Māori, the influence that changing rolls has on the number of Māori electoral seats and their boundaries was new information, and there were mixed whakaaro about it. (Slide 34)
- Influencers vary across age group, geographical locations as well as Māori comfort with their taha Māori and whakapapa. (Slides 24-26)
- Campaigns need to be rolled out across traditional and modern channels, e.g. social media and mainstream television and radio stations. (Slide 27)
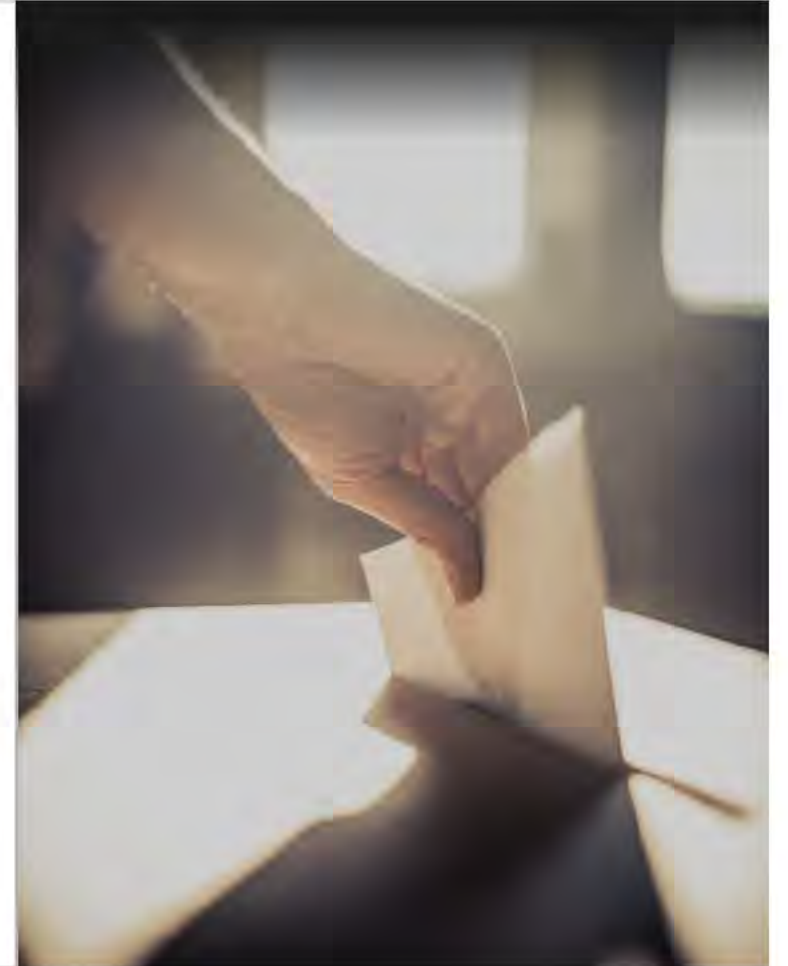
Overall, Māori feel intrigued to learn more about the MEO and share their learnings with those around them

"I've definitely gained a way better understanding because I honestly didn't really know much. I just knew that I was on the Māori electoral roll. So, this definitely has opened my mind up a lot more towards you know why I should be on here."
More engaged wahine, 18-25, Waikato

"I really enjoyed tonight you know, hearing everyone's opinions and everyone talking about voting and stuff. You know, I didn't know nothing about the general and Māori roll and now I have a better understanding on why we should vote"
Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"I'm so wrapped that I came tonight. I didn't know what I came to, but I'm gonna go home and do some research now and I'm gonna deliver something on it tomorrow in my class. A lot of my tamariki live with Nanny and Papa and they probably have no idea [about the MEO] so I'm gonna go home and use a bit of time purposefully to do more research about it."
Less engaged tāne, 26-39, Te Tai Tokerau

"I learnt a lot tonight about why I'm on the Māori electorate roll. It does have a lot more meaning. I mean, we always encourage our kids to do what we do anyway. But now we can give them a reason why. So yeah, that was very good." *Less engaged tāne, 40+, Te Tai Tokerau*

"I'm probably going to go home to do some more research. But I feel pretty empowered. Like, just like all of you fellas coming together all from the same town different walks, and just knowing that there's other young people out there that are like passionate and care about the things that I care about because I have quite a Pākehā friend group, like I have mates that don't identify as Māori. And so it's nice to be around people that are passionate about the same things"
Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"That makes me understand why I made my choice when I did about being on the Māori roll and sort of just reiterated the importance of more Māori getting in the loop, to be part of the decision making. Making your voice heard. And it will never be heard on this unless we take it a little bit more seriously and as a collective, because when we do things as a collective, as a people, then maybe we can make a change collectively as well." *Less engaged tāne, 40+, Te Tai Tokerau*

A campaign that clearly communicates 'what' is changing and 'why' will be necessary to reach Māori audiences in 2023

Across the three ads from 2018, the video with Stacey Morrison resonates most widely across all audiences. A similar creative will be the most effective in communicating the upcoming changes to the MEO in 2023.

Why it resonates:

- Communicates the 'what' and 'why' through walking through the whakapapa of the MEO.
  - This was new information for many participants, and is seen as motivation to switch to/join the Māori roll.
- Clear and concise format, effectively communicates a large amount of information in a short timeframe
- Stacey is a familiar and trusted face for many Māori, increasing confidence and engagement with the ad
- Uses an upbeat tone with colourful visuals that assist in illustrating the information further
- Creates the curiosity to seek out the 'how'

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Key factors to leverage Māori perceptions of voting in the general election

1. Accessibility and visibility
- Both of election candidates and communications about the general election and MEO
- Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi engagement for those in provincial/rural areas is key
- Especially with the impacts of the global pandemic, there is a call for voting to be made accessible online, as well as in-person. This would be particularly motivating for provincial and rural Māori, as well as tāngata whai kaha/immunocompromised people.

2. Greater education
- There is a strong desire amongst Māori to know more about and demystify the election process in general.
- There remains a lack of confidence in the power of your vote, rooted in government mistrust, with the overall political system seen by many as a legacy of colonisation.
- Māori want to see tangible examples of how participating in the general election will be directly beneficial for their whanau, hapu, iwi and community.
- Suggested information channels include kura, schools, universities and other institutions and community hubs. This is seen as particularly important for rangatahi, so they can become involved before they need to enrol to vote.
- Hearing from trusted community figures also alleviates the fear of the unknown.

3. Whānau is central
- Engaging the whole whānau into the voting process will have the greatest influence on perspectives of other wider whānau members.
- Continue to encourage whānau conversations to further drive engagement

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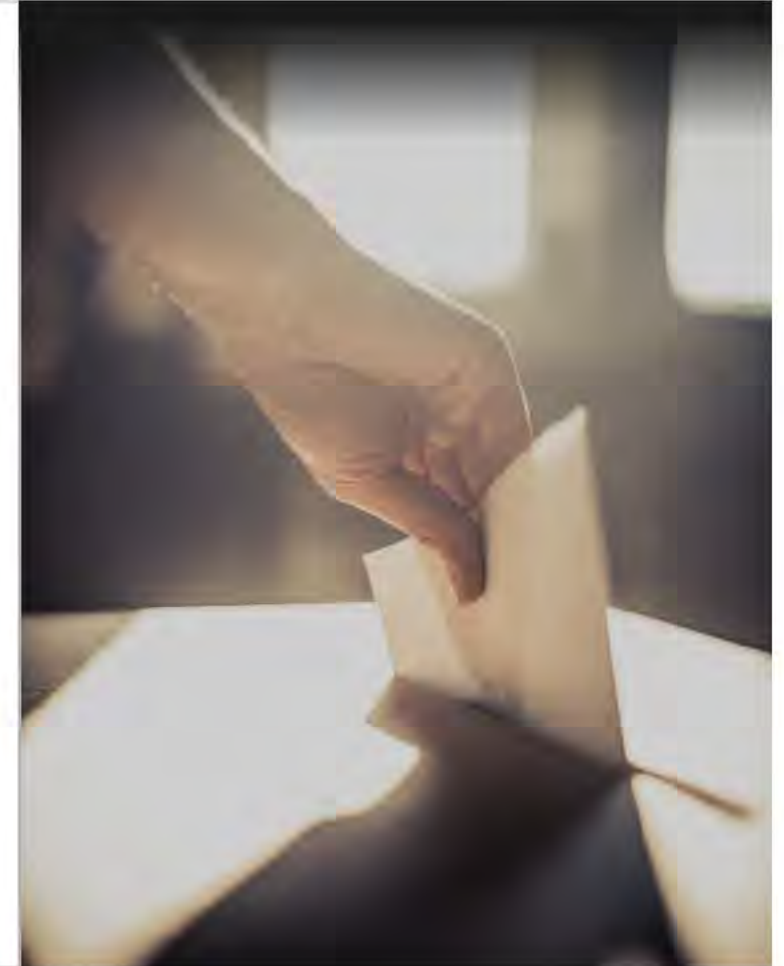
03

Context

Contextual factors include ongoing legacy of vaccine mandates, the Supreme Court ruling around voting age and recent local elections

- For a young wahine in Te Tai Tokerau, losing her job due to the vaccine mandates put her off voting and getting involved.
  - Other factors, such as the rising cost of living, made voting seem pointless. The connect has been lost between the impact your vote can have for your community.

- Some participants are also interested in how the recent ruling of the Supreme Court will impact these discussions, spotlighting the responsibility of voting for rangatahi especially.

- With the local elections happening in recent months, those in the regions were interested to discuss the difference between voting in the local and general election.

  - A major one relating to visibility of candidates, building trust through proximity and connection.

"I know it's really important to vote. But I just didn't vote because I lost my job due to the vaccine mandates. I thought: I lost my job so why should I get involved? With so many things happening, with the cost-of-living crisis and everything, it was a little bit pointless to me." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"With the recent, I don't know if it was law or whatever, but with the rangatahi being able to vote earlier now. I think that's really important for them. This is their time to make a change or put in their voice and what are the aspirations for you know, Aotearoa. Up here in the north we have so much going for the rangatahi. So, yeah, I I think it's really important for our young ones and our old ones, but you know, some of them are hard to convince but if we can get our young ones to try and vote regardless in the General or Māori roll, they can have a voice for themselves." Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Te Tai Tokerau

"I missed all my [local] election mail. Every single bit of it. It goes to some other address. People don't stay put anymore, we move house way more than our grandparents and parents." More engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti

"When you're voting within the Tairāwhiti area, you're whanau. The ones that are trying to get on the board or whatever, you're related to them, or you know them somehow. That plays a part in why you would vote [in local elections]. You know that their values are the same values as what you feel." More engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti

04

Overall perceptions of MEO and voting

Politics, confusion and unknown, among other key words, come to mind for Māori relating to the general election and MEO

These keywords were generated from the phrases mentioned by participants when the terms above (e.g., general election) were mentioned. The larger the phrase, the more prevalent across the groups.

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Confusion is clouding overall perceptions of voting in the general election and the MEO

- Most Māori, regardless of their perceived engagement level, feel their confidence and prior knowledge about the voting system is low.

- Amongst those less engaged, there is confusion about the differences between, and function of, the general and Māori electoral rolls, with some questioning the need for two rolls.

- Those more engaged question why Māori are still confused about how the MEO functions, over the long history that the electoral rolls have been in effect.

- Some voters think to their perceived lack of choices when it comes to who to vote for, particularly when it comes to options that align both with te ao Māori and personal values.

- Others may vote when told by those around them, e.g., whānau members, but without the push, do not see the impact of their vote or potentially the point in voting.

"I get confused with it... I'm unsure of all the differences. Why, like to be honest, why do we have you know, why are the all the different ones? Why can't we just be on the one [electoral roll]?" Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Te Tai Tokerau

"How long have we had Māori seats and why are people still so confused about them?" More engaged wahine, 50+ years, Tairāwhiti

"There's not any party that completely aligns with te ao Māori, but also my own individual values." More engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Moana-a-Toi

"I didn't vote last time but the time before because my mum and dad told me to. But yeah, I don't think it has much difference." Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Tāmaki Makaurau

Perceptions are also impacted by previous personal experiences voting, and those of whānau

- For Māori recalling their first time voting, they remember the stress and uncertainty of the overall experience.

  - One wahine from Kaitaia remembers being taken by her koro to vote, but not knowing what or why she was voting.

  - Another rangatahi from Waikato recalls voting for the first time last election. He remembers the stress of experiencing political conflict with peers, and feeling unsure how to handle those difficult situations.

- The perceptions and opinions of your whānau and household growing up can also have lasting impacts with how you view voting today.

  - A rangatahi from Kaitaia remembers hearing the general roll referred to as the Pākehā roll growing up, reinforcing that she belonged on the Māori roll, again, without understanding the reasons why.

"Back when I first turned 18, my koro took me out to the school to go and vote. I'm stuck there looking at a paper like, I don't even know any of these people. I don't even know what I'm doing." Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Te Tai Tokerau

"For me, the last election was my first time voting and it was a really volatile experience. If [your opinions] don't line up with someone, then you're just in different camps, and you're just arguing with each other. Potentially, us, as a younger generation, struggle to have the wisdom to facilitate those conversations peacefully or be able to actually respect someone else's opinions... Like, chill out! We can have our views and respect each other without having to argue about this." Less engaged tāne, 18-25, Waikato

"My parents would always call the [general] roll the Pākeha roll, that's that. It was just the Pākeha roll or Māori roll, my mum just always told us you know, you fall under the Māori roll always." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"Some whānau are more politically driven than others. Growing up, I lived in an amazing whānau but we never talked about politics other than that my dad voted for Labour… But I had a friend [growing up] and her whānau were very mana motuhake, so they had a different table talk to us. So, I learnt about politics through her. It's also that influence. The kōrero that happens in the home, influences whether you should vote or not." More engaged wahine, 40+, Tairāwhiti

Accessible and relevant information and education, starting from a school age will counter low confidence amongst Māori

- All of these factors are perpetuated by confusion as to where to source accessible and relatable information about the general election and MEO, only reinforcing those who are less engaged to remain that way.

- Many Māori reflect about their experience at school, especially those who went through mainstream education (as opposed to kura kaupapa), not learning much about politics or voting. As a result, the importance and impact of voting is not always known.

  - And this can continue through generations.

- Others would like to see resources that they can share with whānau members, to support informed decision making.

"I feel like the information for them isn't readily available, it's just not accessible enough. I feel like that's a huge reason why a lot of Māori people don't vote." More engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Moana-a-Toi

"When you're at school, you don't really learn much about voting, politics or anything, you hear about stuff on the news, but you don't really learn much about it. So therefore, when you leave school, you're not really that much invested in it. And I guess that culture just carries out throughout the generations… And if you're not really invested in the general election, then the Māori [roll's] not going to be that much of a difference." Less engaged tāne, 26-39, Tāmaki Makaurau

"It's important for us who can vote and who want to, to vote, but also to educate our whānau. Not necessarily telling them who to vote for but give them the information to make an informed decision. Our voices are statistically small, but they need to be heard." More engaged wahine, 26-29, Tāmaki Makaurau

"Voting is very important for our people, because when we don't vote, we get no say. Lots of Māori say, 'I don't want to vote because I don't want to be a part of it', and that's wrong… If we become educated, we can vote for the people that help our communities. That's why I encourage other young people to vote. Because there are people there [in parliament] who are fighting for us [Māori]." Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti

Voting is seen as important by some more engaged Māori because of the potential to mobilise change

- Those who identify as being more engaged are active in voting and advocating for the importance of voting to mobilise change for future generations.
- For those more engaged, they see the ways that your vote counts in less tangible ways as well, especially for Māori.
- For those less engaged, one tāne from Tāmaki Makaurau recognises that it's about wanting to vote, rather than if people actually do. That's how people will become more engaged.
- It is also a way for Māori to be represented from a Māori perspective which is seen as incredibly important.
  - Although, as previously mentioned, there is a perceived lack of options representative of te ao Māori values.
- Others want to believe voting is important, but are unsure why or do not see an impact from their vote.

"What happens now dictates the future in a certain way. Whether that's economic stance, or in terms of bills, policies, laws. Like the COVID law that kind of rocked Aotearoa, the powers that were given policies, their control and power." More engaged tāne, 26-39, Tāmaki Makaurau

"Extremely important to vote in my opinion. There's a lot of things directly that impact our lives in lots of different ways that we often don't recognize or until it gets too late and becomes an emergency. Yeah, I agree that it's important to vote." More engaged tāne, 26-39

"It's important to want to vote. Whether people do or not is another thing, but the 'want to vote' is the important connection that we might all have for different reasons. And we might not all be able to get out there and do so, but whether it be a personal reason or a civic duty or whatever, the 'want to vote' is still valid." Less engaged tāne, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau

"I vote but I acknowledge that it's limited in its representation of Māori values." More engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Whanganui-a-tara

"I feel like we have to vote but then most of the time we're going into it not knowing what exactly we're voting for" Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

05

Changes to the MEO

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The changes to the Option are seen as positive, taking pressure off the decision

- The changes are seen as especially positive to those less engaged who were previously unaware that the Option was limited to every 5-6 years.
- Those who were unsure about the differences between the general and Māori roll view this as a step in the right direction, allowing for more freedom for Māori, and alleviating pressure off the decision when you first enrol to vote.
- Although some Māori are sceptical about the changes.
- One less engaged tāne has concerns about people now treating the decision lightly, or being influenced by outside parties to change before the election.
  - Although, they believe that the freedom and choice the changes allow counteract any flippant behaviour.
- Another less engaged wahine, while happy about the changes, is underwhelmed.
  - Wanting to see more momentous change made for Māori in the political sphere.

"It's awesome, because it means we can change a lot sooner than we were able to, we don't have to wait. I didn't know this, and I was wanting to go on [the Māori roll]. I didn't know that I'd have to wait until there was a Māori Electoral Option to change. I actually didn't know that, and every five or six years is a long time. So now it's gonna be anytime bar that three months. I think that's awesome." Less engaged wahine, 40+, Ōtautahi

"It feels as though there is more freedom surrounding the decision, there's a little less pressure." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Ōtākou

"I'd be concerned about the risk of people changing willy-nilly because it is an important change. And I would hate to see any outside party try and hijack that prior to election and induce people to change for temporary reasons. For me, it's a long-term choice and long-term change, and to be flippant about it kind of defeats the purpose. But I'd rather have the openness of being able to change and allow flippancy, rather than make it every five or six years." **Less engaged tāne, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau**

"Stuff like this, it does make me happy to see this, it really does. But I'm being tired of being drip fed changes. I'm over seeing our people being drip fed all of the time." Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti

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06

Channels and influencers

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Māori want to hear from trusted members from their community and across a range of platforms

To resonate with Māori across the motu, a range of Māori figures and faces will need to be represented in the next MEO campaign.

This is largely driven by geographical location, and individual connection with te ao Māori.

However, a common factor is **trust**.

Most participants have a strong desire to hear about the changes to the MEO from someone who is trusted and visible within their community.

For some participants, the figure being Māori is not as important as seeing someone who advocates for Māori and te ao Māori, e.g., Ruby Tui

"I think it's really important to have a Māori leader. Like Tama Iti, or Te Ururoa, or Stacey. It gives you a sense of familiarity." Less engaged tāne,18-25, Te Moana-a-Toi

"Their sense of consistency and stability coincides with building trust." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Ōtākou

"For me, it has to be from that perspective of people who are on the [Māori] roll. You have to have made this decision yourself to profess it to anybody else" Less engaged tāne, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau

"Social media is really good for aiming at the younger generation, and even people coming into the voting scene. I don't know anyone, even my age, that would go on to NZ Herald or Stuff and read articles. So put stuff out on social media to spread the word and inform people using content that is short, sharp, informative and pretty, and reasonably entertaining as well." Less engaged tāne, 18-25, Waikato

Trusted figures in Māori communities…

Those trusted in te ao Māori

Musicians

Those who have recently learnt about the MEO (a level of relatability)

TV presenters

A range of people advocating, inclusive of kaumatua and kuia

People from TV programmes that are about all things Māori, e.g., Hahana, Kai Time on the Road

TRUST

Region specific members of the community

Sport stars, e.g., Black Ferns, Waka Ama

See the next slide for specific figures mentioned.

Popular figures Māori want to hear from in the next campaign…

Tame Iti

Oriini Kaipara

Taika Waititi

Maisey Rika

Krystal Murray

Cliff Curtis

James Rolleston

Stan Walker

Stacey and Scotty Morrison

Six60

A mixture of traditional and modern channels will be required for a successful campaign

Social media, particularly TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook.

Rangatahi share that they don't take interest of Youtube ads, as they either pay for premium or wait to skip ads.

Traditional channels like TV 1, 2, 3, radio stations and whakaata Māori

"Don't put it on my YouTube video, I'll skip it really fast."

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07

Sand art video

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The sand art video is visually beautiful and mesmerising

- Most Māori feel the sand art visuals are beautiful, mesmerising and engaging, with the imagery and symbols strongly resonating for some.
  - One less engaged wahine from Tairāwhiti feeling as though she was being taken on a journey of whakapapa.

- For some participants, the sand art video is successful as a prompt to look further into the MEO and start those kōrero with those around you about what roll you are on.

- For others, it is the messaging around your choice impacting who will represent you in parliament that particularly resonated, making the impact of your choice seem quite important.

"Initially, I was visually inspired. It was beautiful. From the pictures itself, I had a sense of whānau, hapū, iwi. Kaitiakitanga. Especially when he drew the waka on the side of the tree. It took me on a bit of a journey." More engaged wahine, 40+, Tairāwhiti

"The art was beautiful. I was mesmerized with it. I liked seeing Aotearoa then it went to a stingray, the ika, then whānau, the waka – so it did a pepeha/whakapapa type of thing which was just beautiful." Less engaged wahine, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau

"I remember this ad, and I liked this and I remember how it prompted us, my husband and I, to talk about choosing which roll we're going to be on." Less engaged wahine, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau

"The campaign really sent the message out basically saying that it affects who will represent you in Parliament. It made me think hey, actually that is quite important because who I vote for may end up representing me and many others in Parliament." **Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau**

However, the imagery does not resonate for everyone

The movement of the sand art, while beautiful, distracts from the message and context of the video.

- While many Māori recall seeing the ad, there is little recollection of the ads content or context. The message or connection to the MEO are not present or strong.
- Many shared the sentiment that visually pleasing content is less important than clear and concise messaging.
- And while the Māori imagery is familiar, it proved to be divisive for some, with concerns that it will only resonate with Māori who are connected with their taha Māori, alienating others.
- With some even fearing the ad is attempting to use Māori imagery in a malicious way to try connect with Māori.

"I remember watching that one too. I remember just changing the channel really. Like just completely oblivious to what it was trying to say" Less engaged tāne, 26-39, Tāmaki Makaurau

"I found myself caught up in the prettiness of the visual picture of it and then I didn't quite get the message." Less engaged tāne, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau

"They're trying to describe to us that if you're voting from the general or the Māori roll, you're all on the same waka. But you're actually not. That's the concept I got from that, from the sand and the designs… They trying to say we're all jumping on the same waka but we're all paddling in different directions." More engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti

"I saw the story. I didn't hear the story. Maybe that was their reasoning for it, to connect with [Māori] through the visuals. But it almost desensitizes you to the message. Was it made to do that? I go back to corruption again. Was it made to confuse us." Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti

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For others, the messaging lacks the important context that would drive action

- Many Māori feel the tone of the sand art ad and inclusion of message 'you won't get to choose again for another 6 years', puts even more pressure on to make a decision, without the necessary support to feel as though it is an informed one.
  - The messaging still leaves many less engaged Māori confused as to what the Option is, or what it involves.
  - With many shocked to hear that the Option only takes place every 6 years (prior to the passing of the MEO Bill).
- While the idea of sparking conversations with whānau and friends is appreciated by less engaged Māori, they still feel ill equipped with information to effectively kōrero about it.
- Some participants worry that the tone of the ad is targeted towards older generations, and there is fear that they may feel presure to act on it without any other knowledge, influencing whānau around them to make a change.
- Others more engaged feel that the video is directed at those who actively vote, rather than those who are less engaged, due to the lack of additional information provided.

"I'm still confused as to what exactly is the choice. Though I think it informed me about as much as I already knew and I'm still undecided. Same as before the ad. The only new thing I got out of it was that you can change it every six years. I didn't know that figure." **Less engaged tāne, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau**

"I don't get anything out of it. Like not much information like you, they will send out an email. I'll send out a letter in the post but like, not really promoting like you know what they're about?" **Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Te Matau-a-Māui**

"Our whānau don't even know what the electorate, the Māori roll, or the general roll is about? So, if we're going to talk about it with whānau, what are we going to talk about, you know, like, we don't even know what to talk about. And that's what I got out of the video anyway." **Less engaged wahine, 26-39, Te Tai Tokerau**

"I think that [ad] is aimed at someone who wants to vote, rather than trying to engage someone to vote… If you're someone who's completely oblivious and has no intention to engage, you're not really going to be swayed by this." **More engaged wahine, 26-39, Tairāwhiti**

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08

Stacey's video

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Stacey's video is seen as inviting and relatable to many

- Stacey Morrison is a trusted face in Te Ao Māori, resonating with many. Many Māori feel that they would stop what they are doing to listen to her, or see what she has to say, for this reason.
- Having a familiar face is engaging and comforting, as they offer a sense of relatability.
- The conversational tone of Stacey's kōrero adds to the relatability of her message, and makes it easy to digest for many.
- Alongside her confident and clear delivery, Māori feel confident in the information she is sharing.
- The animations were seen as clear and simple, supporting Stacey's kōrero without distracting from the main messages. This is key, as a key concern about the sand art was the distracting nature of the visuals.
- Stacey's video is not without concerns, however, with some thinking to the diverse needs of Māori across the motu.
    - For more engaged Māori, there is a concern for those less engaged with their taha Māori and whakapapa that they may not resonate with a figure like Stacey, or the Māori imagery and messages used in this ad.
    - As mentioned on slide 23, a variety of figures will be required in the upcoming campaign to connect with Māori of all backgrounds.

"I'm not really a TV person at all, rarely watch TV. But with someone like Stacey Morrison or another Māori person, I'm more inclined to stop and pay attention because she's well known." **Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau**

"I also think it was quite helpful having a familiar face doing the speaking, just so you can kind of relate feel like you relate to it a lot more. And the images that were popping up on the sides, there are a lot more relevant to what she was speaking about. So, I think that was good." More engaged wahine, 18-25, Waikato

"Compared to [the sand art ad] it really highlights the impact that we have being on the Māori roll. It was very chill and explains the benefits of it rather than being like 'you should.' It explains why you should." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Whakatū

"When I saw the first picture with [Stacey] with the bubbling water and the maunga on the sides, I immediately thought what if Māori don't connect to those [images]… It then puts you into that space of, do I qualify as Māori? Do I have to be in connection with my marae to connect to being Māori to be on the roll? So, then it questions all of that identity stuff." More engaged wahine, 40+, Tairāwhiti

3

The video clearly communicates key information about the MEO, in a short timeframe

- The clarity and concise nature of Stacey's kōrero allowed participants to retain key facts and action points, such as the value of enrolling on the Māori Roll to have an influence on politics for Māori.
    - Some wonder whether this ad is intentionally for rangatahi, as it can connect and share a large amount of information in a short timeframe. This is helpful if you are used to shortform media, such as TikTok.

- Less engaged participants respond positively to the ad's emphasis on the MEO's link to achieveing greater Māori representation in Parliament, and better outcomes for Māori. The 'why' participate in the MEO / switch to the Māori roll strongly resonates.

- For many Māori, the influence that changing rolls has on the number of Māori electoral seats and their boundaries was new information, and for some shifts perceptions about the power of the collective Māori voice.
    - Many less engaged Māori feel motivated after watching this ad to share this new information for others around them.

- For some Māori, the messaging feels balanced and direct, especially around why you may want to change rolls or not change. This ads to the trustworthiness of the ad, as Māori do not feel pressured into making one decision.

- For these reasons, Māori feel this ad facilitates informed decision making, more so than the sand art video.

> "I love that. That was way better than the [sand art] ad. They gave me everything that I wanted to know in such a short amount of time... Maybe it also includes a younger audience with our short attention spans. Like it got all the information out everything I wanted to know. And now I'd have a reason why I know exactly why we should be on the Māori electorate roll if we want to increase the number of seats, if you cared about that, then that's your reason straightaway." *More engaged tāne, 30-39, Tāmaki Makaurau*

> "I had no idea that the Māori electoral roll was what set the number [of Māori seats] I thought this was an autocratic decision made by a bunch of people in Parliament somewhere probably mostly white men. You know, I didn't have any idea that we were in control. That is the information it has taken me thirty years to find. That's the one thing that's going to make me change to the Māori roll… The number of seats is not growing fast enough because we're not signing up and that's the people's power." *Less engaged tāne, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau*

> "I came away from it feeling like I understand what the Māori electorate is and how it fits into the bigger scheme of how this country is run; how I can influence it; and why I should get other people to be clued up on it as well." *Less engaged tāne, 18-25, Waikato*

34

For many, understanding the whakapapa of the MEO is a motivating factor to engage further and learn more about Māori and politics

Knowing the whakapapa of the MEO is significant and empowering.

- For most participants this was a key piece of information that was new, and a highly motivating reason to move over to the Māori roll.
- Some participants expressed surprise that the MEO has its roots in the 19th Century, and appreciated how the whakapapa contextualises the Option. As a result, many were motivated to move to the Māori roll in order to participate in the greater historical narrative of improving representation and outcomes of Māori.
- However, it also leaves questions as to why there have not been significant changes since the establishment of the Māori seats, even following the establishment of the MEO in 1975.
- There is concern that the number of Māori seats should not be up to individual decisions, and rather become entrenched.

"Knowing the history of it makes me more interested in it. Oh, this actually is important. This is something I need to be concerned about or need to take action on. Whereas if I didn't know that history, I probably would be a bit blasé about it." Less engaged tāne, 18-25, Te Moana-a-Toi

"it gave you the importance of why your vote counts the more Māori people on the electoral than the more seats in parliament which gives us more power and more say." Less engaged, Female, 40+, Te Tai Tokerau

"In 1867 there was four seats, in 2022 there was seven. It seems to be a long time to have gained only three seats. And what I want to know is can they go higher than seven? Or is there a number on how many Māori seats they can have in Parliament?" Less engaged wahine, 40+, Te Tai Tokerau

"In terms of the numbers, how more people on the Māori roll, the more seats we would get. That doesn't sit well with me. We've still only got seven seats." More engaged tāne, 40+, Tairāwhiti

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09

Puawai's video

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For some, the whānau feel of Puawai's video resonates

- Many Māori resonate with the ad's emphasis on whānau coming together to kōrero about MEO.
  - For many, the dynamic represents their own lived experiences, reminding them of individual members of their own whānau.
  - Others appreciated how everyone in the whānau brought something to the table, and together they had the necessary information needed.
  - Some rangatahi particularly resonate with the younger characters and appreciate the positive representation in relation to their civic awareness, and rangatahi taking the lead within the whānau.

- Many Māori appreciate that this ad provides more information about 'how' to participate in the MEO.

  - Some participants feel the ad emphasises the accessibility and simplicity of participating in the MEO.

- The comedic tone was entertaining for some, and it shows the fun side of voting and getting involved with the MEO.

- The tone softens the hard decision of choosing which roll to be on, making it seem less intimidating.

"The main message could be everyone in our family knows bits and pieces about voting and the general roll and the Māori roll, but they don't fully know everything. So it's like, kinda like, you know, some like bits and pieces that like sort of like trying to help us to like, further educate ourselves on that topic." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"I loved the concept too. And that's what I was looking for… a whānau kōrero. Having Koro and Nan around and the young ones, you know, and having a cuzzy tiff at each other." Less engaged wahine, 40+, Tāmaki Makaurau

"I think for me, it's definitely Māori lingo… a bit drama, fun. It's typical of what you'll hear in a Māori house. That's how your nannies or your auntie's will talk to each other. I guess it was just strongly trying to get the message across to Māori people." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

Although, for others, the overall style of the video does not land

- However, the overall tone of the ad does not resonate with all Māori.
- Some feel the comedic tone takes away from the seriousness and importance of the decision.
- Some find the delivery too simple, lacking a call to action, or 'so what'.
- For some Māori, the dynamic and characters leaned towards stereotypical, rather than relatable.
  - Others feel that the ad portrays the kuia putting pressure on whānau members to go on the roll, which feels forceful rather than supportive.
- The video still leaves pātai unanswered…
  - Is the video instructing me to send physical documents to an online address? Why?
  - Why do we still have to do things on paper?
  - Where's the 'so what'? What happens if I do switch rolls?

"For me it didn't resonate because it was just joking about something important.... it's not really a laughing matter" Less engaged wahine, 40+, Te Tai Tokerau

"I definitely found this ad to be real simple. But, [Stacey's video] I resonated with the most because it was clear and informative. I'm a person who likes direct information. This video here, you could still understand but it was very simple." Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"I didn't like how the lady was telling the other person because they weren't concentrating on voting to go vote it's like forcing them to do it, forcing them to learn about it" Less engaged wahine, 18-25, Te Tai Tokerau

"I started to think who was the mastermind behind it? Like, they would be funny, and then it could be stereotypical." Less engaged tāne, 26-39, Te Tai Tokerau

10

Appendix

Full sample breakdown

AGE	TOTAL
18-25	17
26-39	20
40+	18

GENDER	TOTAL
Wāhine / Female	34
Tāne / Male	21

ATTITUDE	TOTAL
Less engaged	41
More engaged	14

LOCATION	TOTAL
Te Tai Tokerau / Northland*	20
Tairāwhiti / Gisborne *	14
Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland	7
Kirikiriroa / Hamilton	5
Te Moana-a-Toi / Bay of Plenty	2
Te Matau-a-Māui / Hawke's Bay	2
Ōtautahi / Christchurch	2
Whakatū / Nelson	1
Te Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington	1
Ōtākou / Otago	1
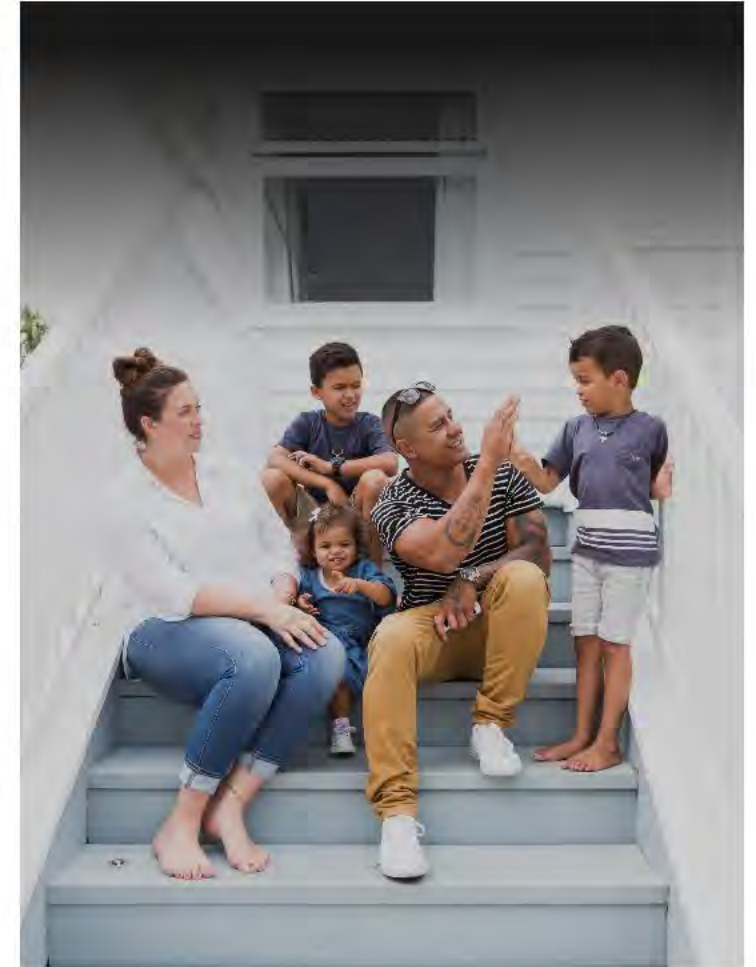
Locations of the four kanohi-ki-te-kanohi groups.

and

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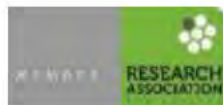 c. Correct any misleading aspects of the published presentation of the findings

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RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Electoral Commission

2022 Local Election Post-campaign Evaluation

September 2022

Contents

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ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

1.

Background, method and summary

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ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Background

- With the upcoming local government elections later this year, the Electoral Commission needs to ensure voter enrolment is up to date

- Accordingly the Commission has run an enrolment campaign from late June to mid August

- As with previous years, the Commission was keen to diagnose the success of the campaign. Kantar Public has conducted a pre- and post-campaign survey of eligible voters

- This report provides the results from both the pre and post waves, and where relevant compares to 2019 results

⚠️ The report contains a number of campaign norms, showing how the enrolment campaign compares to other advertising campaigns evaluated by Kantar Public (and its legacy companies).

These norms remain the property of Kantar Public and should not be shared outside of the Electoral Commission (including any creative or media agencies). A separate version of the report can be created with the norms removed.

How impactful is the campaign in driving enrolment and engagement in the electoral process, and what lessons can be learned for future campaigns and measurement approaches?

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Method

Stage 1 - PRE-CAMPAIGN	Stage 2 - POST-CAMPAIGN
Establish a baseline measure of awareness and engagement	**Measure the campaign effectiveness on awareness and engagement**
Online	**Online**
Completed 17-29 June 2022	Completed 16-25 August 2022
500 eligible voters, whether or not already enrolled (4% margin of error)	**500** eligible voters, whether or not already enrolled (4% margin of error)
5 minute survey	10 minute survey
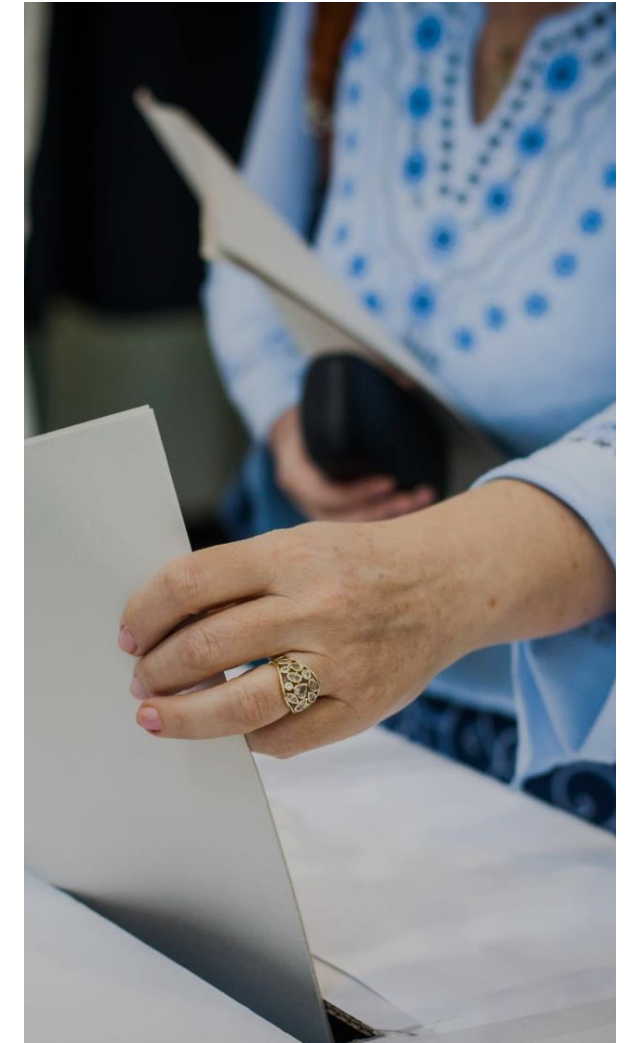
Summary:

The campaign achieves good recognition

The Electoral Commission Campaign achieves a relatively high level of recognition (67%). More work is needed to reach certain audiences including Aucklanders, Asian New Zealanders and Reluctant segment voters*.

The creative is viewed positively but needs to evolve

It is important that the campaign continues to evolve to maintain and build interest in its messages. There are positive reactions to the campaign, it is seen as distinctive and involving but not interesting. Perceptions of Orange Guy remain relatively positive, which may be supported by the introduction of Pup. However, there is no strong evidence the campaign has shifted the dial on enrolment.

Young adults remain a key audience

There is a continued need to support young adults in the election process. Young adults are less likely than average to be enrolled. They also have lower than average awareness of the update pack, and when the local elections are held.

Further mahi to support Māori around Māori wards

More work needs to be done to raise awareness of which councils have a Māori ward and to support Māori to understand rules around how Māori wards work.

A need for cognitive engagement in 2023

A segmentation of voter engagement*, shows the that there has been a shift from voters who are both cognitively and emotionally engaged (the Responsive segment) to those who have lower levels of cognitive engagement. Voting seems more difficult than it did at the election, and voters feel less confident in making a choice. It will be important to address these barriers in 2023 to support voter turnout.

2.

Awareness and engagement with the local elections

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Enrolment and enrolment package awareness remain high and unchanged compared to pre-campaign levels. However, awareness that the local elections are taking place in September / October has almost doubled.

ENROLMENT AND AWARENESS OF ENROLMENT PACKAGE AND OCTOBER ELECTION

%

■ Pre-campaign
■ Post-campaign

88   89
Enrolled

88   88
Awareness of enrolment pack

27   50
Awareness of September/October election

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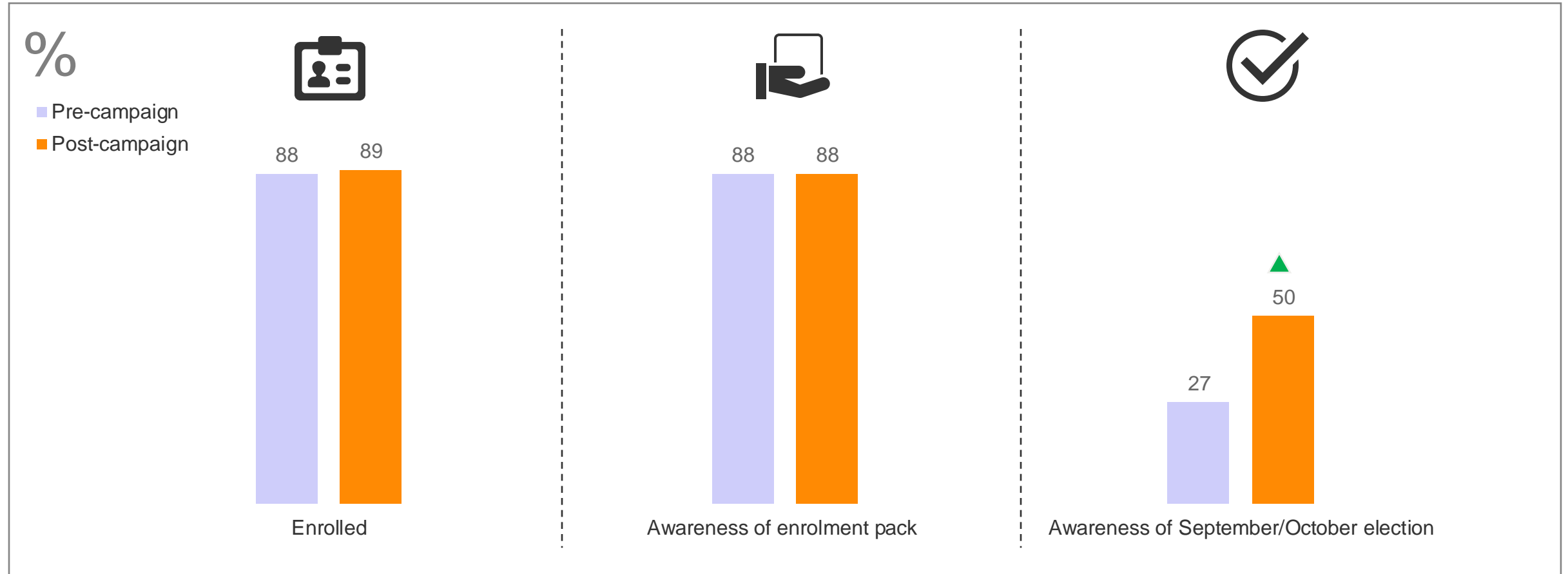
Overall the campaign does not appear to have shifted enrolment levels, and they remain relatively low for younger New Zealanders. That said, enrolment levels have increased amongst Asian New Zealanders.

%

POST-CAMPAIGN ENROLMENT COMPARED TO PRE-CAMPAIGN ACROSS AGE, GENDER AND ETHNICITY

Legend:
- Pre-campaign
- Post-campaign

Category	Pre-campaign	Post-campaign
Total	88	89
Men	90	93
Women	87	86
18-29	80	79
30-39	84	89
40-49	85	91
50-59	96	89
60-69	95	96
70+	96	95
Pākehā	91	90
Māori	91	92
Pasifika	83	82
Asian	79	92 ▲
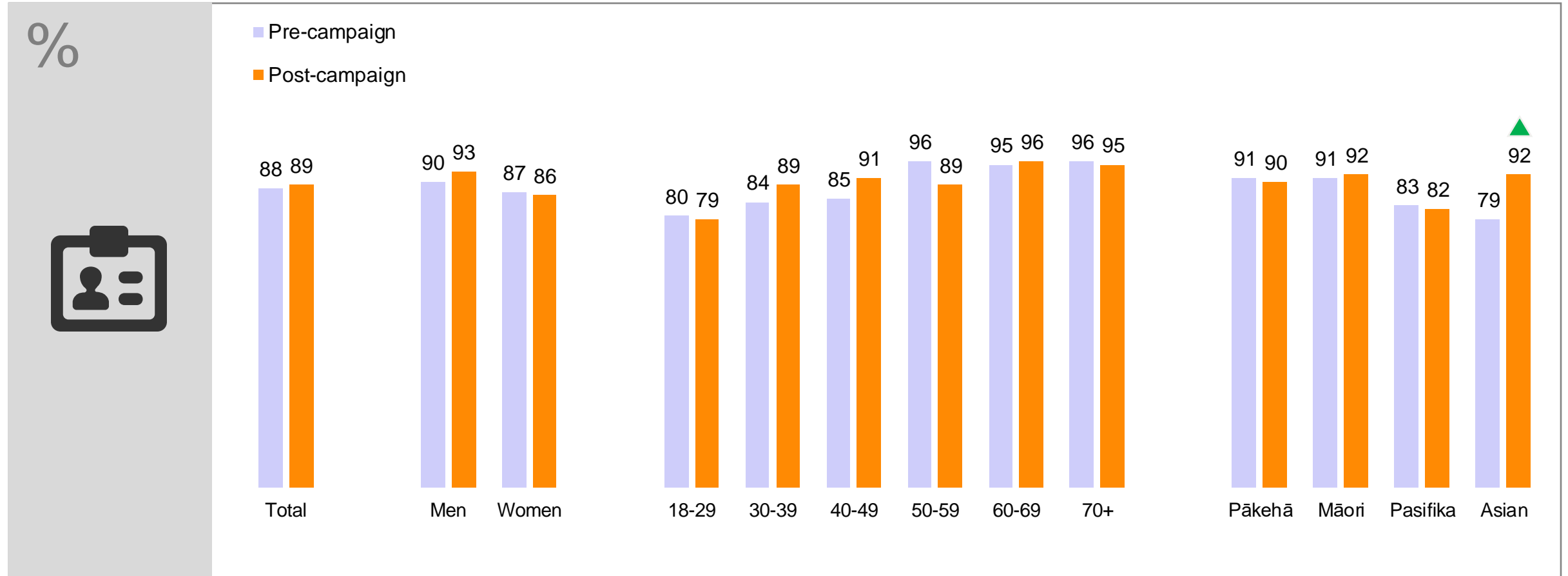
The two key methods New Zealanders would use to check or change their enrolment details are going to vote.nz or calling the Electoral Commission. Overall, there have been no notable shifts in the likelihood to use either approach across the campaign. That said, both are trending upwards which indicates the campaign may have supported this. the proportion of Māori who would call the Electoral Commission has almost doubled.

WHERE WOULD YOU GO TO ENROL, CHECK OR CHANGE YOUR ENROLMENT ADDRESS?

%

Online at vote.nz

	Online at vote.nz
Total	67 / 72
Men	68 / 67
Women	67 / 74
18-29	71 / 74
30-39	76
40-49	66 / 76
50-59	70 / 71
60-69	67 / 68
70+	48 / 62
Pākehā	68 / 76
Māori	67 / 66
Pacifika	66 / 58
Asian	68 / 73

Call the Electoral Commission

	Call the Electoral Commission
Total	24 / 27
Men	25 / 29
Women	22 / 26
18-29	19 / 17
30-39	17 / 26
40-49	23 / 31
50-59	29 / 34
60-69	31 / 33
70+	27 / 28
Pākehā	23 / 27
Māori	22 / 42 ▲
Pacifika	32 / 37
Asian	24 / 30

Pre-campaign Post-campaign

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than total pre-campaign

10

Awareness of the enrolment update pack remains high and is largely consistent across different demographic groups between waves. That said there is some volatility in the data by age group.

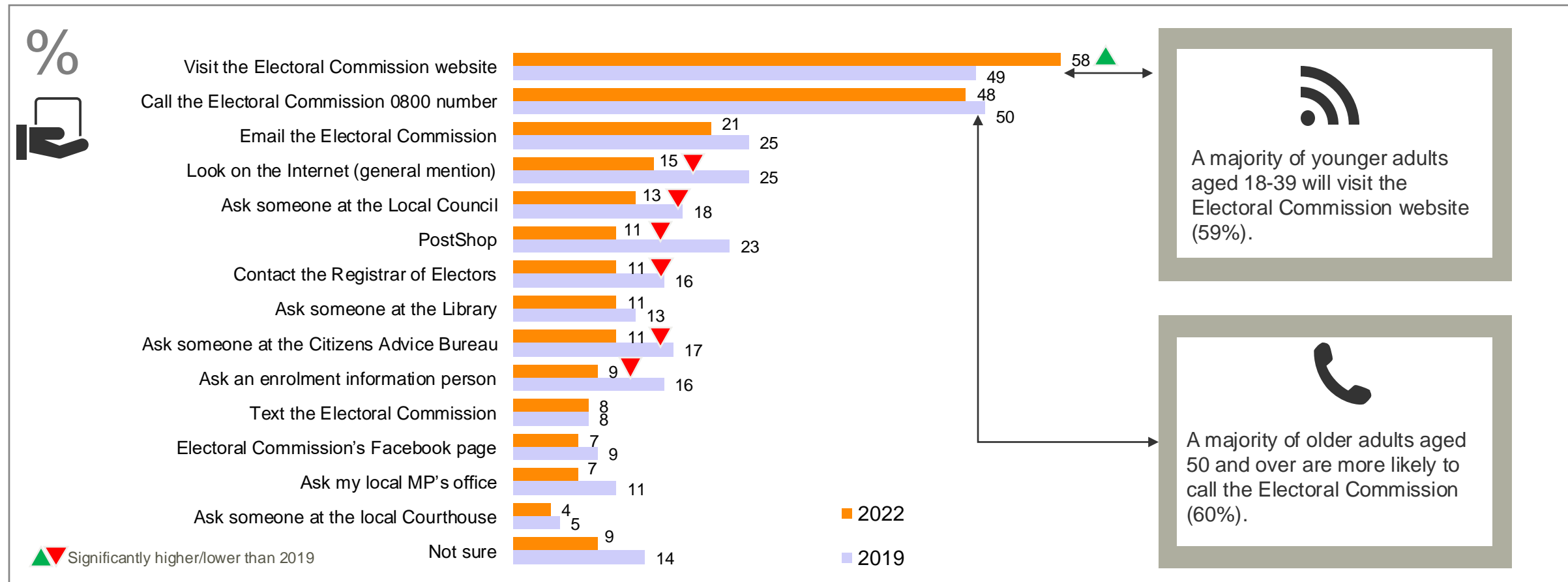## POST-CAMPAIGN PACKAGE AWARENESS COMPARED TO PRE-CAMPAIGN ACROSS AGE, GENDER AND ETHNICITY

%

■ Pre-campaign
■ Post-campaign

Group	Pre-campaign	Post-campaign
Total	88	88
Men	86	87
Women	90	88
18-29	77	83
30-39	85	80
40-49	95 ▼	86
50-59	84	95 ▲
60-69	97	94
70+	100	91 ▼
Pākehā	91	90
Māori	93	90
Pasifika	87	87
Asian	87	86

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than total pre-campaign

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Q010 - Before the local elections, everyone who is on the electoral roll is sent a pack in the mail from the Electoral Commission that shows their enrolment details for them to check and amend if necessary. Were you aware of this?
Base: All adults 18+ (pre-campaign n= 500, post-campaign n= 500). Note that base sizes for demographic groups vary.
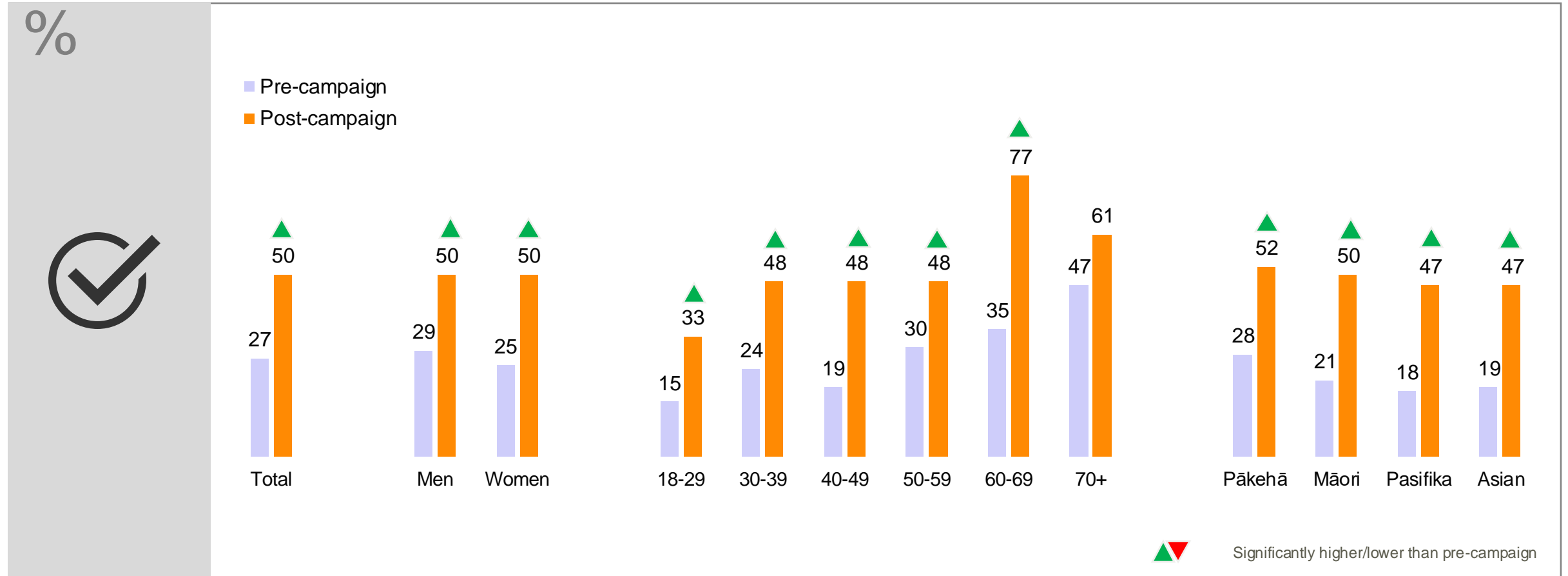
The way in which the public would respond if they did not receive their enrolment pack is evolving. They are now more likely to visit the Electoral Commission website than call the Electoral Commission. They are less likely to use a number of offline approaches, as well as searching more generally online. As might be expected younger age groups typically prefer to use online channels, whereas older people prefer to call.

WHERE COULD YOU GO, OR WHAT COULD YOU DO, IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE AN ENROLMENT UPDATE PACK IN THE POST?

%

Response	2022	2019
Visit the Electoral Commission website	58 ▲	49
Call the Electoral Commission 0800 number	48	50
Email the Electoral Commission	21	25
Look on the Internet (general mention)	15 ▼	25
Ask someone at the Local Council	13 ▼	18
PostShop	11 ▼	23
Contact the Registrar of Electors	11 ▼	16
Ask someone at the Library	11	13
Ask someone at the Citizens Advice Bureau	11 ▼	17
Ask an enrolment information person	9 ▼	16
Text the Electoral Commission	8	8
Electoral Commission's Facebook page	7	9
Ask my local MP's office	7	11
Ask someone at the local Courthouse	4	5
Not sure	9	14

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2019

A majority of younger adults aged 18-39 will visit the Electoral Commission website (59%).

A majority of older adults aged 50 and over are more likely to call the Electoral Commission (60%).

Awareness of the local elections is building. Half of all adults are able to correctly name the months when voting takes place, compared to 27% in the pre-wave. This increase may be supported by the campaign (albeit the campaign does not specifically name the dates). Awareness of the dates has increased across the board but remains lowest amongst young people (only 1 in 3 aged 18-29).

POST-CAMPAIGN AWARENESS OF LOCAL ELECTION IN SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER COMPARED TO PRE-CAMPAIGN ACROSS AGE, GENDER AND ETHNICITY

%

■ Pre-campaign
■ Post-campaign

Group	Pre-campaign	Post-campaign
Total	27	50 ▲
Men	29	50 ▲
Women	25	50 ▲
18-29	15	33 ▲
30-39	24	48 ▲
40-49	19	48 ▲
50-59	30	48 ▲
60-69	35	77 ▲
70+	47	61
Pākehā	28	52 ▲
Māori	21	50 ▲
Pasifika	18	47 ▲
Asian	19	47 ▲

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than pre-campaign
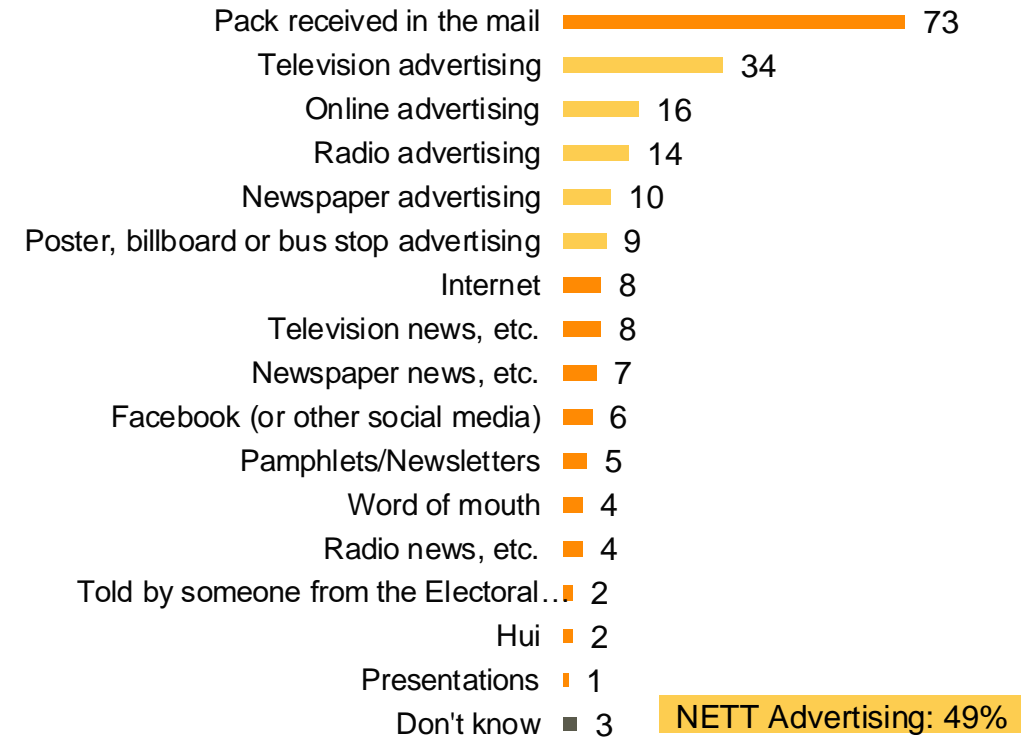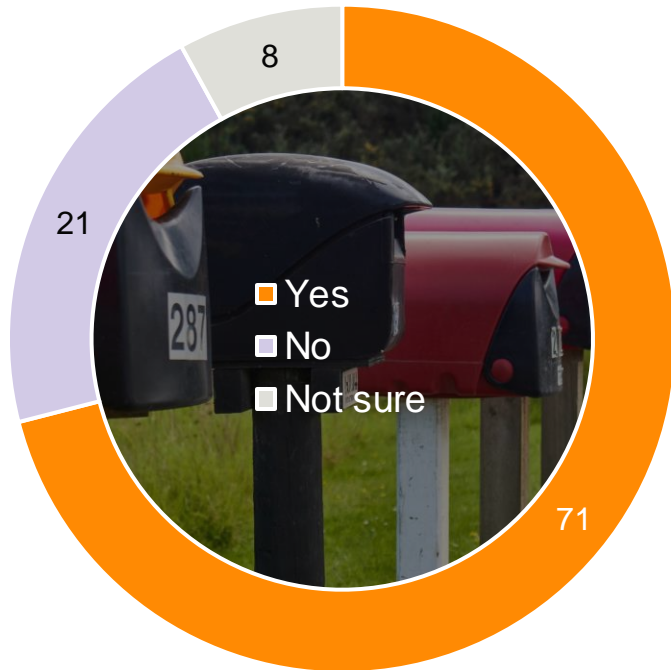
3.

Campaign Evaluation

Seven in ten people have seen or heard some information about checking their enrolment details ahead of the local elections. They are most likely to have been prompted by an enrolment pack sent in the mail, although half have been prompted by some form of advertising. Further analysis indicates much of this advertising is likely to be the Electoral Commission's enrolment campaign.

HAVE YOU SEEN, READ OR HEARD ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEED TO BE ENROLLED AT THE RIGHT ADDRESS, OR CHECKING THAT YOUR DETAILS ARE CORRECT, TO BE ABLE TO VOTE IN THIS YEAR'S LOCAL ELECTIONS?	WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN, READ OR HEARD THIS? (Based on the 71% who recall having seen or heard something)

%

8

21

71

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Pack received in the mail	73
Television advertising	34
Online advertising	16
Radio advertising	14
Newspaper advertising	10
Poster, billboard or bus stop advertising	9
Internet	8
Television news, etc.	8
Newspaper news, etc.	7
Facebook (or other social media)	6
Pamphlets/Newsletters	5
Word of mouth	4
Radio news, etc.	4
Told by someone from the Electoral…	2
Hui	2
Presentations	1
Don't know	3

NETT Advertising: 49%

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Q014 - Have you seen, read or heard any information about the need to be enrolled at the right address, or checking that your details are correct, to be able to vote in this year's local elections? | Base: All adults 18+ (post-campaign n= 500).

Q015 - Where have you seen, read or heard this? | Base: All who have seen or heard anything about checking their enrolment details (post-campaign n=357)
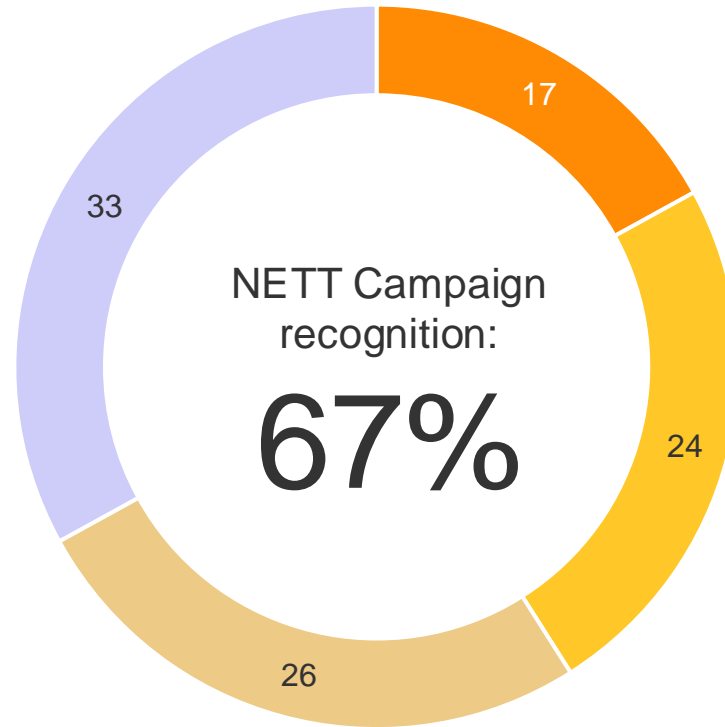
When prompted, 2 in 3 people say they have seen the campaign at least once. This compares favourably to the Kantar Public norm (59%). There is further work required to engage certain audiences. Aucklanders, Asian New Zealanders and Reluctant segment voters are less likely than average to recognise the campaign.

%

NETT Campaign recognition:

67%

17

24

26

33

- Lots of times
- A few times
- Once or twice
- No, this is the first time

People who are **more** likely than average (67%) to recognise the campaign include:

- Instinctive segment voters (76%)

People who are **less** likely than average (67%) to recognise the campaign include:

- Aucklanders (54%)
- Asian New Zealanders (56%)
- Reluctant segment voters (57%)

THE 2022 **LOCAL ELECTIONS**

Your enrolment pack is on its way.

Check it to make sure you're enrolled and ready to vote in the local elections.

vote.nz

LOCAL ELECTIONS 2022

THE 2022 **LOCAL ELECTIONS**

It's almost time to vote in the local elections.

Enrol by 12 August to make voting in the local elections easy.
0800 36 76 56.

vote.nz

LOCAL ELECTIONS 2022

When asked to describe the campaign, common phrases include informative and easy to understand. Most descriptions of the ad campaign are positive or neutral in tone, with only 9% saying something negative.

## OPEN-ENDED DESCRIPTION OF THE AD CAMPAIGN

%

Description	%
Informative / instructive	20
Easy / easy to understand / follow	18
Simple	12
Concise / short / quick	9
To the point	8
Clear	7
Orange	7
Vote / telling you to vote	6
Good	6
Familiar / recognisable	6
Check details	6
Ensure your enrolled	4
Effective / gets message across	4
Bright	4
Fun / amusing	4
Boring	4
Memorable	3
Friendly/pleasant/appealing	3
Same old ad / same as always	3
Ineffective / waste of money	3

Emotional valence attached to the coded responses

Positive 58

Neutral 44

Negative 9
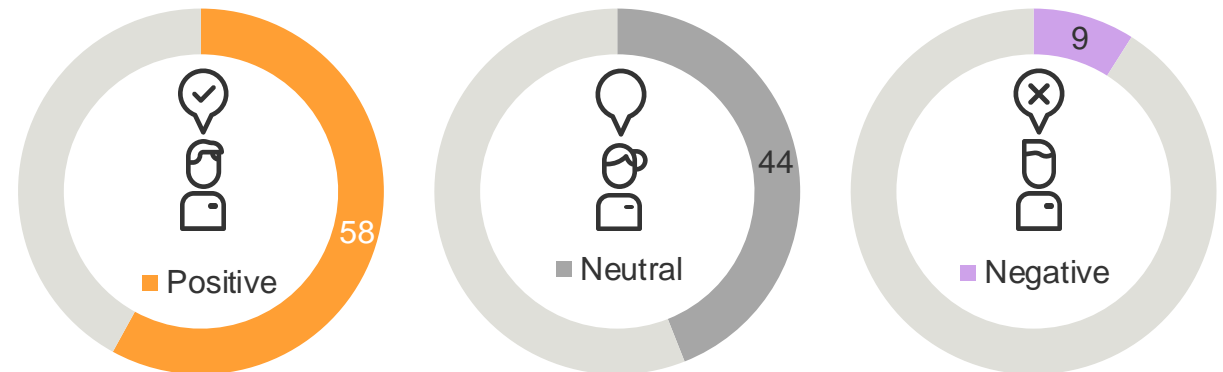
The TVC is relatively effective in attracting attention. When compared to the Kantar Public norms it is more likely to be described as involving and distinctive. However, it lacks the connection or emotional pull to be viewed as interesting. Instead the TVC over indexes on the passive positive adjectives, such as pleasant or gentle. The potential risk is that it does not sufficiently connect with the viewer to prompt them to take action. Younger people in particular are more likely than average to use the passive positive adjectives, and less so the active positive ones.

TVC ENGAGEMENT
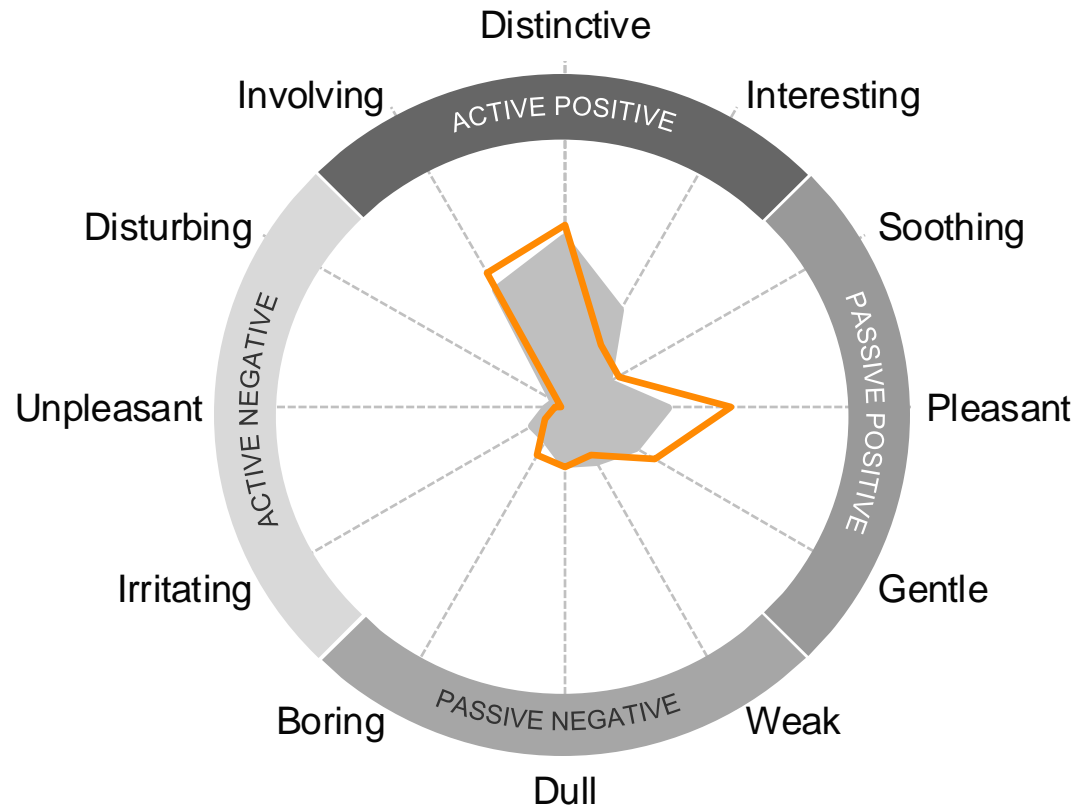
For an ad to be noticed, to grab and keep attention, it should aim for the 'Active' quadrants.

The most memorable ads are both enjoyable, to engage people in a positive way and to be entertainment in their own right, and actively involving, to make sure viewers are connected.

■ NZ Norm

☐ Campaign

The campaign does not elicit a great deal of enjoyment. Only 14% say they would enjoy the ad each time they see it. This is relatively weak compared to the Kantar Public norm (31%). This provides further evidence that the campaign needs to work harder to engage the public. It is worth noting that women are less likely than men to enjoy the ad, which could reflect the gendered nature of Orange Guy.

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU ENJOY WATCHING THIS AD EACH TIME YOU SEE IT ON TELEVISION?

%

■ A lot　　■ Quite　　■ Wouldn't mind　　■ Not much　　■ Not at all

A lot	Quite	Wouldn't mind	Not much	Not at all
3	10	53	23	11

NETT enjoy

14
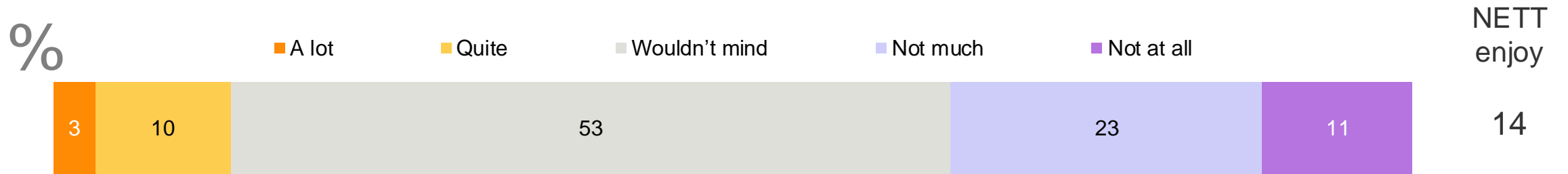
People *more* likely than average (14%) to enjoy watching the ad each time they see it include:

- Instinctive voter segment (27%)
- Asian New Zealanders (26%)
- Young adults aged 18-29 (23%)
- Aucklanders (21%)
- Men (18%)

People *less* likely than average (14%) to enjoy watching the ad each time they see it include:

- Reluctant voter segment (5%)
- Responsive voter segment (6%)
- Women (10%)

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TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Q018 - How much would you enjoy watching this ad each time you see it on television?
Base: All adults 18+ (post-campaign n= 500).

19

Further reactions to the ad are broadly positive if not overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Most people say the campaign is relevant, and only 8% say it is difficult to understand. On the other hand, only 30% believe it increases their interest in what was shown and 15% say they would talk about it with their friends (lower than the Kantar Public norm). This again indicates there is a potential opportunity to reinvigorate the campaign to maintain engagement.

Q. THINKING ABOUT THIS ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN, PLEASE INDICATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH STATEMENT.

%

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	NETT AGREE	TVC NORMS
The points made in the ad were relevant to me	17	42	25	8	6	2	59	50
It increased my interest in what was shown	6	24	44	13	10	2	30	N/A
I'm getting fed up of seeing/hearing it	4	14	43	23	14	3	18	15
It's the sort of ad you would talk about with your friends	3	12	30	23	28	3	15	26
It's a bit difficult to understand		7	20	31	40	1	8	67

■ Strongly agree ■ Slightly agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Slightly disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

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Q017 - Thinking about this advertising campaign, how much do you agree or disagree that...
Base: All adults 18+ (post-campaign n= 500).

20

On balance the impact of the ad on understanding of the enrolment process is positive, albeit for most people it has no real impact. Young adults in particular are more likely to benefit from exposure to the ad.

HAVING WATCHED THE AD, HOW WOULD YOU NOW RATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENROLMENT PROCESS? WOULD YOU SAY IT IS ... THAN BEFORE YOU HAD SEEN THE AD

%

■ Much better   ■ Slightly better   ■ The same   ■ Slightly worse   ■ Much worse   ■ Don't know

NETT better Understanding

Much better	Slightly better	The same	Slightly worse	Don't know
4	17	74	2	3

20

People *more* likely than average (20%) to have better understanding of the enrolment process after watching include:

– Young adults aged 18-29 (30%)

– Wellington residents (33%)

People *less* likely than average (20%) to have better understanding of the enrolment process after watching include:

– People aged 70 plus (8%)

Overall, people feel mainly positive towards Orange Guy and Pup. These feelings largely match 2019. except for their association with enrolling to vote which has markedly decreased since 2019. The fact that perceptions have not deteriorated suggests that the introduction of Pup, has given the creative a new dimension, but other diagnostics suggest there is a need to further evolve this for future campaigns to support positive attitudes and behaviours.

Q. HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE THAT THE 'ORANGE GUY AND PUP'…

%

■ Strongly agree   ■ Slightly agree   ■ Neither agree nor disagree   ■ Slightly disagree   ■ Strongly disagree   ■ Not sure

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	NETT agree 2022	NETT agree 2019
Are friendly and open	31	44	19	3	1	1	75	72
Are distinctive and unique	27	48	15	6	2	1	75	77
Are informative	26	48	20	3	2	2	73	70
Are associated with enrolling to vote	35	38	18	6	2	2	72 ▼	86
Are likeable	25	42	24	6	3	1	65	61
Are independent and neutral	24	42	27	3	2	2	64	63
Are modern	16	38	32	9	4	1	54	48
Encourage me to think about voting	14	38	35	7	5	2	51	55
Make me feel part of the voting process	11	32	38	11	6	2	42	45
Are dated	7	19	34	26	12	2	27	28

4.

Understanding of Māori wards

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A clear majority of New Zealanders are aware of the Māori Roll, rising to 96% of Māori. However, the concept of Māori wards is still unfamiliar to many (around 1 in 3). Awareness is higher amongst those who live in a council with a Māori ward, as well as amongst Māori.

AWARENESS OF MĀORI ROLL

All New Zealanders
(n=500)

4
10
86

Māori
(n=113)

4
96

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

■ Yes ■ No

AWARENESS OF MĀORI WARDS

■ Not sure
■ No
■ Yes

	All New Zealanders (n=500)	People who live in a Māori ward (n=178)	Māori (n=113)
Not sure	9	5	4
No	25	17 ▼	17
Yes	66	77 ▲	79 ▲

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than total

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Q021 - An electoral roll is a list of voters enrolled in an electorate. In New Zealand there is a general roll and a Māori roll. If you're of Māori descent you decide which electoral roll you want to be on. Before today, were you aware that a Māori roll exists? | Bases are shown on chart.

Q022 - In local elections, people vote for candidates to be their councillors who will represent their local ward or constituency. Some councils have Māori wards, as well as the general wards. Before today, were you aware that Māori wards exist in some councils? | Bases are shown on chart.

More needs to be done to raise awareness of the presence of Māori wards amongst Māori. 19% are able to correctly identify whether it does or not. The results are similar for Māori on the Māori Roll.

DOES YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL HAVE A MĀORI WARD AT THE UPCOMING LOCAL ELECTION?

All Māori
(n=113)

19
27
54

- Correct - Incorrect - Not sure

DOES YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL HAVE A MĀORI WARD AT THE UPCOMING LOCAL ELECTION?

Māori on the Māori Roll
(n=52)

22
29
49

- Correct - Incorrect - Not sure

Q024 - Are you enrolled on the Māori roll or the general roll?
Bases are shown on chart
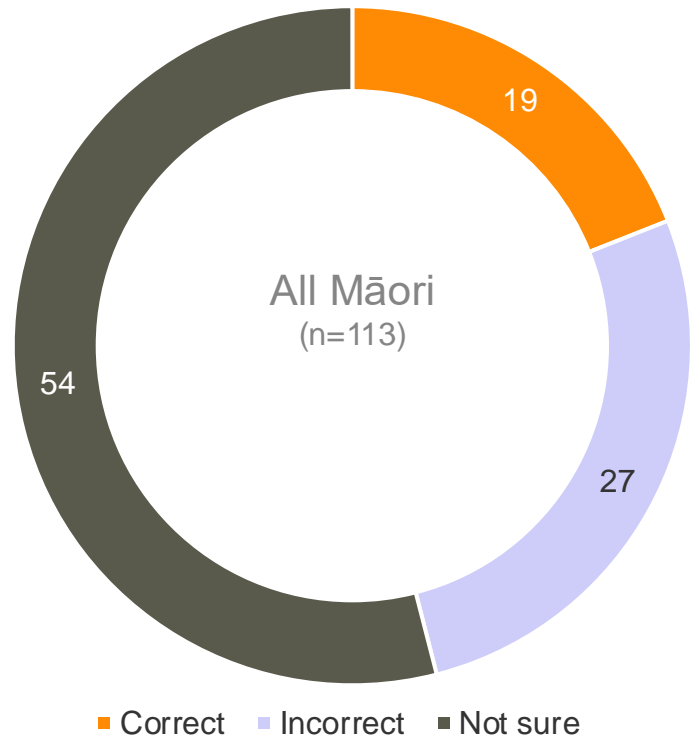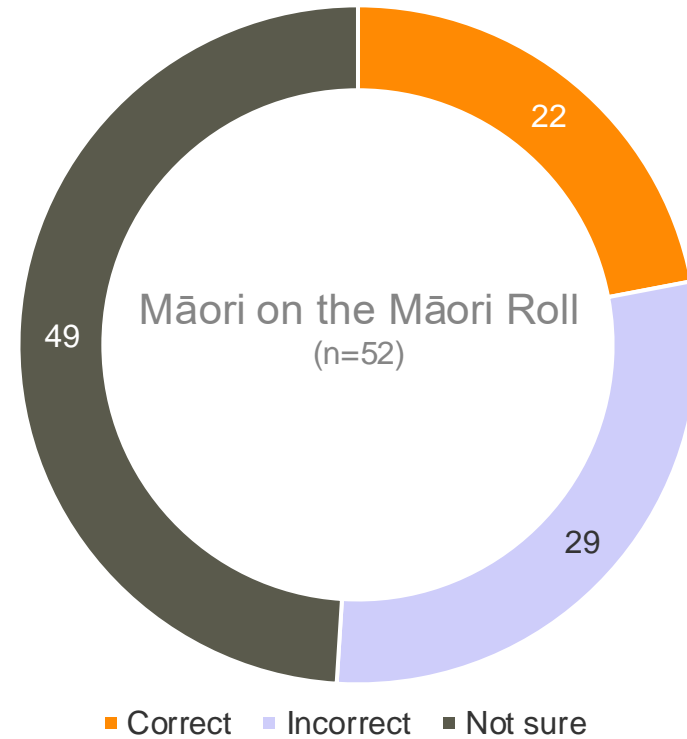
There is some confusion with how local councillors are elected in Māori wards. Half of Māori do not know that being on the Māori roll means they can only vote for councillors in a Māori ward. Positively, 85% of Māori know that they will still be able to vote in the general wards if there is no Māori ward in their local council.

IF YOU'RE ON THE MĀORI ROLL AND YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL HAS MĀORI WARDS, YOU CAN ONLY VOTE IN A MĀORI WARD.

50   50
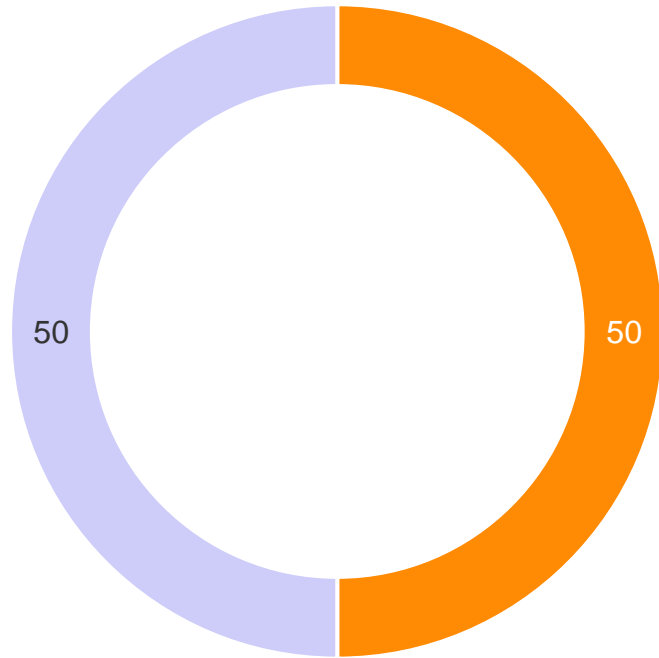
■ Correct   ■ Incorrect

IF YOU'RE ON THE MĀORI ROLL AND YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL HAS NO MĀORI WARDS, YOU CAN STILL VOTE IN THE GENERAL WARDS.
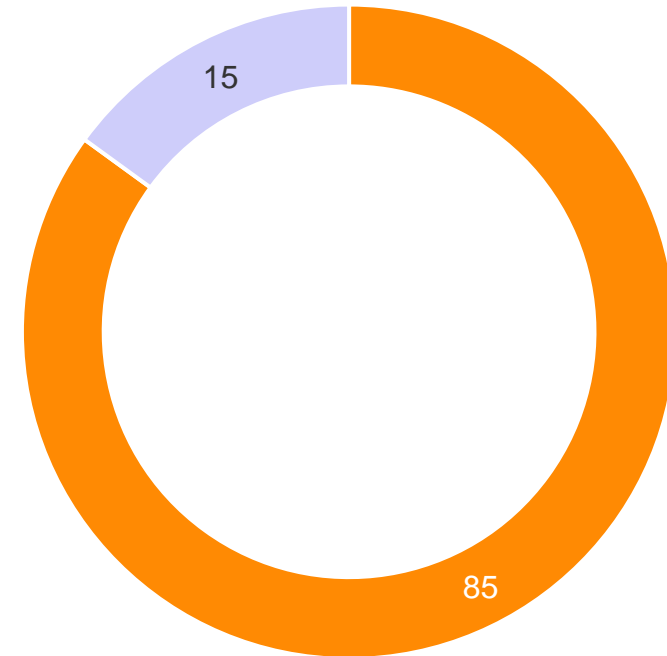
15

85

■ Correct   ■ Incorrect

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Q026 - We are now going to show you some statements about voting for candidates to become local councillors. These statements all relate to Māori who are on the Māori roll. Please state whether you believe each statement is true or false…
Base: All Māori 18+ (n=113)

5.

Segmentation of voter engagement

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By clearly defining cognitive and emotional engagement in the New Zealand voting context, regardless of recent voting behaviour, we built a robust segmentation. Behavioural engagement is classed as voting at the last General Election.

Cognitive engagement

(or lack thereof) is a function of how hard the voting process seems and the level of thought that goes into voting

It can be defined as relatively higher agreement with:

– I feel pressured by the elections and just tune out

– The voting process is confusing or difficult

– Voting is hard work

– It's hard to decide who to vote for – I don't have the confidence to make a decision

– I choose who to vote for based on 'gut feel' without thinking too much about it

– I vote for the party I/my family/whanau have always voted for

Cognitive engagement

High cognitive engagement, low emotional engagement	High on both
Low on both	High emotional engagement, low cognitive engagement

Emotional engagement
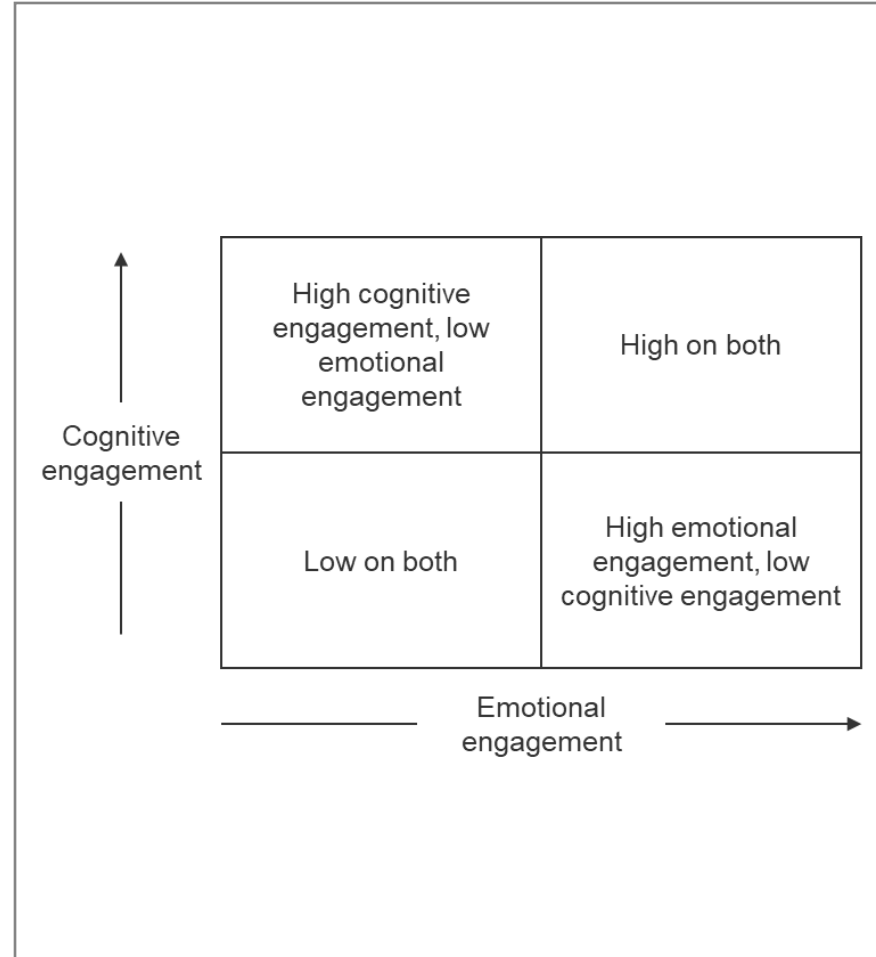
Emotional engagement

(or lack thereof) is a function of belief in the voting process and its outcomes

It can be defined as relatively higher agreement with:

– Voting is an important thing to do

– Voting makes me feel involved

– People like me vote

– I see voting as a privilege and value being able to vote

– Voting makes a difference to my life

– I trust political parties to do what they say they will

The profile of the segments has changed since 2020 election and is now more in line with the original profile from early 2020. The proportion of Responsive segment voters (the prize segment) has shrunk since 2020. At the same time, there has been an increase in the Instinctive and Floating voter segments. Further analysis of the segment statements highlight these shifts are principally driven by cognitive barriers coming to the fore. In particular voters are more likely to feel the process is confusing or difficult, and they are more likely to question their confidence in making a decision. This leads to a strengthening feeling that voting is hard work. It will be important to address some of these barriers in the 2023 campaign to ensure voter turn out remains strong or builds yet further.

Engagement segment sizes over time
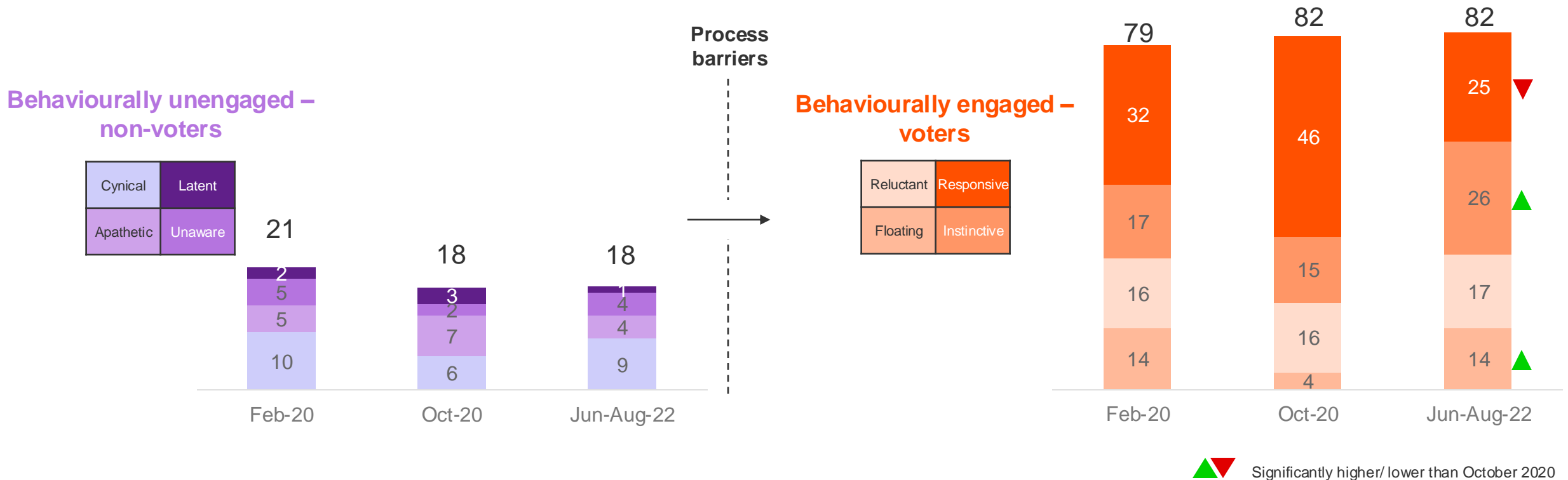
Behaviourally unengaged – non-voters

Cynical	Latent
Apathetic	Unaware

Process barriers

Behaviourally engaged – voters

Reluctant	Responsive
Floating	Instinctive

Significantly higher/ lower than October 2020

KANTAR PUBLIC

ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Electoral Commission: Capability Review

Final Report

9 September 2021

pwc

Private and confidential

Marie Shroff
Chair
Electoral Commission
34-42 Manners Street
PO Box 3220
Wellington 6140

9 September 2021

Capability review and review of funding arrangements – final report

Dear Marie,

PwC is pleased to present our final report relating to the capability review of the Commission and review of funding arrangements. This report is provided in accordance with the Consultancy Services Order dated 12 May 2021. Please note the restrictions as set out in Appendix A of the report.

We would like to express our thanks to you, Alicia and the rest of the team, for the support that has been provided throughout the course our work. This has been of great assistance and is much appreciated.

If there is anything that you would like to discuss, or that we can assist with, in the light of this report, please do not hesitate to make contact.

Yours sincerely

██████████
████████
████████ @pwc.com
████████

Table of Contents

Executive summary

This review considers the capabilities, and funding, that the Electoral Commission (Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri or the Commission) needs to successfully administer the general election in 2023 (GE23). We recommend that a significant uplift in capability and, hence, funding is needed in order to address a range of issues and challenges.

- The Commission lacks sufficient capacity and capability to undertake the planning and preparation that is required for administering a large and very complex event of national significance.

- The external environment poses a range of threats and risks to the orderly running of elections. This includes security threats (cyber and physical), misinformation about elections (especially via social media), supply-chain disruptions (e.g. the Commission is a major buyer of paper and printing and postal services), difficulties in recruiting the large number of temporary field staff for voting places (there were over 23,500 of these in GE20) and so on. The Commission lacks sufficient capacity and capability to keep pace with the increasingly complex risk and threat environment.

- Māori, Pacific peoples, other ethnic communities, youth and some other groups have lower enrolment and voting rates than the general population that is eligible to vote. Although the Commission has taken steps to address this, there is more that needs to be done consistent with its statutory objective of facilitating participation in, and promoting understanding of, parliamentary democracy and ensuring that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are integrated into the Commission's day-to-day activities.

The current appropriation for delivering GE23 is $136 million. Officials have been asked by Cabinet to review the level of funding for the Commission as it is generally recognised that this level of funding is not sufficient to deliver GE23. The current appropriation is substantially below the level of funding that was provided for GE20. We do not consider that an election could be delivered for this amount. This level of funding is not sufficient to fund the Commission as it stands today let alone enable the investment in capability that we consider is needed.

To determine the level of capability and, hence, funding needed by the Commission six scenarios have been developed and assessed.

In line with preferences indicated by the Commission and Ministry of Justice, the scenarios have been labelled as follows:

- Scenario 1 - Significantly reduce electoral services to an unviable position
- Scenario 2 - Significantly scale down electoral services from previous electoral cycles
- Scenario 3 - Modest reduction in electoral services from 2020 election with no capability uplift
- Scenario 4 - Increase the resilience of the Electoral Commission to be responsive and provide electoral services similar to 2020 election
- Scenario 5 - Enhance the strategic capability and capacity of the Electoral Commission and a modest increase to the scope of electoral services from 2020 election
- Scenario 6 - An Electoral Commission that delivers world leading electoral services.
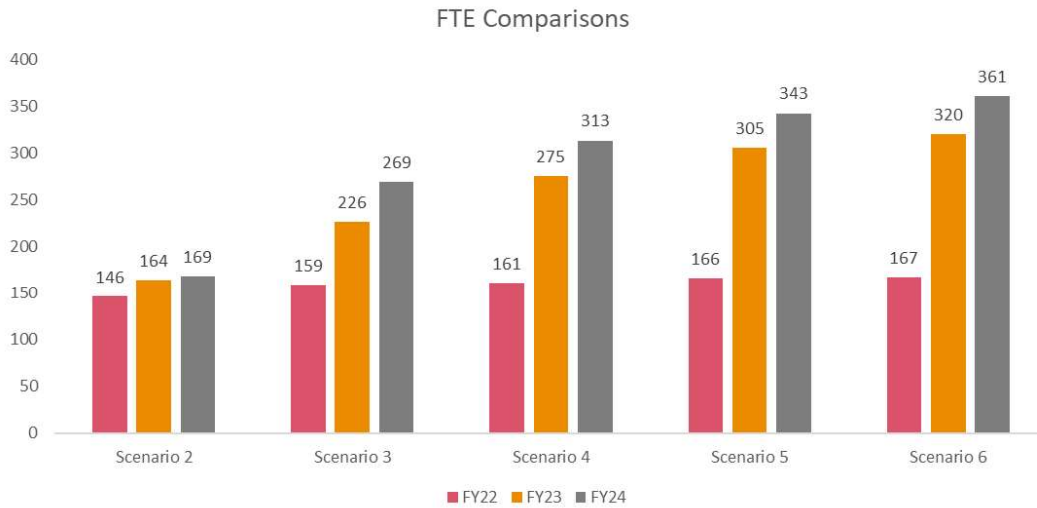
Throughout the report we refer to each scenario by its number rather than repeating the full title.

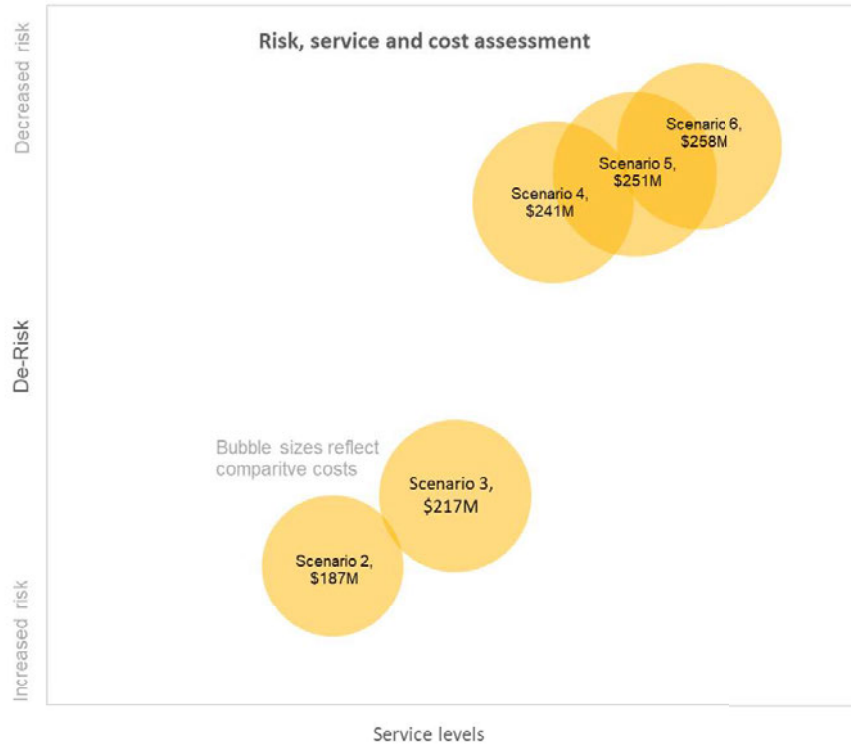The estimated operating cost of each scenario, across the three year cycle for GE23, is shown below.

Comparative Costs

Scenario	FY22	FY23	FY24	Total
Scenario 1	$26M	$47M	$63M	$136M
Scenario 2	$36M	$64M	$87M	$187M
Scenario 3	$37M	$69M	$111M	$217M
Scenario 4	$37M	$77M	$127M	$241M
Scenario 5	$38M	$81M	$132M	$251M
Scenario 6	$38M	$84M	$136M	$258M
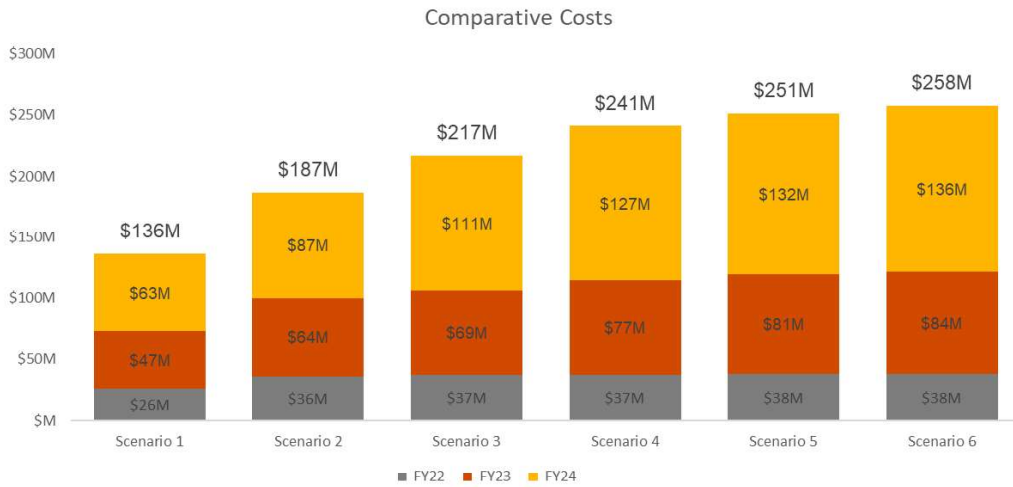
It should be noted that Scenario 1 reflects the current baseline funding rather than a realistic estimate of cost.

The full time equivalent (FTE) staff associated with each scenario is shown in the graph below. It should be noted that the graph excludes the large temporary workforce that is brought on at election time.

FTE Comparisons

Scenario	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 2	146	164	169
Scenario 3	159	226	269
Scenario 4	161	275	313
Scenario 5	166	305	343
Scenario 6	167	320	361

Each of the scenarios differs in terms of the quality of service provided to voters and the risk of a major disruption to the running of GE23. This is summarised in the diagram below. We note that Scenario 1 has not been included for the reason that this is not viewed as being a realistic scenario. The reasons for this are discussed later in this report.

Risk, service and cost assessment

Decreased risk

De-Risk

Increased risk

Scenario 6, $258M
Scenario 5, $251M
Scenario 4, $241M

Bubble sizes reflect comparitve costs

Scenario 3, $217M
Scenario 2, $187M

Service levels

We have assessed the scenarios against six main criteria:

- the **achievement of the Commission's core objective** (i.e. impartial, efficient and effective administering of the electoral system) and supporting objectives (i.e. facilitating and promoting participation in parliamentary democracy, understanding of the electoral system and confidence in the administration of the system)

- **the quality and timeliness of services** (from a voter perspective)

- the contribution to the **achievement of the Commission's strategic priorities (**as reflected in the Commission's Statement of Performance Expectations)

- the level of **resilience** to respond to threats, events and other things that can disrupt elections

- the **sustainability** of the Commission

- the **cost** of running the Commission and a general election (and, hence, funding requirement)

- the overall **value-for-money** implied.

A summary of our assessment is shown below.

Scenario heatmap appraisal against key criteria
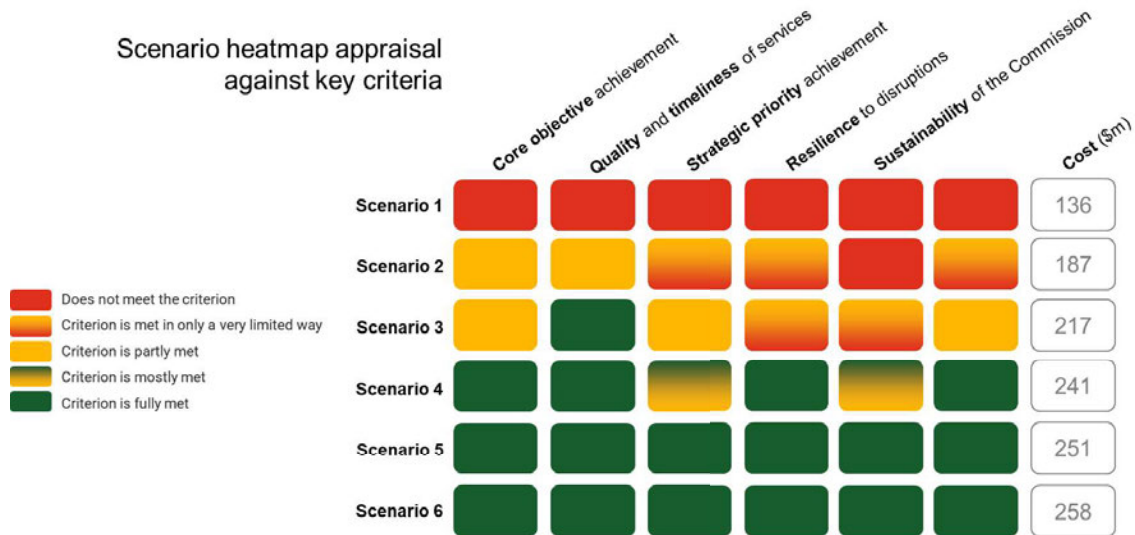
Based on the assessment and the benefit/risk trade-offs involved, we recommend Scenario 4 subject also suggesting that Scenarios 5 and 6 should be kept on the table for further assessment. In brief, our reasons are as follows.

- Scenario 1, as already noted, would not enable a successful election to be delivered. Scenario 1 is not recommended.

- Scenario 2 provides a level of service that is significantly inferior to that delivered in GE20. This does not align with the Commission's statutory mandate and we doubt voters would find the level of service acceptable. There would be a high risk of major disruption to the election and it would be very hard, if not impossible, for the Commission to meet its statutory responsibilities. Scenario 2 is not recommended.

- Elections are events of national significance. Accordingly, the tolerance for the risk of disruption should be very low. Scenario 3 does not align well with this requirement even though it is intended to deliver a level of service similar to that for GE20 but with some adjustment to take account of the fact that service levels in GE20 were elevated, in part, reflecting the response to COVID-19. Scenario 3 is not recommended.

- Scenario 4 delivers a good level of service that is likely to meet voter expectations. It also strengthens capabilities across a range of the Commission functions and, as a result, the risk of disruption to the conduct of GE23 should be a lot lower than under Scenario 3. Scenario 4 is our preferred scenario and is recommended. We note that in addition to operating costs of $241 million, there is also a small amount of capital expenditure ($3 million).

- Scenarios 5 and 6 move beyond the current one-cycle approach to planning for, and administering, the election. Both scenarios extend the planning horizon of the Commission and enable it to take a more strategic and innovative approach to its work. Scenario 6 enables the Commission to better meet the changing needs of voters and to begin the journey of digital transformation. Because Scenario 5 and, more so, Scenario 6 enable a more strategic and innovative approach, these scenarios are more likely to contribute to organisational efficiency and effectiveness and, with that, open up opportunities for reducing expenditure and making quantifiable savings.

Scenarios 5 and 6 have merit. However, we caution that they imply a level of organisational change that may go beyond that which can realistically be managed in the lead up to GE23. Further development of the scope and implications of these scenarios is warranted before determining whether to increase, beyond Scenario 4, the funding for the Commission.

We have also considered funding arrangements for the Commission in section 4 of this report. The current approach, which is based on annual appropriations, does not provide the Commission with sufficient financial flexibility to plan and prepare for the election. To address this issue, we

recommend that the annual appropriations be replaced with a multi-year appropriation (MYA) and, furthermore, that the term of the MYA be five years (the maximum that is allowed under the Public Finance Act).

1   Introduction

The Electoral Commission
The Electoral Commission (Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri or the Commission) is responsible for maintaining electoral rolls, administering parliamentary elections and referenda, and facilitating participation in, and promoting understanding of, parliamentary democracy. This includes promoting compliance with electoral laws, registering political parties, allocating time and money for the broadcast of election programmes, conducting the Māori Electoral Option, undertaking an enrolment update campaign for local body elections, supplying information for the Māori Affiliation Service, servicing the work of the Representation Commission, and providing advice and advisory opinions, reports and public education on electoral matters.

The statutory objective of the Commission (as set out in section 4C of the Electoral Act 1993) is to administer the electoral system impartially, efficiently, effectively and in a way that:

- facilitates participation in parliamentary democracy
- promotes understanding of the electoral system and associated matters
- maintains confidence in the administration of the electoral system.

Consistent with this objective, the Commission works to ensure that New Zealand has a healthy democracy by providing an electoral system people can have trust and confidence in and by helping people to take part in the electoral process.

Capability review
The Board of the Electoral Commission has commissioned this capability review (the review). The primary objective of the review is to assess the level of capability and capacity the Commission requires to deliver on its objectives. The review is intended to inform and support the development of a robust funding bid for the 2023 electoral cycle in time for Budget 2022. The Commission and the Ministry of Justice (which has monitoring responsibilities in respect of the Commission), have identified this bid, and an improvement to the Commission's funding model, as the top priority for both agencies to work together on in 2021.

Scope
The terms of reference for the capability review, as prepared by the Commission, is focused on the 2023 electoral cycle which ends on 30 June 2024 (throughout this report we refer to the 2023 General Election as GE23). Furthermore, the terms of reference require that the review focuses primarily on people-related capability and capacity.

As discussed with the Commission, while the main focus continues to be on GE23 and people-related capability, it has been advantageous to consider capability requirements beyond GE23 and, moreover, to adopt a broader definition of capability to also include systems and processes. This is discussed further in the context of some of the capability scenarios that are a key feature of this review and which are covered later in this report.

Our terms of reference have also required us to examine the current funding arrangements and identify and assess alternatives to current arrangements. Currently the Commission is funded by way of annual appropriation which does not align well with the three-year cycle associated with elections.

A few other aspects of the scope of the review are also worth noting.

- The Commission performs some roles in respect of local government elections (but does not administer those elections) and it also has roles to play in respect of referenda, by-elections, the Māori Electoral Option and supporting the Representation Commission. Generally speaking, the activities and capabilities specific to these roles have not been a part of the capability review and they are funded separately.

- In the lead up to a general election, the Commission recruits a large number of workers who are employed on a temporary basis to support the running of the election (e.g. the operation of voting places). In GE20, temporary staff numbered 23,520 (in effect making the Commission New Zealand's single largest employer at that point). Although the number of temporary personnel required has not been a central part of the review, we have touched on this in the context of some of the capability scenarios discussed later in the report and their costs are included in the scenarios that are discussed later in this report.

- The broadcasting allocation process and associated capability requirements is out of scope.

- The Commission provides electoral assistance to various Pacific neighbours. This work is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) under the NZ Aid Programme and is outside of scope.

- Capability requirements in relation to the Māori Electoral Option (which is next scheduled for 2024) is outside of scope as the costs associated with this are funded separately.

- Resources needed to administer the provisions of the Election Access Fund Act 2020 are out of scope. The purpose of this fund is to reduce barriers for disabled persons standing or seeking selection as candidates in general elections or by-elections. The Commission's role is to determine eligibility for funding and establish a framework for delivering the Access Fund.

- The terms of reference for the capability review have not required us to undertake an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission. That said, during the course of our work, Commission personnel have drawn to our attention opportunities for strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission. The ability to implement initiatives that drive efficiency and effectiveness is, however, constrained under current settings for a range of reasons. These include the Commission simply not having the people capacity to take the time that is needed to plan for such initiatives and/or the financial means to invest in such initiatives. Some initiatives, including shifting to more digital ways of working, are also constrained by current legislative settings.

PwC's role

PwC has been appointed by the Commission as independent adviser to undertake the review. In parallel with the capability review, PwC has also been working with the Commission to develop a financial model; the purpose of which is to articulate the costs of running the Commission, including core support functions, and the costs of delivering an election. Documentation relating to the financial model, and the model itself, has been provided under separate cover to the Commission and is not addressed in this report.

Approach to the review

The review has been conducted in three main phases: discovery, analysis and reporting.

The aim of the discovery phase has been to understand the Commission's work and identify developments that have a material bearing on the scale and scope of activities. Information to develop our understanding has been obtained through interviews with Commission personnel, the Ministry of Justice and the Treasury. We have also reviewed a wide range of documents provided to us by the Commission and documents, relevant to our work, that are in the public domain.

Central to the analysis phase has been the development and assessment of a set of six capability scenarios (and these are outlined below). The scenarios differ in terms of the scale and scope of the Commission's capabilities and, hence, funding requirement. The development of the scenarios has been informed by the discovery phase. Importantly, the scenarios have been refined through two workshops held with Commission personnel. These have also involved the Ministry of Justice and, to lesser extent reflecting other demands on their time, the Treasury. In addition to helping to define the scale and scope of the Commission's activities, the workshops have assisted in identifying the capability requirements needed by the Commission under each scenario.

The scope and assessment of capability requirements has been approached through an operating model framework, a summarised version of which is shown below.
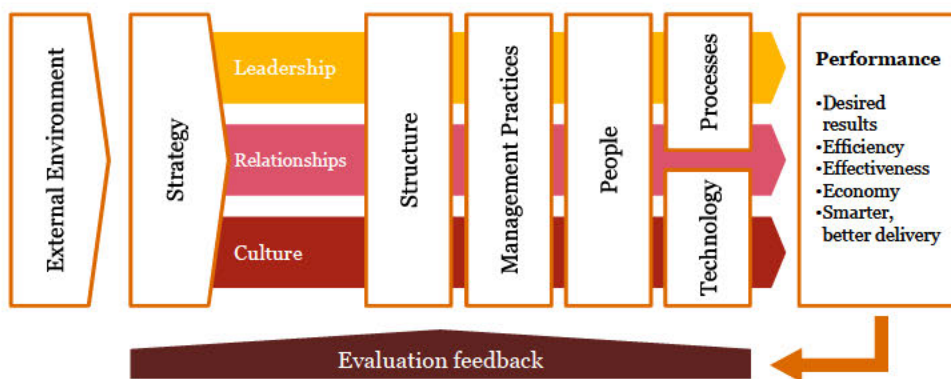
The scenarios have been assessed for their benefit, risk and cost implications and against a range of criteria including achievement of the Commission's core objective, the quality and timeliness of services, the achievement of the Commission's strategic priorities, the resilience and sustainability of the Commission and value for money (the criteria and their application are discussed more fully throughout this report).

Structure of this report

Beyond this introductory section, the report has three further sections.

In the next section (Section 2), we discuss the context within which the capability review sits and the drivers that lie behind the need to assess the Commission's capability requirements. This section includes some commentary on the Commission's current situation and experience during GE20.

Section 3 of the report contains the assessment of capability requirements. It is framed around a suite of six scenarios that can be summarised as follows. The scenarios are presented in order of the least, to most, capability and capacity requirements (and, by implication, cost and funding requirement).

- **Scenario 1: Significantly reduce electoral services to an unviable position**. Over the three financial years that relate to GE23 (i.e. FY22, 23 and 24), the Commission has an existing appropriation of $136 million. This is approximately $40 million less than the amount originally appropriated for GE20 and about $100 million less than the amount eventually appropriated for GE20 including funding that was provided for the impact of COVID-19, a change to the election date and running two referenda. It is extremely doubtful that GE23 could be delivered for $136 million.

- **Scenario 2: Significantly scale down electoral services from previous electoral cycles**. This scenario is framed around the minimum capability and capacity that the Commission considers it would need to administer GE23. Service levels would be below those experienced by voters in GE20 and there would be a high risk of disruption to the running of the election.

- **Scenario 3: Modest reduction in electoral services from 2020 election with no capability uplift**. This scenario is based, with minor adjustments, on the plan and budget that the Commission prepared for GE23 in December 2020. That plan aims to deliver a level of service close that which voters experienced in GE20 taking into account that the response to dealing with COVID-19 involved higher levels of services that would not need to be fully replicated. The scenario does not, however, address existing capability gaps which pose significant risks to the smooth running of the election. Accordingly, significant risk of disruption to the running of the election is likely.

- **Scenario 4: Increase the resilience of the Electoral Commission to be responsive and provide electoral services similar to 2020 election**. This scenario addresses existing capability gaps and aims to deliver levels of services achieved in GE20. The risks of disruption to the election are significantly reduced (to a low level that is appropriate for an event of national significance) and the Commission becomes a more resilient organisation.

- **Scenario 5: Enhance the strategic capability and capacity of the Electoral Commission and a modest increase to the scope of electoral services from 2020 election**. Current funding arrangements force the Commission into planning and preparing for the next election (i.e. GE23) but not beyond that. Opportunities to think more strategically and embody greater

innovation within the Commission's functions are constrained accordingly. Scenario 5 involves a shift from the current one-cycle focus to a two-election cycle focus (i.e. GE23 and GE26). In so doing, it seeks to unlock a range of opportunities for modernising and improving services.

- **Scenario 6**: **An Electoral Commission that delivers world leading electoral services**. This last scenario is an extension of scenario 5. It allows for a longer term view of the evolution of voting and planning for the next generation of voters.

Each scenario is described in terms of what the Commission is capable of delivering (or not) and the associated capability and capacity requirements. Indicative cost estimates are provided. The assessment of each scenario revolves around the benefit, risk and cost implications of each. A preferred scenario is recommended.

Section 4 of the report focuses on funding arrangements and assesses some options for change. It should be noted that none of the scenarios covered in section 3 are affected by changes to the way in which the Commission is funded.

2   Context and drivers for the capability review

Context behind the capability review

To put the capability review into context, a recap on some history is helpful.

The last major reset of the baseline funding for the Commission was in 2009 (i.e. in the lead up to the Commission's establishment in October 2010). In the years following establishment, other than minor adjustments, the Commission continued to operate on the basis of the baseline set in 2009.

Over the ensuing years, the Commission absorbed cost increases and increases in voter numbers without additional funding. It also had to implement changes to voting arrangements including, for example, an increase in advance voting.

These, and other, changes were having a cumulative effect in terms of stretching the capacity and capability of the Commission to deliver elections and, at the same time, avoid significant issues emerging. Moreover, voter turnout at GE11 was at a low point and, although the rate in GE14 improved, turnout was still below average historical levels. The Commission recognised that a major re-think of the way in which services were delivered was required particularly with respect to those groups who were not engaging in the system and who had low rates of enrolment and voting.

Following a review of GE14, the Commission identified that it needed to:

- better resource, and devise, ways of engaging with targeted groups of disengaged communities on their terms and with them as partners
- make it easier for voters to participate in ways that better aligned with the digital transactional world and that better met their expectations including, in particular, reforming the process for digital enrolment through simplification and expansion of registration beyond RealMe
- better integrate the Commission's enrolment and voting services so they were all aligned with the needs of the public and not just focused on the Commission's own (transactional) outputs and ways of working.

This led to the decision to bring enrolment services that had previously been provided by NZ Post in-house under the Commission's direct control. The integration was hurried reflecting the narrow window that exists to implement significant change ahead of preparing for the next election (i.e. GE17). This caused some issues. One of them was a lack of investment in corporate support functions to keep pace with the demands of what was, by this time, a much larger organisation.

The focus on making it easier for people to vote included giving more emphasis to advanced voting. The proportion of votes cast as advance votes increased from 29% in GE14 to 47% in GE17. This change in voter behaviour was a contributor to an overall increase in the voter turnout rate and is likely to have also led to a change in terms of how voters expect to be able to vote.

There were, however, some issues with the conduct of GE17:

- the set-up and flow-on effects on logistics, staff and risk management caused by the growth in advance voting and the growing number of people who wanted to enrol and vote at the same time, pushed the Commission to a critical 'strain' point during GE17 (and we note that as part of GE20, enrolment on election day was introduced which added further strain)
- the Commission was much more dependent on logistics management than ever before and it struggled in some electorates where the logistics management was challenging
- the amount of resourcing and nature of roles required was more complex
- new security risks were identified including managing huge numbers of 'live' ballot papers that needed to be secured for up to two weeks (as opposed to papers lodged and secured at a single and supervised site on election day).

Some of the implications felt in 2017 were:

- challenges getting the official result declared on time
- staff being over-stretched and areas of under-resourcing where services had changed (and the flow-on implications of this in business processes)
- increased risks around the handling and storage of materials, in particular around 'live' advance votes
- failures in some critical roles where staff were overstretched or were underprepared because of changing demands
- increasing stresses on staff and the risk of higher staff turnover.

A major assessment of the Commission's capability requirements was completed in 2018.[1] That assessment identified major gaps in the Commission's capability and capacity. Among other issues, the 2018 work identified the following problems.

- The substantial growth in the size of the Commission's National Office from 20 to around 100 staff, following the transfer of enrolment services from NZ Post, had not been supported by a realignment of organisational policies and procedures, expansion and repositioning of internal corporate support services or a planned programme of changes to how the organisation works.
- Information technology was seriously understaffed and was struggling to consolidate systems knowledge and support following the transfer of enrolment services (including maintaining electoral rolls) from NZ Post.
- There was insufficient support from the centre across core corporate support functions. HR and finance were called out for specific mention; for example, business units endeavoured to resolve HR issues on their own without any framework to work within or support from the centre.
- The organisation struggled to manage the design and development of service improvements at the same time as maintaining ongoing service delivery.

The 2018 review found that in its current state, the organisation's capability (or, specifically, the lack thereof) carried risks to the future delivery of successful electoral events.

In the lead up to GE20, a budget bid was submitted seeking a major uplift in the Commission's appropriation reflecting the:

- need to address the capability gaps identified in the 2018 review
- cumulative effect of several years of volume and cost escalation for which no additional funding had been provided.

Decisions taken in Budget19 provided additional funding for GE20 but those decisions did not look beyond that. In particular, the revised baseline for GE20 was not carried through to the cycle for GE23. As a result, the current appropriation for GE23 reflects assumptions that underpinned GE17 which, of itself, was viewed as being under-resourced as evidenced by the problems encountered with GE17. Moreover, the appropriation for GE23 does not take into account changes to voting arrangements since the time the appropriation was determined including, in particular, the introduction of enrolment on election day (which adds complexity and cost).

The appropriation for the GE23 cycle is $136 million. This appropriation is $40 million below the appropriation of $176 million for GE20 excluding funding adjustments for COVID-19, a change of election date and running two referenda and $100 million below the appropriation for GE20 including the funding adjustments.

At the time of Budget19 the looming funding problem for GE23 was acknowledged. Officials were directed to work together to address the Commission's funding [CBC-19-MIN-0033 refers]. We note that although a funding bid was developed for Budget21, in the event, the Commission was not invited to submit a bid.

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[1]   Capability and Capacity Planning, February 2018

Capability review drivers

The historical context described above provides insight to the drivers for the capability review. The most recent election - GE20 - was more complex to plan and prepare for than previous elections (leaving to one side the impact of COVID-19). Several factors contributed to this but important among them are:

- a strategy of making it easier for people to enrol and vote
- increased threats and challenges to the orderly conduct of general elections.

In addition, and as alluded to in the historical recap, the Commission is having to deal with increased pressures associated with ongoing growth in voter numbers (typically between 180,000 and 300,000 extra voters each election) and cost escalation, as well as a range of business risks.

Making it easier to enrol and vote
A key objective of the GE20 strategy was to improve voting place accessibility by having more places available to the public to support a predicted increase in advance voting and use better locations. Advanced voting places increased from 485 in GE17 to 1522 in GE20. The advance voting period was extended from 12 days (GE17) to 14 days (GE20) and hours of operation were extended. There was a substantial push to encourage people to vote in the weekend prior to election day (referred to as the "big weekend").

Of all votes cast in GE20, 68% were advance votes (up from 47% and 29% in GE17 and GE 14 respectively). Nearly a quarter of advance votes in GE20 were exercised in the "big weekend". It is important to note that although advance voting is more convenient for voters, it is much more costly to administer. Among other reasons, this is because of needing staff for a longer period of time, having to pay for commercial premises and the additional complexities associated with advance voting. This includes, for example, undertaking early counts, the additional logistics involved (e.g. ensuring the security of voting places and voting materials for a longer period of time) and ensuring that services can be provided consistently over an extended period.

The Commission built on the approach adopted in GE17 of locating voting places close to where people live and work with the pre-COVID-19 plan being to make use of high convenience locations such as supermarkets, shopping malls and "big-box" stores. The Commission also worked with marae, churches and mosques to provide groups of voters with voting places where they could feel comfortable.
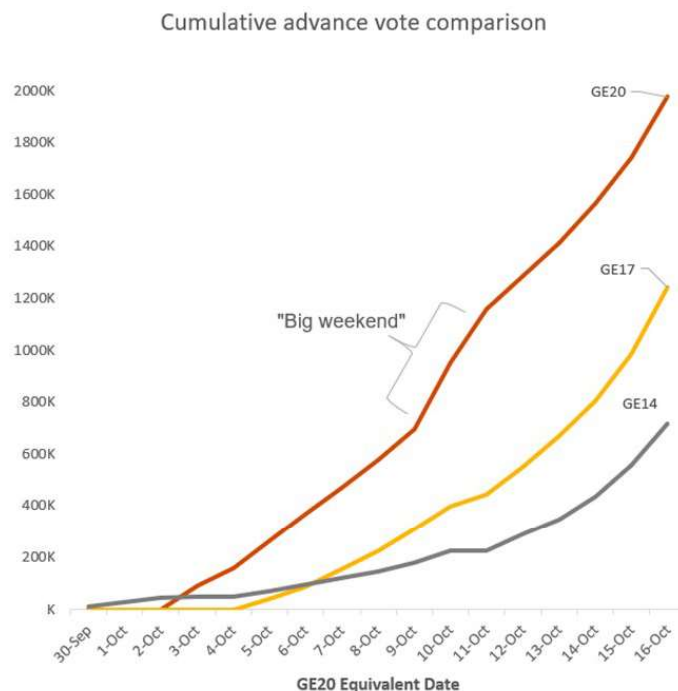
Source: Advance voting statistics for the 2020 General Election

In addition to increases in the number and proportion of advance votes, the number of special votes also increased in GE20 consistent with longer term trends of people enrolling and updating their enrolment details closer to the elections. Special votes take roughly five times longer to process, and involve more staff, than a normal vote and, hence, are much more expensive to process.

GE20 also involved changes to election rules. For example, enrolment on election day was introduced along with the enfranchisement of segments of the prison population. Enrolment on election day makes the process more convenient for voters but makes processes in the voting place more complex and time-consuming (which adds to resource requirements and, hence, cost). It requires a large data entry team to process large volumes of enrolments within a short timeframe.

Many voters, including but not limited to younger voters, increasingly expect to be able to enrol digitally. The Commission has been assessing and, where possible, implementing initiatives aimed at shifting to a more digital environment for enrolment. For example, in FY19, the Commission began developing an online service to enable people to enrol or update their details using their driver licence or passport as proof of identity.

Although difficult to attribute, the developments described above are likely to have contributed to an increase in voter turnout. GE20 saw the highest turnout of voters since 1999 with 82.2% of enrolled voters casting a vote. The comparable figure in GE17 was 79.8%. Survey results indicate 95% overall satisfaction with the voting process (slightly higher than the 94% recorded in GE17). These are good outcomes and the Commission is keen to build on the gains and avoid a reversal of trend. Voters have clearly responded positively to the initiatives noted above that are aimed at making it easier for them to enrol and vote and, no doubt, this sets the bar in terms of the expectations they have for future elections.

Notwithstanding these positive results, disparities in enrolment and voting rates continue to exist across some segments of the population. Māori and Pacific peoples and other ethnic communities, as well as youth, new migrants and refugees, are less likely to enrol and less likely to vote than other groups in society. The Commission views as a high priority the need to increase participation rates among these groups (referred to as the priority groups) consistent with its statutory objective of facilitating participation in parliamentary democracy. To this end, there is more that needs to be done in terms of promoting understanding of elections and the election process as well as enabling access for the priority groups.

2020 General Election - Voter turnout by electorate, age band and descent
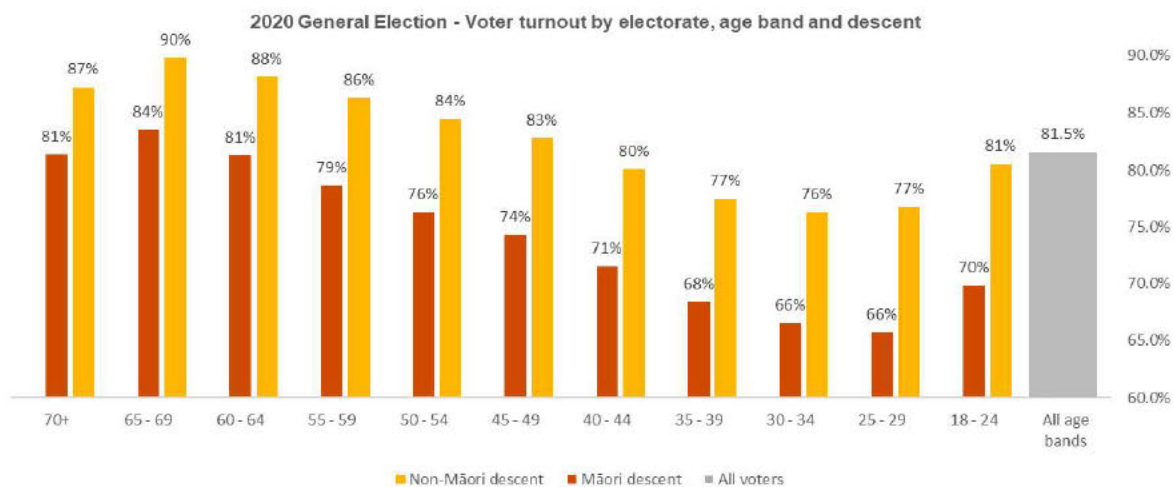
Source: 2020 GE full voter turnout statistics

Threats, challenges and opportunities
Conducting an election that is secure and resilient to external disruption directly impacts on trust and confidence in the event and the results produced. The Commission is operating with greater

challenges than in the past around the integrity of information and systems, as well as the safety of voting places and people.

Electoral management bodies overseas have been targets for cyber-attacks, misinformation campaigns and international interference. New Zealand is not immune to these developments. Although the Commission cannot be expected to mitigate all of these risks, it can be expected to increase its efforts to anticipate the nature and scope of such risks and take reasonable steps to reduce them (in probability and consequence terms) to acceptable levels.

In this regard, the Commission has been working more closely and intensively with other government agencies to assist in identifying, mitigating and preparing to respond to, critical risks to elections. In 2019, the Commission started to assemble support from other government agencies to help better understand and manage the risks relating to elections. This included establishing a Senior Officials Committee, chaired by the Chief Electoral Officer, to provide inter-agency oversight of the election and ensure effective collaboration across agencies. Membership of this group includes, among others, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, The NZ Security Intelligence Service, the National Cyber Security Centre and the National Emergency Management Agency. Work undertaken with other agencies has resulted in the development of protocols on the management and response to election disruptions including managing foreign interference and cyber security threats. Communications protocols have also been developed along with guidance on how to address misleading or inaccurate information about the election.

There is no reason to suspect that threats to the conduct of elections will abate. A more likely scenario is a continued trend of escalating scope and diversity of sources of disruption and misinformation. New Zealand has built an enviable record for the integrity of election processes but it is a reputation that, potentially, is easily lost if vigilance is not maintained.

The challenge faced by the Commission is one of increasing threat of disruption to elections but constrained capacity to plan for, and mitigate, those threats notwithstanding the support from, and roles played by, other agencies. By implication, the risk of disruption to an election is increasing. We note also that misinformation about, and interference in, elections also spurs increased volumes of enquiries that the Commission has to respond to regarding the counting, reporting and integrity of election results.

Cyber and physical security is important for the conduct of an election and also for the protection of personal information. The Commission holds information relating to a very large number of New Zealanders. It follows that the way information is managed (including archiving) and the upholding of, and compliance with privacy requirements is critical (and is an area for attention within the Commission).

In addition to the range of factors that threaten to disrupt an election, there are other developments in the external environment that challenge the way in which elections are run.

The increasing voter preference for increased digitisation highlights a further challenge in the external environment which is the decline of postal services. Traditionally, the administration of elections has been paper-intensive and, reflecting this, the Commission has been a major user of postal services. For example, the enrolment information pack, enrolment update campaign and the EasyVote pack, which contains information regarding candidates and parties and where to vote, are mailed to every elector. Communications generally continue to be a mix of digital and paper-based. There is plenty of scope to increase the proportion of communications that are in digital form.

More generally, there are opportunities for greater use of digital processes in enrolment and voting services to meet public expectations (noting that the Commission does not recommend going as far as on-line voting).

Examples of moving to digital processes include:
- Live roll mark-off. Currently, electoral rolls are printed as of writ day. This means that anyone enrolling or updating their details in the month leading up to election day must complete a special vote. Reflecting this, there is a substantial and growing number of special votes. These are time consuming and expensive because each special voter's enrolment has to be checked and each declaration checked against legal requirements. Live roll mark off would allow anyone who can be marked off the roll electronically to be issued with an ordinary vote.
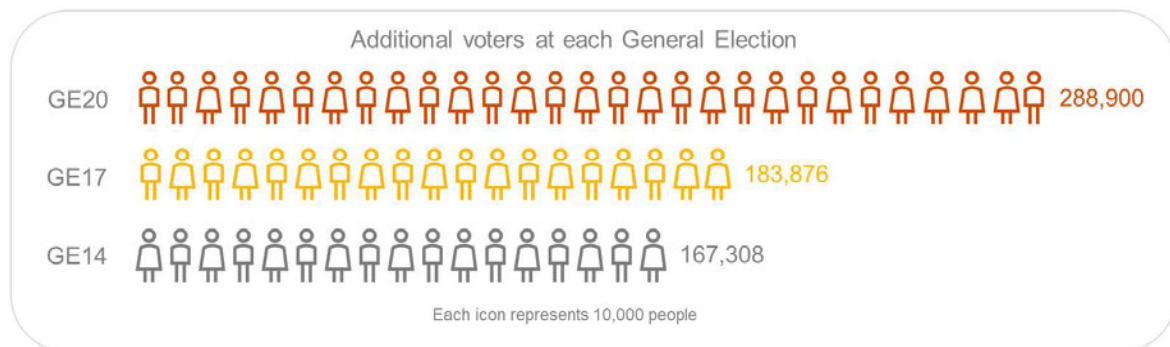
- Digital enrolment. Behind the scenes, and notwithstanding the initiative in FY19, enrolment is still largely a manual process. Although submitting information can be done electronically, the processing of that information is not yet truly digital. Looking ahead, a digitised enrolment system could reduce the amount of manual activity associated with enrolment.

Moving to a more digital world for the administration of elections is, however, hampered by existing legislation. The Electoral Act 1993 (the Act) is dated and, in many respects, is not framed for digitally-based ways of working. For example, the Act would need to be modified in order to enable an overseas elector to be sent electronic correspondence for enrolment update campaigns and to confirm a new enrolment or change of enrolment details. Similarly, legislative change would be needed in order to enable overseas voters' marks and signatures produced through physical action to be captured using an electronic device.

In short, there are many opportunities to move to more digital ways of conducting elections. The ability to implement these is, however, stifled by capability and resource constraints within the Commission. In some, but not all, instances, legislative amendment is needed.

Volume and cost pressures
Each election, the Commission plans on there being between 180,000 and 300,000 additional voters compared to the previous election. More voters means, for example, more election packs, more communications, more enquiries, and more votes to process and count. All of these impacts give rise to additional cost. The current appropriation does not, however, include any allowance for this. The current appropriation is, in effect, based on GE17 which means two cycles of growth in elector numbers has not been allowed for.

Additional voters at each General Election

GE20 — 288,900
GE17 — 183,876
GE14 — 167,308

Each icon represents 10,000 people

There is also cost growth. Significant areas of expenditure for the Commission include people, property, postage and paper and printing. In all cases, the Commission is a price-taker. The majority of the temporary workforce that the Commission recruits in the lead up to an election are paid the living wage. Adjustments to the living wage are outside the Commission's control. In situations where the Commission must pay in order to secure space for a voting place, the price is determined by the market. The Commission has no control over postage rates or the cost of paper and printing.

New Zealand, like many of the economies that it normally looks to, is experiencing an uplift in price and cost growth. This is likely to continue through to GE23 (and beyond). The current appropriation does not take this into account.

We note that there is a similar picture with respect to the Census (which is NZ's other government-funded and recurring major event of national significance). Here and internationally, each census is becoming increasingly complex to manage. Each is having to contend with volume and cost pressures as well as the challenge of maintaining public willingness to participate. In very round terms, the budgeted cost for NZ's next census (2023) is over double that of the 2013 census. Internationally, the cost of running the US census has roughly doubled each decade since 1970 and the UK 2011 census was almost double that of the previous census in 2001.

Business risk
In addition to risks in the external environment, there are risks internal to the Commission that threaten the orderly conduct of elections. The Commission has several core IT systems that it relies on for enrolment and running the election. There are major issues.

- MIKE is the core system used for managing enrolments. It dates back to 2003. Reflecting its age, this system uses outdated and complex code which makes it increasingly hard to maintain or update.

- ERSA (electoral role scrutiny application) is used to guard against dual voting and other irregularities. Support for this system has been purchased but there are questions as to how long support can be retained (support through to GE26 is unlikely).

- EMS – the electoral management system – assists with the management of logistics and tabulation of results. It is no longer well-aligned with the Commission's delivery model; an issue that needs to be addressed prior to GE23.

The Commission does not have funding to invest in replacement systems (and the legacy systems do not give rise to depreciation that could be used to fund replacements). Moreover, the single election cycle approach that underlies current funding arrangements does not lend itself to taking a longer term perspective to the management, upgrading and replacement of the Commission's IT systems.

GE20 was more challenging than anticipated. Although some of this can be attributed to the impact of COVID-19 and the need to run two referendums, the challenges are more deep-seated than these particular factors. Commission personnel were stretched during GE20 to unreasonable levels. Health and safety concerns have become a pressing issue for the Commission. The concerns reflect the cumulative effect of successive elections that have been administered without material increase in funding other than the uplift as part of GE20.

Business policies and processes are in many cases out-of-date and no longer fit-for-purpose. Many of the Commission's core policies and procedures are designed for the organisation that used to have 20 FTE staff in its National Office and are not scalable for the current situation. Capacity constraints within the Commission mean that it has not had the resource needed to review and refresh policies and procedures. This increases the risks to the orderly conduct of elections either as a result of people trying to work within policy and procedure that is no longer-fit-for purpose or trying to implement work-arounds that lack suitable quality assurance and/or open the door for inconsistent practices.

More generally, there is an under-investment in the Commission's suite of corporate support functions. As noted earlier, the work undertaken in 2018 on capability and capacity planning observed that the corporate centre had not adjusted for growth in the wider organisation and in particular following the transfer of functions from NZ Post. The consequences are felt in many ways. Drawing on our observations of the Commission and its risk register as it stood at the time of GE20, we note the following points.

- Managers lack support across a wide range of corporate functions and so are having to take on tasks themselves. This results in managers being too much in the business and not enough on the business.

- Concerns have been expressed within and external to the Commission regarding the quality of financial reporting and analysis and the insights this provides regarding the drivers of activity and cost.

- There is insufficient HR support when the Commission ramps up its recruitment in the lead up to an election.

- Programme management maturity is low and, to the extent that it exists, it does so only as a result of additional funding provided in response to COVID-19. This is an area where there is a substantial gap between what is needed and the extent of existing capability. The successful administration of elections depends on robust and mature programme management; something the Commission does not currently have.

- The Commission is a major procurer of goods and services in the lead up to elections yet there is no dedicated procurement capability. Key supplier failure is a critical risk for the Commission but it lacks resource to undertake ongoing monitoring and due diligence of suppliers to provide early detection of potential problems.

- There is insufficient resilience within the organisation to deal with issues when they arise. Elections are large and complex events. Things do go wrong and these have the ability to derail the election. Anticipating and planning for disruption and unexpected issues is a key part of

running a successful election process. The under-investment in corporate support functions makes planning for, and development of, mitigating actions hard to achieve.

- The Commission is highly dependent on third parties for IT and there is limited institutional knowledge within the IT team. This creates risk in terms of IT solutions not being sufficiently robust, issues with being able to deal to all IT solution requirements (of which there are many) and, ultimately, service delivery risk.

- There are risks that IT support for field staff during critical periods is insufficient.

- The lack of depth across corporate support teams means the Commission is dependent on a few key personnel. This creates a key person risk, introduces single points of failure and places a premium on effective succession planning; a capability that is not well developed within the Commission. These points apply more generally across the organisation and not just to corporate support functions.

These and other examples translate into high levels of organisational risk and low levels of organisational resilience.

Strategic priorities

The drivers behind the capability review are not just about addressing threats, challenges and risks, albeit that these factors are very significant. The capability review is also an opportunity to establish the Commission with the capability and capacity that it needs to deliver on its strategic priorities. In this regard, the Commission has identified four strategic priorities. In brief, these are:

- building the Commission's capability and core systems to ensure it is well placed to deliver high quality services now and in the future

- bringing forward election planning so that the Commission is better prepared to respond to changing or unforeseen circumstances

- thinking beyond the three year election cycle so that more attention is given to planning and identifying longer term projects with a view to elections in five and ten years' time

- strengthening relationships with people and groups who support the Commission to deliver elections and working with Māori, community partners, government agencies and voters to help build understanding of, and maintain confidence in, the electoral system.

In short, the priorities are aimed at improving services, increasing participation and fostering trust and confidence in the integrity of New Zealand's democracy.

As part of the fourth strategic priority listed above the Commission is committed to giving effect to, and integrating, the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi as part of the Commission's day-to-day activities and ways of working. Improving services for Māori voters was a key focus for GE20 and will be so for GE23. Following GE17, the Commission engaged with Māori communities to better understand their experiences of enrolling and voting. This is being repeated in light of GE20 as the Commission strives to build trust and confidence with Māori communities.

3 Capability scenarios

Introduction

Six scenarios, as outlined in the introduction to this report, have been developed. Each of them paints a distinctly different picture of the future capability and capacity of the Commission to deliver to its statutory roles and objectives in relation to administering elections and associated activities.

Each of the scenarios carry different implications in terms of:

- the **achievement of the Commission's core objective** (i.e. impartial, efficient and effective administering of the electoral system) and supporting objectives (i.e. facilitating participation in parliamentary democracy, promoting understanding of the electoral system and confidence in the administration of the system[2])
- **the quality and timeliness of services** (from a voter perspective)
- the contribution to the **achievement of the Commission's strategic priorities**
- the level of **resilience** to respond to threats, events and other things that can disrupt elections
- the **sustainability** of the Commission
- the **cost** of running the Commission and the election (and, hence, funding requirement)
- the overall **value-for-money** implied.

The purposes of this section of the report are to describe each of the scenarios (i.e. what can the Commission do under each scenario and, equally, what can't it do?) and to assess the implications of each scenario with reference to the points listed above.

The approach to describing each scenario is structured into three main parts.

- We start with a description viewed from the perspective of voters in terms of what the scenario means for their ease of being able to enrol and/or vote (we use the term "voter experience").
- We then focus on the engagement, education and communications roles of the Commission and the extent of effort that is directed toward encouraging people to enrol and vote and to understand the electoral process and how to vote.
- Lastly, we focus more inwardly on the Commission itself and the extent to which there is investment in the organisation to ensure that it is efficient, effective, resilient and sustainable.

The process of assessing the scenarios helps with developing an understanding of the cost, benefit and risk trade-offs between each. Understanding the trade-offs helps to inform a judgment as to which scenario (or scenarios) is preferred ahead of the others.

It is important to emphasise that the scenarios are presented as if they are discrete and that the task at hand is to choose the scenario that looks best (when assessed against a range of criteria). In reality, the scenarios are much more malleable than that. In particular:

- the option of combining some, but not all, features of one scenario with some, but not all, features of another scenario is entirely feasible
- the scenarios are capable, to varying extents, of being scaled (up and down).

To illustrate the point being made, Scenario 4 seeks to de-risk the Commission and threats to the effective functioning of elections. This involves, among others, a significant investment in building the capacity and capability of corporate support functions which, prior to now, have not kept pace with growth in, and demands of, the wider organisation. In addition, de-risking the elections involves adding capacity and capability to the key outward facing parts of the Commission; voting services, enrolment and community engagement as well as communications and education.

Although we consider that all areas of under-investment need to be addressed, there is the possibility of prioritising which areas should be addressed first leaving some to a later time.

Scenario 3 seeks to deliver, as far as possible, the level of service achieved in GE20 albeit subject to some adjustment to take into account the fact that GE20 was somewhat atypical because of the

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[2] Although not explicit in the Electoral Act, an important aspect of having confidence in the electoral system is ensuring the integrity of the system and that elections, and the electoral system, are perceived to have high levels of integrity.

impact of COVID-19, the late change in election date and two referenda being held. Clearly, given that tolerance for risk in the context of an event of national significance should be extremely low, it may be prudent to combine some, but not necessarily all, of the features of Scenario 3 with some, but not necessarily all, of the capability-building that is proposed under Scenario 4. There are potentially many, if not limitless combinations in this regard and it is not practical to set all of these out in this report. Rather, presenting the scenarios in a discrete way helps to identify and understand the unique features of each and the implications for benefits, risks and costs.

Common assumptions and givens

There are assumptions that are common across all the scenarios. In addition, for the purposes of this review, certain things have been taken as given and are also, therefore, common to all the scenarios. These are listed below.

Assumptions	Givens
• Cost escalation is applied across all scenarios. This means that increases in wage rates and other costs are taken into account using suitable cost forecasts. • The Commission is planning on the basis that COVID-19 alert level one is in effect at the time of GE23. The assumption is that if special arrangements need to be put in place to deal with a higher alert level, or any other significant and unexpected event, this will be the subject of a separate funding bid. • The number of people who are eligible to enrol and, hence vote, will continue to increase. Although the precise rate of growth is not known and varies, the working assumption is that there is between 180,000 and 300,000 new voters every election.	• No legislative change. The statutory objective of the Commission, its statutory roles and responsibilities, and a raft of legislative provisions that impact on the Commission's operations and costs, are taken as a given and, accordingly, assumed not to change. This review has not sought to anticipate legislative change. • Expenditure that has been committed to for FY22, or that is planned and budgeted for in FY22, will be incurred. This has relevance in the context of some IT developments as well as recent approvals by the Board to establish a small number of positions (e.g. two positions in Corporate Services for which recruitment is currently underway). This has particular significance in terms of Scenario 1 where cuts in capability have to be made. • The living wage is applied. Consistent with the Government's stance, the Commission has committed to adopting the living wage as the minimum wage. This is relevant, in particular, to voting place field staff and electorate headquarter (HQ) administration staff (i.e. significant elements of the large temporary workforce that is hired by the Commission in the lead up to an election).

Scenario 1

Overview

This scenario is based on the current appropriation of $136 million over the three year cycle for GE23.

- We do not consider that GE23 can be delivered for $136m. The risks of the election being disrupted would be unacceptably high and the level of service implied would be unacceptable to most New Zealanders.

- If an election was run on this basis, confidence in electoral systems and processes, and the legitimacy of the election, would be at risk of being seriously undermined.

- Funding at this level would necessitate a fundamental re-think of the approach to enrolling and voting in New Zealand.

For these reasons, Scenario 1 is not recommended.

Description

The scenario is based on the current appropriation of $136m. This is about $40m less than the cost/funding for GE20 excluding funding that was provided in relation to addressing the impacts of COVID-19, the change in election date and the need to conduct two referenda. It is $100 million less than GE20 including the funding adjustments. Furthermore, the current appropriation does not take into account the cost impact arising from enrolment on election day that was implemented after the current appropriation was determined. Scenario 1 is also about $80 million less than the amount the Commission currently has budgeted to deliver GE23 based on plans developed in December 2020 (these plans are being refined but decisions on funding are needed before they can be finalised).

Compared to GE20 and the current plan for GE23, $136m represents a substantial reduction in funding. It is very doubtful that a successful election could be delivered for that amount of money. If there is no additional funding above $136m, there would need to be a fundamental re-think of how elections are administered and this would almost certainly involve substantial change to the Commission's operating model and the way in which elections are conducted.

The Commission has explored the possible ways in which services could be cut, and levels of capability reduced, in order to stay within a budget of $136m. However, reflecting the depth of the cuts that would need to be made, the Commission has not been able to identify a plausible set of assumptions regarding service levels and Commission capability under which GE23 could be delivered. Appendix B sets out a range of assumptions regarding service levels for Scenario 1 but, even if adopted, these would fail to deliver anywhere near the level of savings needed in order to bring the overall budget within $136 million.

Reflecting these points, we do not dwell on Scenario 1 further here. It is not a realistic scenario and we do not recommend it.

Scenario 2

Overview

The intent behind this scenario is to pare back the Commission's capacity and capability to the minimum that is consistent with being able to deliver an election (but not to the standard of GE20) and without breaching its statutory objective and roles and responsibilities.

Because Scenario 2 is the bare minimum, it:

- delivers a relatively poor level of service that is below voter expectations

- does not address and, in fact, is likely to widen disparities in enrolment and voting rates across different segments of the community and so is likely to result in substantial criticism of the electoral process

- does not de-risk the election and, therefore, increases further the already growing risk of material disruption to GE23

- does not de-risk the Commission and so does not support it in being a resilient and sustainable organisation.

Scenario 2 is not recommended.

Description

Voter experience

Scenario 2, voter experience summary

2,367 Election day voting places	Total voting hours ↘	Enrolment rates ↘	Turnout rates ↘
350 Advance voting places	Voter satisfaction ↘	Equality of voting ↘	**Yes** EasyVote
51,670 Advance & election day hours			
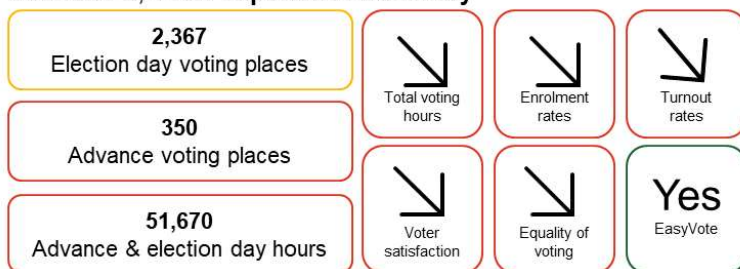
The voter experience will not be as good as that under GE20 reflecting cuts to services levels.

- Advanced voting places are substantially reduced (by about 77%) and there is a modest reduction (about 8%) in the number of voting places on election day. Reducing the number of advance voting places is likely to reduce the proportion of votes cast in advance. In GE20, 68% of votes were cast in advance. Scenario 2 is based around this figure falling to GE17 levels which was about 47%.

- Overall, the total amount of time during which voting places are open is circa 52,000 hours compared to approximately 85,000 in GE20 (although this was about 8,000 hours more than planned reflecting the response to COVID-19). Although Scenario 2 still delivers a reasonable level capacity on election day, there will be more voters on election day because of the reduction in advance voting. This, plus the fact that voter turnout tends to be skewed to the morning means that it is likely that voters will experience longer queues and wait times, particularly in the morning, than they would have in GE20. Significant numbers of voters are likely to miss out on being able to vote or will be dissuaded from voting.

- Compared to Scenario 1, some additional enrolment processing capacity is added, but not to the level of that in GE20. Accordingly, processing times are longer than they were for GE20 which means more risk, compared to GE20, of delays to either preliminary results and/or official results.

- There would be cuts to the mobile teams that visit voters who otherwise cannot access voting places (e.g. people in hospital).

Engagement, education and communications

Compared to Scenario 3, there are reductions in, and changes to, the level of engagement, education and communication activity.

- As part of the minimum viable product, community engagement would be a "light touch" with little, or no, engagement directed toward target groups (e.g. Māori, Pacific peoples, other ethnic communities and youth).
- In GE20, communications/campaigns activity was split roughly evenly between targeted groups and mainstream audiences. Under Scenario 2, there would be only very limited communications activity directed to target groups. Most activity will be designed around mainstream audiences and there will be less of it compared to GE20. The Commission's reach is reduced, it is less comprehensive and it is less frequent.
- Communications and education would be transactional rather than motivational.
- The overall campaign budget is reduced to about half its GE20 level noting that the budget for communications and education in GE20 had the advantage of a significant boost in funding reflecting funding adjustments for COVID-19, the change of election date and the referenda.
- The Commission would have little, or no, capability to work alongside other agencies to respond to the growth of mis- and dis-information about elections.
- The Commission would have a bare-minimum capacity to respond to media enquiries.

Investing in the Commission

Scenario 2 does not provide the Commission with the additional capacity and capability that is needed to more effectively plan and prepare for the next election. Scenario 2 has the following features.

- There would be no dedicated programme management capability to take a leadership role in planning and coordinating the administration of the GE23.
- Organisationally, there is no increase in the Corporate Services team over and above current capability (other than filling existing vacancies). By implication, the existing under-investment continues.
- Leaving Corporate Services largely with the capacity and capability that it currently has means that the rest of the organisation continues to struggle to receive anywhere near the level of support it needs. As a result, the organisation has low levels of resilience and continues to be at high risk of things going wrong; for example, procurement problems, recruitment problems, management problems, lack of effective project management and so on.
- Under the current plan, a fixed term senior advisor position is added to the strategy team in FY22 and FY23. Under Scenario 2, this position is retained for FY22 only. Furthermore, a junior data analyst position that was scheduled to be appointed in FY23 is deferred until FY24. The existing principal data insights advisor position is retained which enables continued production of existing dashboards but with minimal additions to data and data refreshment.
- IT analyst support and programme management is cut below current staffing. Compared to current plan, there would also be cuts in expenditure in systems development. As a result, there is minimal capability to address system enhancements and fix problems with existing systems albeit less than that which exists currently. Certification and accreditation would be limited to core election systems. Overall, the risks of disruption caused by systems failures and security breaches are higher than they are currently.

In addition to the changes outlined above, a position of Principal Advisor International Research that was planned for in FY23 would not be established.

Resources

The resource implications for Scenario 2 are summarised in the table below. The table indicates the reduction in personnel numbers, measured in full-time equivalent (FTE) staff terms, compared to Scenario 3 which, for the most part, is based on current plans for GE23. The personnel numbers for Scenario 3 are summarised on page 33.

It should be noted that the personnel numbers shown in the tables comprise fixed term and casual staff/contractors as well as permanent employees.

Scenario 2 FTE staff	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**
Voting Services	-	-	-
E&CE	(12.50)	(56.00)	(95.75)
Communications and Education	-	-	(1.00)
International	-	(0.50)	(0.50)
Corporate support functions	-	(5.58)	(3.00)
Scenario 2 Total	**146.00**	**164.00**	**168.50**

Costs

The operating cost implications associated with the resource changes are shown in the table below. These changes are also relative to Scenario 3 (and the costs associated with Scenario 3 are shown on page 33).

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**
Voting Services	-$0.007	-$0.197	-$11.597	**-$11.800**
E&CE	-$0.841	-$3.956	-$7.004	**-$11.801**
Communications and Education	$ -	$ -	-$4.610	**-$4.610**
International	$ -	-$0.093	-$0.099	**-$0.192**
Corporate support functions	$ -	-$0.986	-$0.784	**-$1.770**
Scenario 2 Total	**$35.999**	**$63.898**	**$86.959**	**$186.855**

Assessment

This scenario involves a significant degradation of service levels relative to GE20. A significant gap would emerge between the services voters expect (based on GE20) and the Commission's ability to deliver. For example:

- Many voters who would prefer to exercise an advance vote won't be able to and they will be forced into the less convenient alternative of voting on election day. Convenience can be a significant driver of participation which means it is likely that some voters will be dissuaded from voting under Scenario 2.

- Lengthy queues can be expected on election day, especially in the morning. There is evidence that queues and associated wait-times can also dissuade some voters from voting.

- Those who are likely to vote anyway will continue to do so. However, those who are less aware of elections, or who are unsure about why they should vote or how, are less likely to vote.

- The difference in enrolment and voter turnout rates between priority groups (i.e. Māori, Pacific peoples, other ethnic communities and youth) and the general population are likely to widen because of cuts in targeted engagement, education and communications activities. This could spur criticism of the Commission from these groups and the public more generally.

- This a high risk scenario. The ability of the Commission to anticipate risks of disruption and take steps to mitigate and manage those risks is heavily constrained because existing gaps in capability are not addressed and, in fact, are made worse as a result of cuts in personnel numbers. Under Scenario 2, the Commission is destined to be a very reactive organisation. It lacks sufficient capacity and capability to undertake thorough planning and preparation for GE23. At best, it is able to plan for and mitigate existing and known risks but does not have the capacity to scan the horizon for emerging risks. In short, there is more chance, compared to GE20, of things going wrong and the Commission then finding that it is not well placed to quickly address issues when they arise.

- There would be increased risk that preliminary and/or final results might be delayed because of there being fewer staff.

- Cuts in personnel numbers are also likely to place added pressure and strain on remaining staff with a flow-on risk of increased staff turnover.

Compared to current plans for GE23, this scenario delivers a substantially inferior service and involves heightened levels of risk. The successful delivery of GE23 is far from assured.

Scenario 2 is likely to spur some undesirable outcomes and consequences and it does not align well with the criteria (introduced in section 3) that we have used to assess the scenarios.

Achievement of the Commission's objectives is likely to be compromised.

- Rates of enrolment and voting are likely to be significantly lower under Scenario 2 than GE20 reflecting the substantial reduction in advance voting options and reduction in voting place hours more generally. This is not consistent with the Commission's objective of facilitating and promoting participation in parliamentary democracy.
- Cuts in engagement, education and communications activities are not consistent with promoting understanding of the electoral system.
- This scenario is also not consistent with another of the Commission's objectives which is to promote confidence in the administration of the electoral system particularly if disruption occurs and or there are delays in preliminary and/or final results.

Voters won't like the experience under this scenario. Voters, rightly, will see GE23 as falling short of their expectations. Like Scenario 1, because this scenario makes it hard for some to vote, they are likely to be dissuaded from voting and that could have a lasting impact in terms of a longer-term lowering of participation rates.

Because engagement, education and communications activities are mostly limited to mainstream audiences, there is likely to be a widening gap in the level of turnout between priority groups and the rest of the population. This runs counter to one of the Commission's strategic priorities. It is also likely to raise questions about the fairness of the election. Māori are likely to be among the groups that are disadvantaged in this respect and accordingly, it is questionable as to whether this scenario is consistent with the Commission meeting its Treaty obligations.

Gaps in capabilities, that are one of the main triggers for this review, remain and get worse. As a result, Scenario 2 does nothing to address the Commission's strategic priority of building capability and systems to ensure it is well placed to deliver high quality services now and into the future.

The lack of capability means planning and preparing for, and coordinating, GE23 is likely to be compromised. The risks of disruption to GE23 are likely to be high. The Commission is unlikely to have the resilience to effectively manage disruption, or unexpected events, especially if it has to deal with multiple issues simultaneously. If these risks materialise, then there is likely to be knock-on adverse implications for New Zealand's democratic reputation and international standing.

The lack of investment in the Commission's capability mean that it is unlikely to be sustainable (at least in its current form). The risk of significant organisational failure is likely to increase because of an inability to keep pace with increasing voter (and government) expectations, cost and demand pressures and increasing risks in the external environment.

Although this scenario costs about $30 million less, over three years, than Scenario 3 (i.e. current plan), we do not consider it delivers value for money because of the reduction in service levels and the increase in risks to the administration of GE23 and to the resilience and sustainability of the organisation.

The graph below summarises where Scenario 2 sits relative to the other scenarios in terms of services levels and risk.

Risk, service and cost assessment

Decreased risk

Scenario 6,
$258M

Scenario 5,
$251M

Scenario 4,
$241M

De-Risk

Bubble sizes reflect
comparitve costs

Scenario 3,
$217M

Scenario 2,
$187M

Increased risk

Service levels
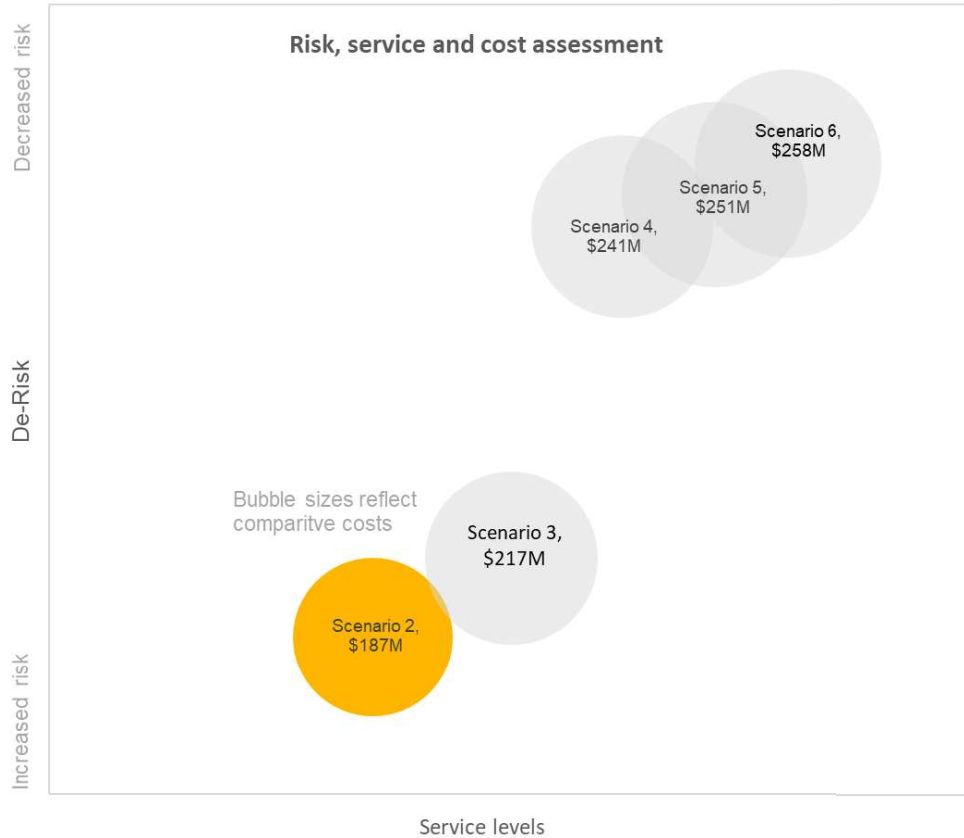
In summary, Scenario 2 does not align well with any of the criteria that are used to assess the scenarios and summarised below using the red, amber, green scale.

Reflecting the assessment, Scenario 2 is not recommended.

Scenario 3

Overview

This scenario is, for the most part, based on the plan and budget for GE23 that the Commission developed in December 2020. The aim is to try and replicate, as far as possible, the level of service that voters experienced in GE20 but taking into account the fact that service levels were somewhat elevated as a result of additional funding received for GE20 in light of the impacts of COVID-19.

This scenario does not address the Commission's wide-ranging capability gaps. These gaps mean there is a high risk of major disruption to the running of GE23. Scenario 3 does not effectively de-risk the election and/or the Commission.

Elections are an event of national significance and the tolerance for risk should, therefore, be low. Because this scenario is high risk, it is not recommended.

Background

GE20 had a number of positive features and generally was regarded very positively externally. Several initiatives were implemented to make it easier for people to vote. This included extending the period for advance voting, enabling enrolment on election day and increasing the overall number of voting places and total hours that voting places were available to process enrolments and votes. In addition, the Commission made some changes to make it easier to enrol online.

Compared to GE17, overall rates of enrolment increased by around a couple of percentage points to just over 94%, and the voter turnout rate rose to its highest level since 1999. The proportion of votes cast as advance votes rose from 47% in GE17 to 68% in GE20. Some progress was made with targeting engagement and communications with those groups who have lower rates of enrolment and voting including Māori, Pacific peoples and youth. This was reflected in increases in the enrolment and voter turnout rates for these groups over and above the general trend.

These results also translated into increased levels of overall satisfaction with the voting process and understanding of the enrolment process (as measured by a survey of voters and non-voters after the general election).

These are desirable outcomes. They align strongly with the Commission's objectives, as set out in the Electoral Act which include facilitating participation in parliamentary democracy, promoting understanding of the electoral system and maintaining confidence in the administration of the electoral system. These are outcomes that the Commission would not want to see undermined or diminished. With that front of mind, the Commission's current plan for GE23 is based around trying to deliver, as far as possible, the level of service and voter experience that was achieved in GE20 and it is these plans that lie at the heart of Scenario 3.

COVID-19 and the referenda provided the Commission with approximately $60 million additional funding for GE20, over and above the level originally budgeted. Scenario 3 is predicated on retaining about $40 million of this amount rather than the full $60 million and is based, in the main, on plans for GE23 that were prepared by the Commission in December 2020. Minor adjustments have been made to those plans and are reflected in this report. The adjustments include adding a programme manager and coordinator. They also include additional resource for the international team to undertake growing international liaison and research activities beyond MFAT requirements that, to date, have been absorbed by the MFAT-funded roles. Taking these adjustments into account, Scenario 3 is estimated to cost $217 million.

In effect, Scenario 3 represents a current state scenario. As such, we have viewed it as the base scenario against which scenarios 2, 4, 5 and 6 can be compared.

For reviews of this type, it is usual to compare scenarios against the current baseline scenario. However, as discussed earlier, we strongly doubt that the current baseline of $136 million is sufficient to run an orderly election process. Accordingly, we do not consider comparisons against the current baseline are particularly helpful or meaningful.

Important note

> *Although Scenario 3 is based on the plans for GE23 (developed in December 2020), it does currently trade off the costs of addressing capability gaps in favour of maintaining service levels. Given that tolerance for risk in the context of an event of national significance should be extremely low, if the decision was taken to approve funding at, or close to $217 million, the Commission would almost certainly want to revisit its current plan with a view to making some cuts in services levels (but trying to avoid a reversal of the positive trends noted above) in order to then address the highest priority capability gaps. In the period since the plan for GE23 was developed, the Commission has completed a review of GE20 and the process of that review has reconfirmed that there are significant gaps in the Commission's capability which have the potential to result in significant problems with the running of the next election.*

Description

Voter experience

In general, it is reasonable to suggest that high turnout rates are viewed as being desirable; it is a sign of a healthy democracy and engaged communities. Although there are many factors affecting turnout rates, reducing levels of service is likely to have an adverse impact. There is international evidence that voters can be dissuaded from voting if access is impeded; for example, as a result of issues with the method by which votes are cast, a lack of convenient voting places, limits on the opening hours of voting places, the length of queue and wait time at voting places and so on.

As far as we are aware, there is no particular policy reason as to why service standards should be expected to fall. From a voter perspective, their expectations are influenced by the most recent election and, for the most part, it is reasonable to assume that they will expect the same, or better, but not worse.

With this in mind, Scenario 3 is aimed at delivering, as far as possible, a level of service that reflects that delivered in GE20. In this regard, Scenario 3 has the following features as shown and described below.

Scenario 3, voter experience summary
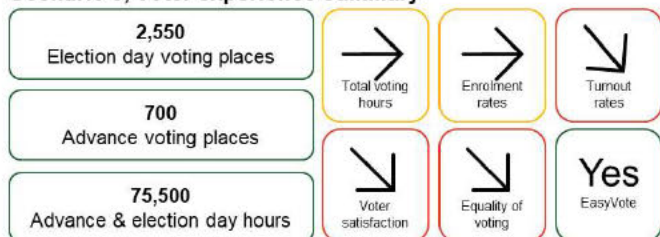
- To live within the budget that was determined in December 2020, the plan is to have voting places open for a total of 75,500 hours. This is about 10% below the GE20 level of 85,000 hours which, at the time, had been increased by about 8,000 hours in light of COVID-19 to help avoid situations of problems with maintaining social distancing at voting places.
- The period of advance voting is maintained at GE20 levels. However, the number of advance voting places is reduced slightly compared to GE20. This is because COVID-19 and the need for social distancing and avoidance of crowds spurred an increase in the number of advance voting places over and above those originally planned for GE20.
- The number of election-day voting places is very similar to the number in GE20.

- Mobile services were provided as part of GE20. This continues in GE23 with mobile teams who visit voters in prisons, hospitals and rest homes (i.e. people who otherwise cannot access voting places).
- Other services introduced as part of GE20 also continue and, possibly, expand including services for the deaf, voters in need, postal delivery and pick-up out of electorate headquarters (HQ).
- The scale of the data entry team (enrolments) is brought up to the GE20 level so that the processing of enrolment applications is timely.

Engagement, education and communications

The additional funding provided in response to COVID-19, the change in election date and the referenda meant that the Commission was able to increase levels of engagement, education and communications in GE20 over and above the level that was otherwise planned. For example, in addition to explaining what the referenda questions were, communications also provided information on how to enrol and vote and, to this extent, provided something of a spin-off benefit to supplement normal communications. This has had the effect of raising expectations regarding the level of engagement, education and communications provided as part of GE23.

More generally, dealing with COVID-19 meant elevated levels of communication that generally helped with raising awareness about the election. The setting of a new election date meant further communications over and above the normal EasyVote pack that is sent out ahead of the election. There was a scaling up of the 0800 call centre service as well as additional media and other advertising. A team was set up to take escalated calls from the call centre (and website) with support from Ministry of Justice personnel (the Commission did not have sufficient resources of its own).

As a result there is some cut back in communications compared to GE20. Community engagement would continue to utilise a hybrid digital and face to face approach. The Commission would continue, as far as could be afforded, with engagement, education and communications targeted toward those groups that are less likely to enrol and/or vote. To make further progress will require investment in audience research and understanding to inform campaign strategy and ground it in evidence. Making progress also requires specialist design/co-design input to develop the approach to engage effectively with hard to reach audiences. Within the funding available under Scenario 3, it will be hard to make any headway with this.

Investing in the Commission

Current plans, upon which Scenario 3 is based, do not address the capacity and capability gaps that have been discussed earlier in this report. Under Scenario 3, the only change to current capability is to appoint a programme director and programme coordinator early in 2023 as part of the lead up to GE23. This would provide at least some programme management capability albeit falling short of the level needed. A small amount of resource is also added to the international team. Apart from these adjustments, the capability that is needed to support the functioning of the Commission and administration of the election is unchanged from the plan developed in December 2020.

The gaps in capacity and capability exist across corporate support functions as well as within the external-facing parts of the Commission such as voting services, enrolment, engagement and communications, and education.

Turning first to corporate support functions, the depth of capacity and capability across these functions is not sufficient for an organisation of this size and/or the complexities involved in running a large event of national significance.

As at August 2021, the Corporate Services business unit (which covers finance, people and culture, procurement, property, accountability reporting and administrative/executive assistant services) comprised a manager and a team of 19 (including fixed term and contractor personnel as well as

permanent employees). We have undertaken a limited comparison against other small government agencies using the BASS benchmarking survey.[3]

Comparisons between the Commission and other organisations is challenging because of the highly cyclical nature of the Commission's workload. In FY22, the Commission has approximately 160 FTE staff. However, in FY24, this grows by around 70% to over 270 FTE staff not including the approximately 25,000-strong workforce that is needed at election time.

Using the BASS numbers as a guide, we conclude that the size of the Corporate Services team is close to what would be expected for an organisation of 160 people (leaving to one side the greater complexity associated with the Commission's work) but is not sufficient as the organisation increases in size in the lead up to an election. For example:

- the number of HR staff compared to total staff is about right for an organisation of circa 160 people but is one or two positions light for an organisation of circa 270 people let alone an organisation that grows by around 25,000 personnel at the time of the election each of whom needs to be recruited, trained and paid
- the number of finance personnel looks to be one or two positions light for an organisation of circa 160 people but around 4 or 5 positions light for an organisation of 270 people.

As at August 2021, the IT team comprises a manager plus a team of 15 permanent and fixed term personnel with a number of contractors above and beyond that. While the size of the team looks to be appropriate in relation to the overall size of the Commission, there are issues with old and legacy systems upon which the administration of elections relies and there are issues with high levels of dependency on third party providers

The lack of any investment, under Scenario 3, in corporate support functions carries the following implications.

- The Commission does not have sufficient capacity and capability to plan and prepare for GE23 to be confident of low risk to the running of the election. Resource constraints mean planning and preparation is less than is needed and takes place over a shorter time frame than is desired.
- The Commission tried to bring a programme management approach to the administration of GE20 but it lacked the resource to achieve this. Notwithstanding the addition of a programme director and coordinator, programme management capability under Scenario 3 is very limited and not at the level of maturity needed for an event of the complexity of a general election.
- Managers do not have the support they need to manage. As a result, they end up having to undertake roles that we would normally expect to be undertaken by, or heavily supported by, the corporate centre (e.g. in relation to recruitment, financial management, and procurement, among others). This crowds out the time available for core management tasks including planning.
- The Commission procures many goods and services and it has high levels of dependency on key third party suppliers. The lack of procurement support means the Commission is unable to undertake the level of due diligence it needs to in relation to suppliers and/or monitor suppliers to guard against the risk of unexpected supply issues.
- The Commission struggles with the very large recruitment programme that takes place ahead of each election.
- There is no formal and dedicated risk management and quality assurance capability. Managers assume responsibilities in this regard but without support.
- There is very limited research and evaluation capability which hinders the ability to be targeted and effective in roles such as engagement, education and communications and aspects of pre-election and election day services.
- More generally, the lack of depth in capacity and capability across corporate support functions means that the Commission is exposed to key person risks.

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[3] We have benchmarked using the 2017 BASS results (the last available before BASS was terminated) and focused on five small cohort organisations: the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, the (former) State Services Commission, the NZ Tourism Board, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Te Puni Kokiri.

Over and above the gaps in corporate support capability, there are also capability gaps across the external-facing parts of the Commission. This includes the following.

- There is relatively limited capacity across the regional offices of the Commission. This limits the ability to efficiently and effectively respond to, and deal with, issues when they arise.
- In the lead up to an election, the Commission has to deal with large volumes of enquiries. The capability to deal with this was scaled up in GE20 (assisted by the additional funding provided in GE20 and support from the Ministry of Justice), but the plans for GE23 don't allow for this. As a result, the scale of the team planned for GE23 is smaller which means it will be harder to keep pace with the volume of enquiries and address them in a timely manner.
- As noted earlier, targeting groups with relatively low rates of enrolment and voter turnout is a high priority for the Commission. To be most effective, community engagement relies on developing trusted relationships and this is very personnel-intensive. The Commission does not currently have the capacity to make headway in this respect.

In short, the gaps in capability are significant because they exist across many, if not most, parts of the Commission including back-office functions (i.e. corporate support services) and external-facing parts of the Commission.

Resources and costs

The tables below summarise the resources (FTE personnel) and operating costs associated with Scenario 3.

Scenario 3 FTE staff	FY22	FY23	FY24
Voting Services	17.50	25.00	25.00
E&CE	81.50	125.00	163.75
Communications and Education	9.00	13.00	10.50
International	0.00	0.50	0.50
Corporate support functions	50.50	62.58	69.00
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**

Costs

The operating costs associated with Scenario 3 are approximately $217m as shown in the table below. This is more than the original budget for GE20 ($176m) but less than the revised budget for GE20 of $236m that included the adjustments for COVID-19, change of election date and the referenda. The cost for Scenario 3 is, as a result of minor adjustments, slightly above the budget that the Commission developed in December 2020 for GE23.

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Voting Services	$4.713	$21.128	$50.860	**$76.701**
E&CE	$11.049	$19.703	$20.228	**$50.981**
Communications and Education	$2.487	$5.853	$10.170	**$18.510**
International	$0.065	$0.158	$0.184	**$0.407**
Corporate support functions	$18.532	$22.287	$29.610	**$70.430**
Scenario 3 Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**

Assessment

If everything goes to plan, Scenario 3 has the potential to deliver an election that caters to mainstream voters reasonably well. Assuming no disruption:

- enrolment applications should be capable of being managed in a timely way
- most voters should have convenient options in terms of when and where they vote
- preliminary and official results should be delivered on time.

Furthermore, for mainstream voters, there should be reasonable levels of community engagement as well as communications and education campaigns and related initiatives to raise their awareness of the election and when and how to vote.

The key issue with Scenario 3 is risk and, in particular, the risk that not everything will go to plan.

Risk of disruption

Our concern with Scenario 3 is that capacity and capability gaps pose significant risks for the running of GE23 and create the potential for major issues, and disruption, if everything does not go to plan. There are several reasons for holding this view.

Key to minimising the risk of disruption to the election is intensive levels of planning and preparedness. This includes anticipating the things that could go wrong, developing the strategies and plans to limit the likelihood of those things occurring and developing the plans to manage those things when they do occur so that their impact is minimised. Based on interviews and discussions with Commission personnel, there is a strong sense that within available capabilities, the Commission is struggling to muster sufficient resource to undertake thorough planning and preparation in the lead up to GE23 and, commensurate with this, struggling to also start that work in a timely way (i.e. to undertake the preparatory work well ahead of the election).

There is a myriad of risks and threats that could disrupt an election. It is almost certain that at some point in the run up to, or on, election day, one or more threats will materialise, or that the unexpected will occur. We are concerned that the Commission, because of capacity and capability gaps, does not have a sufficient level of resilience so that when things do not go to plan, they can be swiftly managed and brought back onto plan, particularly if the Commission has to deal with multiple issues simultaneously.

The gaps in capability that relate to planning and preparedness are not confined to particular parts of the Commission. On the contrary, the gaps are widespread across the organisation and the fact that they are widespread further exacerbates the problem in the sense that it is much harder to address (if the constraint is in a specific area, it is generally more feasible to effect some sort of work-around).

There are gaps in capability (people, systems and processes) across all core supporting capabilities: strategy, finance, people and culture, procurement, programme management, risk and assurance, IT, data analytics, research and evaluation. All of these functions play a part in planning and preparing for, and running, elections and they are currently below the level that is needed to support the smooth running of elections. Gaps in these areas means under-strength support for the external facing parts of the Commission which of themselves also have capacity constraints in several areas (e.g. in the regional offices and across the engagement, education and communications functions).

In short Scenario 3, is likely to fail the test of delivering an event for which there should be a very low tolerance for risk of disruption.

Health and safety risks

In addition to these points, we are also concerned that gaps in capacity and capability put added strain on personnel; they end up having to cover roles over and above their core responsibilities. We note as one example of this that as part of GE20, one of the managers in the Voting Services team was charged with undertaking the lead programme manager role for the administration of GE20. However, the individual concerned also had normal duties to perform which, no doubt, created stress but also meant the programme management role was, in effect, under-resourced.

Many interviewees within the Commission have commented to us that GE20 was a highly stressful experience for many staff. It is possible that the impacts of COVID-19 added to stress levels but notwithstanding that, the picture is one of teams being stretched beyond reasonable levels. The prospect of a repeat of this in GE23 would not be welcomed and could lead to a situation of increased staff turnover and potential mistakes being made. Any increase in this regard would then exacerbate the problem of gaps in capacity and capability.

Participation risks

In addition to the concerns regarding the risks of disruption, we also have concerns that the progress made in GE20 around enrolment and voter turn-out rates will be undermined particularly with respect to the priority groups (i.e. Māori, Pacific peoples, youth and others).

The additional funding that was provided as part of GE20 enabled the Commission to increase levels of community engagement and communications. Some of this is pared back under Scenario 3 on the assumption that not all of the additional funding approved for GE20 is rolled over into GE23.

In general, engagement, education and communications activity that is targeted toward the priority groups is, on a per voter, basis more expensive than is true of activities that are geared to the general population. Accordingly, reductions in expenditure on engagement, education and communications tend to be directed more to the targeted activity than mainstream activity. The concerns stemming from cuts in this area are that voters in general won't be as prepared for the election compared to GE20 and, moreover, that gains in enrolment and voting rates for the priority groups achieved in GE20 might be reversed.

The diagram below illustrates where Scenario 3 sits, in relation to the other scenarios, in terms of the level of risk involved and level of service.

Risk, service and cost assessment

- Decreased risk
- De-Risk
- Increased risk

Scenario 6, $258M
Scenario 5, $251M
Scenario 4, $241M

Bubble sizes reflect comparitve costs

Scenario 3, $217M

Scenario 2, $187M

Service levels

Outcome implications

Scenario 3 may not support particularly well the achievement of a range of desired outcomes and objectives. Our assessment against the criteria used in this review is as follows.

- If cuts in engagement, education and communications result in reduced enrolment and voter turnout rates, that may be viewed as being inconsistent with the Commission's objective of facilitating participation in parliamentary democracy and promoting understanding of the electoral system. Moreover, if the cuts result in a widening of enrolment and turnout rates between the general population and priority groups, that could trigger public criticism and concerns around the fairness of the election. Cuts in these areas could also be perceived by voters as a reduction in service quality.
- Scenario 3 does not align particularly well with the Commission's strategic priorities. It doesn't enable the Commission to build its capabilities and core systems to the extent that the Commission considers is needed to ensure that it is well placed to deliver high quality services now and into the future. Gaps in capabilities mean that forward election planning is not as robust as that which is needed in order to bring the risk of disruption down to a low level. Scenario 3 does not readily enable the Commission to approach its work in a way that thinks beyond the three year election cycle. The Commission continues to lack sufficient capability to drive a more strategic and longer-term approach to its work.
- The reduction in engagement, education and communications activity compared to GE20 potentially runs counter to the strategic priority of further strengthening relationships, particularly the priority groups, to help build understanding of, and maintain confidence in, the electoral system.
- There are risks that the Commission is not sufficiently resilient.
- It is questionable as to whether Scenario 3 delivers value for money. If everything goes to plan, it probably does. However, when risk is taken into account, value-for-money is called into question. In our view, Scenario 3 is unlikely to represent the best value-for-money scenario.

In summary, Scenario 3 has the potential to deliver a reasonably good level of service. Scenario 3 is, however, a high risk scenario. The potential for disruption to the election, and the adverse consequences this would imply, cannot be ruled out. As we have stated before, the tolerance for risk in the context of an event of national significance should be extremely low. Scenario 3 does not achieve this requirement.

Reflecting the points above, Scenario 3 does not rate particularly well against the six criteria that we have used to assess each scenario. This is shown below.

Given the assessment summarised above, Scenario 3 is not recommended.

Scenario 4

Overview

This scenario builds on Scenario 3. Scenario 4:

- delivers levels of service comparable with GE20 (consistent with the intent of Scenario 3)
- reduces the risk of elections being disrupted and the adverse consequences that would stem from a major disruption
- renders the Commission a more resilient organisation and enables it to be more efficient and effective.

Additional capacity and capability means the Commission can bring forward its planning and preparations for GE23. Being ready early allows the Commission to better anticipate factors that can impact on the smooth running of an election and adapt and change to take account of those factors. The primary benefit is a lower chance of disruption to GE23 and reduced consequences if there is disruption.

This scenario enables the Commission to address historical under-investment in organisational capability including, but not limited to corporate support functions. Capacity and capability are lifted to better align with the size and complexity of the Commission and its work. The additional capacity and capability enable the Commission to be more resilient, efficient, effective and sustainable.

Background and context

From a voter perspective, GE20 will have been perceived as being successful, based on survey results relating to voter satisfaction. Behind the scenes, however, GE20 was delivered with a high level of underlying risk and stress on staff reflecting gaps in capacity and capability. These gaps have been discussed in the context of Scenario 3 and are not repeated here other than to reiterate that the gaps:

- have been developing for many years
- exist across all aspects of corporate support functions
- exist also in many external-facing parts of the Commission
- relate to people as well as systems, operational policies, procedures and processes.

As discussed in Scenario 3, the gaps in capacity and capability elevate the risk of disruption to the running of an election and the resilience of the Commission to address issues when they arise and ensure that plans are placed back on track. The capacity and capability gaps also serve to constrain the level of service in some areas.

The focus for Scenario 4 is on addressing the gaps in capacity and capability. In so doing, the intent behind Scenario 4 is to de-risk the administration of the election and de-risk the Commission.

Description

Voter experience

Scenario 4, voter experience summary
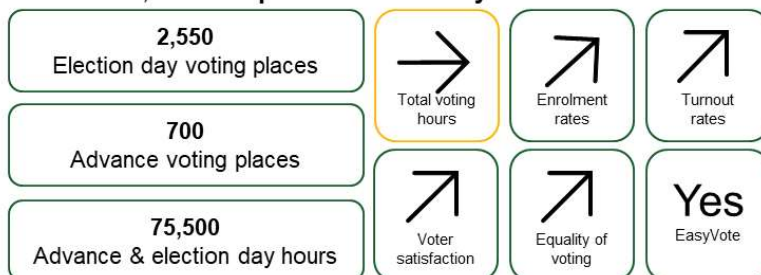
From a voter perspective, Scenario 4 does not appear to be much different to Scenario 3. Service levels are sufficient to meet voter expectations based on their experiences in GE20.

The number of advance voting places, election day voting places and the total number of hours they are open is the same as Scenario 3. Other service features that are included under Scenario 3 (e.g. mobile teams) are also included under Scenario 4.

Behind the scenes, returning officers are brought on slightly earlier in the lead up to GE23 to assist with the smooth running of the election. There is also a modest deepening of capacity across the Commission's five regions. Three regions have a Regional Manager Voting but the other two share a manager. In addition to addressing this, a regional advisor is added to each region. Again, the additional resource is aimed at ensuring the smooth running of the election and providing more resilience to deal with issues when they arise.

Engagement, education and communications
The Commission would seek to intensify engagement that is targeted to low participation groups. The aim is to limit large and undesirable disparities in enrolment and voting rates vis a vis the general population. This will involve establishing five new permanent positions in the Community engagement area in FY23 including advisors for each of Māori engagement, Pacific peoples engagement and ethnic communities engagement. Capacity will also be added to manage community engagement more generally including at the regional level.

Furthermore, 5.67 FTE staff are added to the communications and education area in FY23 to:
- increase capacity for stakeholder engagement and partnerships
- enable more proactive engagement with media (e.g. briefings and resources)
- pro-actively manage social media channels to identify and mitigate risk related to misinformation around the election
- increase the targeted communications to those groups that are less likely to enrol and vote
- provide additional support for front-line staff including the expanded community engagement team

A permanent advisor position is added in FY23 to focus on enabling those with disabilities to engage with the electoral system (e.g. through support for voting place staff on best ways to assist voters with disabilities).

An organisation-wide team is in place in the lead up to the election to handle calls that are escalated from the call centre.

The additional resources are needed to address three main types of risk.
- Internationally, elections are being accompanied by increasing levels of misinformation and disinformation (the US elections last year being an example). New Zealand is not immune to this risk. The additional resource will better enable the Commission to proactively engage with media and proactively manage social media channels to identify and mitigate the risk associated with mis- and dis-information about enrolling and voting.
- The communications programme, like the rest of the Commission's activities, is subject to the risks that unexpected events and developments disrupt delivery of the programme. The additional resources are aimed at adding capacity and capability to anticipate the range of disruptive risks and plan for their mitigation.
- The priority groups have distinctly lower rates of enrolment and/or voting. If these disparities persist, or widen, there is risk of public criticism and that concerns may be raised regarding the fairness of the electoral process. The additional resources better enable targeted communications to such groups and complement the work of the community engagement advisors noted above.

Investing in the Commission
In addition to de-risking the election through the changes noted above, Scenario 4 also focuses on de-risking the Commission so that it is more resilient (i.e. better able to deal with issues when they arise). This involves an up-lift in capacity and capability across the range of corporate support functions; strategy, data analysis, finance, payroll, people and culture, IT, programme management, procurement, property, administrative support, and accountability reporting.

In addition, a Māori/cultural capability team is established. This is designed to build in-house Treaty capability. This involves establishing a manager and two advisor positions. This team will develop

Treaty strategy including through co-design with Iwi. This team will also work closely with the Commission's community engagement and communications teams to develop and implement targeted campaigns.

Further resource is added to the international team to enable engagement in international fora, maintaining oversight of developments in other countries that could have relevance here, and hosting visiting delegations and programmes (on pause at the moment due to COVID-19).

In addition to increasing the number of Commission personnel, there is also a focus on improving business processes and systems.

- The Commission would undertake major security and quality improvements across business processes and systems.
- Business policies and procedures would be brought up to date to ensure they are all fit-for-purpose.
- Investment would be made in technology to support enhanced information management and data analysis as part of a shift to strengthening data and analytics to improve the evidence base for decision making.
- The Commission would plan for the replacement of legacy systems but actual replacement would not take place until after GE23. The two highest priorities in this regard are MIKE (the core system used for managing enrolments) and ERSA (the electoral roll scrutiny application). ERSA is at end-of-life. MIKE is becoming a legacy technology which means it is hard to get people with the right skills to maintain and update it. It also means that changes to MIKE are increasingly cumbersome.
- Certification and accreditation would be extended across all of the Commission's systems rather than just those that are critical to the running of an election (certification and accreditation of systems and system providers is a key part of credible and effective information assurance governance).
- More generally, quality and risk assurance processes are strengthened.
- Greater focus is given to completing, for example, privacy impact assessments, to ensure robust compliance with regulatory requirements.

Resources

The people-related implications associated with Scenario 4 are summarised below. These are described in terms of additions to personnel over and above Scenario 3.

Scenario 4 FTE staff	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**
Voting Services	+0.31	+10.50	+7.84
E&CE	-	+5.00	+5.00
Communications and Education	-	+5.67	+6.50
International	-	+0.50	+0.50
Corporate support functions	-	+27.42	+24.75
Scenario 4 Total	**160.81**	**275.17**	**313.34**

Costs

The operating cost implications associated with Scenario 4 are shown below and these are also presented as the increase in costs over and above Scenario 3.

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**
Voting Services	+$0.019	+$2.786	+$9.515	**+$12.320**
E&CE	$ -	+$0.479	+$0.507	**+$0.986**
Communications and Education	$ -	+$0.693	+$0.833	**+$1.527**
International	$ -	+$0.093	+$0.099	**+$0.192**
Corporate support functions	+$0.308	+$3.908	+$4.800	**+$9.017**
Scenario 4 Total	**$37.174**	**$77.089**	**$126.806**	**$241.070**

In addition to an increase in operating cost, Scenario 4 also involves some capital expenditure associated with system enhancements. This comprises $2 million to address a range of problems with core elections systems (e.g. the Election Management System and the Electoral Roll Scrutiny system) and $1 million for system changes to improve quality and assurance processes including certification and accreditation.

Assessment

Scenario 4 aligns well with the Commission's statutory objectives. Scenario 4 enables the Commission to deliver a level of service comparable to that of GE20 and, in this respect, it should be able to meet the expectations of voters, based on their experiences in GE20. Additional resource is directed toward community engagement, education and communications. This includes additional effort that is directed toward the priority groups that have low enrolment and voting rates relative to the general population. There is a much stronger commitment to partnership with Māori. Disparities in rates of enrolment and voting are, therefore, likely to narrow under Scenario 4. Reflecting these points, it is likely that voter turnout rates should be at least as high as those achieved in GE20 particularly among the priority groups. These outcomes, if achieved, are consistent with the Commission's statutory objective of facilitating participation in parliamentary democracy and promoting understanding of the electoral system.

Reflecting the points above, the quality and timeliness of services under Scenario 4 should be comparable with GE20. Voters are likely to continue to be highly satisfied with the way the election is run.

The diagram below illustrates where Scenario 4 sits compared to the other scenarios in terms of service levels and risk.

Risk, service and cost assessment

Decreased risk

De-Risk

Increased risk

Scenario 6, $258M

Scenario 5, $251M

Scenario 4, $241M

Bubble sizes reflect comparitve costs

Scenario 3, $217M

Scenario 2, $187M

Service levels
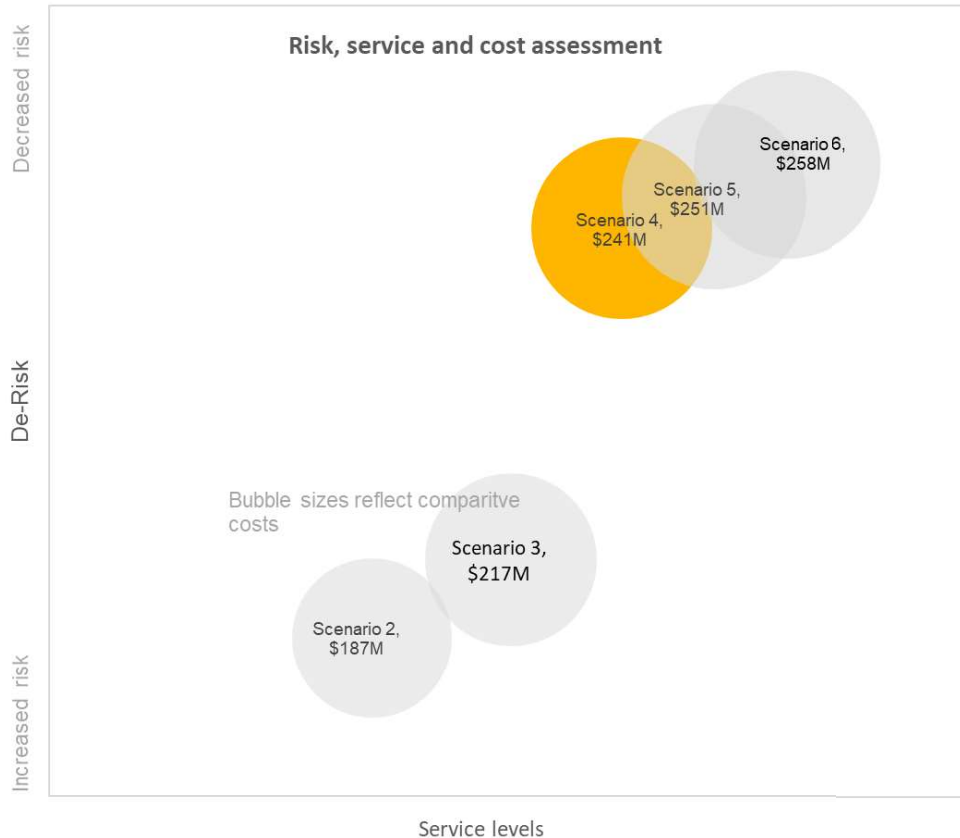
Scenario 4 also aligns well with the Commission's strategic priorities. In particular, Scenario 4:

- provides the funding that is needed to build the Commission's capability and core systems
- enables the Commission to bring forward planning and preparedness activities for the next election.

Under Scenario 4, the Commission should become a much more resilient organisation reflecting:

- the additional capacity and capability that is available to support planning and preparedness
- the additional investment in systems
- the enhanced capacity to update policies, procedures and processes where these are not fit for purpose or getting out of date
- the ability to build more contingency into plans.

Increased resilience means that when issues arise, the Commission should be better placed to deal with those issues thereby limiting the risk of material disruption to the election.

A key difference between this scenario and Scenario 3 is that under Scenario 4 there is a much greater assurance that the election will go to plan without significant disruption.

Although closing a range of gaps in capacity and capability is likely to render the Commission as a more resilient organisation, Scenario 4 does not fully address the goal of sustainability. Scenario 4 perpetuates a single election cycle, rather than multi-cycle, approach to planning and delivery. As a result, opportunities are lost to take a longer term and more strategic approach to planning and investment.

Overall, we consider that Scenario 4 delivers good value for money in the sense that there is a much better balance across service delivery (and the benefits this delivers), risk and cost.

The benefits associated with Scenario 4 are a mirror-image of the problems and shortcomings associated with Scenario 3. Organisationally, the benefits include:

- planning and preparation for GE23 is not constrained as it is under Scenario 3
- the historical under-investment in corporate support functions is addressed and these functions are right-sized for the organisation as a whole
- organisational resilience is strengthened.
- the risks of personnel flight, because of the stresses associated with GE20, is substantially abated
- key person risks and single points of failure are reduced.

In much broader terms, the benefits of Scenario 4 are:
- the risk of undermining the integrity of the electoral system, or experiencing a loss of confidence in that system, should be low
- by extension, New Zealand's strong reputation for having a robust electoral system should be maintained, or even enhanced and New Zealand's democratic ratings in the international arena maintained
- Crown/ Māori partnerships are strengthened
- support for democratic processes is maintained, if not enhanced.

Our assessment of Scenario 4 is summarised below.

Overall, Scenario 4 rates well against the criteria and, reflecting this, we recommend Scenario 4.

Sequencing

We note that a question might be raised regarding the ordering of Scenarios 3 and 4 with a suggestion that it could be better to de-risk the organisation and administration of the election first (i.e. Scenario 4) ahead of then seeking to mimic service levels from GE20.

We have chosen to present the scenarios in the order they appear for two main reasons.

- The capability that is required under Scenario 4, including that needed across the suite of corporate support functions, is influenced by the overall size of the organisation. In turn, the size of the organisation is influenced by the level of service delivered. It follows, therefore, that determining service levels (Scenario 3) is a pre-condition to determining the level of capability that is needed to address the existing under-investment in corporate support functions (Scenario 4).
- We do not consider there is a case for reducing service levels below those in GE20 other than some adjustment for one-off initiatives triggered by the need for social distancing as a result of COVID-19. In effect, therefore, Scenario 3 is akin to maintaining the status quo. In contrast, Scenario 4 marks a clear investment aimed at substantially de-risking the Commission and the conduct of the election and, in this regard, is a material improvement over and above the current state.

Scenario 5

Overview

This scenario involves the Commission undertaking its planning and preparation activities across two election cycles. Currently the Commission's focus is on the next election cycle (three-year horizon), whereas this scenario would involve a planning horizon of six years.

In practical terms this scenario does not radically change or alter delivery of the election. There is some uplift in enrolment, community engagement and communications activities to deepen and strengthen relationships with people and groups who support the Commission to deliver elections consistent with the Commission taking a longer-term view to its activities. Under this scenario it is the Commission's back-office and IT functions that would be most impacted. From a planning perspective, this scenario would bring forward planning for investment in digital transformation.

Background and context

The Commission has traditionally had a three-year planning horizon. This causes the following challenges for the Commission.

- Risk management/planning is short-term. The current process is overly focussed on the next election event, which limits risk scanning/planning beyond the current event.

- It is difficult to innovate between elections. Ideally, operational change needs to be anticipated over a longer time horizon to enable legislative change (where needed) and time for more complex transformation projects. Existing capacity does not allow room for this.

- Investment in relationships tends to be focussed around the election. Rather than an enduring relationship which can be maintained throughout the election cycle. The focus is currently (necessarily) on the relationships which matter the most for the current election event.

As a consequence, the Commission does not have the capacity to undertake future planning and preparedness and is at risk of failing to keep pace with technological change, changes in voter expectations or to identify medium term risks.

Description

Voter experience

Scenario 5, voter experience summary
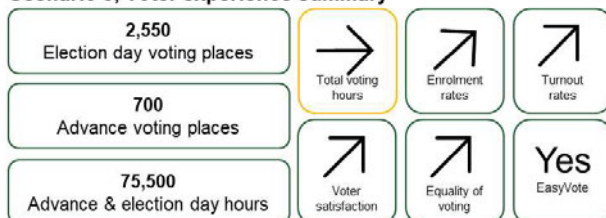
From a voter perspective, there will be limited immediate impact from this scenario. However, over time we would expect that the Commission would be better positioned to keep pace with voter preferences. For example, this could include electronic mailing of EasyVote and digital enrolment communications.

Under Scenario 5, the number of FTE staff in Voting Services increases by about 25 in FY23 compared to Scenario 3. This is an increase of about 12 FTE staff in that year compared to Scenario 4. The majority of additional personnel are to enable longer term planning and preparation for future elections. There is also provision for one subject matter expert to provide input into future election planning work.

Engagement, education and communications

Four FTE staff are added to the Enrolment and Community Engagement business unit over and above Scenario 4 comprising:

- Digital services design lead
- Digital services design advisor
- Manager community engagement design
- Community engagement design advisor.

Overall, this means that under Scenario 5 there are nine additional FTE staff in this business unit over and above Scenario 3.

In addition to the numbers in Scenario 4, a further four FTE staff are added to the Communications and Education business unit to support the enquiries team. Overall, the additional number of personnel in this business unit is approximately 10 FTE staff over and above Scenario 3.

Investing in the Commission

This scenario would necessitate additional investment in the Commission's Corporate Services business unit to support the increased planning horizon. In particular, a further eight FTE staff are added over and above Scenario 4 to fill the following roles:

- Business Analyst
- Data Analyst
- Dedicated Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor
- Principal Advisor Human Resources/Employment Relations
- Project Manager
- Senior Advisor – Finance
- Senior Advisor – Human Resources
- Senior Advisor – Organisational Development.

Overall, including these positions, the number of staff in the Corporate Services business unit increases by 26 compared to Scenario 3 in FY23. Although that is a significant increase in the number of Corporate Services personnel, it is important to recall that this is an area of historic under-investment.

Scenario 5 requires modest increase in FTE staff for FY23 and FY24, over and above Scenario 4, across a range of other corporate support business units in the Commission. The additions are summarised in the table below.

Business Unit	Additional positions (compared to Scenario 4)
Strategy	1 x Project Manager 1 x Business Analyst 1 x IT Technician
International	2 x Senior Advisors
Legal	1 x Senior Legal Advisor

Information Technology

This scenario involves an additional 10 FTE staff in the IT business unit. This is an increase of three FTE staff compared to Scenario 4. The additional resources enable the Commission to begin to future proof its operations. In particular, it should enable the Commission to:

- plan for digital transformation
- implement a range of system improvements to position the Commission for digital transformation
- undertake process improvements to enhance quality, assurance and security.

The additional roles are as follows:

- Technology Specialist
- Management/team leader
- Specialist technical support.

In addition to the additional three FTE staff the Commission will require approximately $4.75 million of capital expenditure for immediate system changes. The two-cycle time horizon would require changes to core systems. Under Scenario 5, there is also some investment in new systems to improve interactions with voters as well as further investment in systems used for quality and risk assurance

purposes. These investments remediate the current IT environment to a level of service that is more manageable and enable the Commission to plan for and design its digital transformation.

It is important to note that the capital expenditure does not involve replacing core systems (such as MIKE, ERSA and the EMS). Replacing these systems would be the subject of a business case and separate funding bid. Furthermore, the capital expenditure does not include any investment in new systems or technology that might stem from work in planning for digital transformation.

Resources

The resource implications for Scenario 5, compared to Scenario 3, are summarised in the table below. Although the direct investment in strategy resources looks minor (three FTE staff), this scenario adds additional capacity in the main business units (Voting Services and Enrolment and Community Engagement) which should enable management to operate more strategically.

Scenario 5 FTE staff	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**
Voting Services	+3.81	+15.75	+10.84
E&CE	-	+9.00	+9.00
Communications and Education	-	+9.67	+10.50
International	-	+2.50	+2.50
Corporate support functions	+3.67	+42.42	+40.92
Scenario 5 Total	**165.98**	**305.42**	**342.51**

Costs

The operating cost implications associated with this scenario are shown in the table below. Most of the change in cost is personnel related. Scenario 5 further increases the total number of personnel which, among other implications, means that the Commission would have to lease additional accommodation as the capacity limits of the existing National Office are exceeded under Scenario 5. The cost estimates include provision for extra accommodation costs.

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**
Voting Services	+$0.414	+$3.370	+$9.915	**+$13.699**
E&CE	$ -	+$0.952	+$1.009	**+$1.961**
Communications and Education	$ -	+$1.240	+$1.413	**+$2.653**
International	$ -	+$0.364	+$0.386	**+$0.749**
Corporate support functions	+$0.517	+$6.420	+$8.167	**+$15.104**
Scenario 5 Total	**$37.777**	**$81.475**	**$131.942**	**$251.195**

In addition to operating costs, as noted above there is capital expenditure of $4.75 million.

Assessment

This option provides investment for the Commission to deliver incrementally better and less risky elections and to begin to scope large shifts that it will need to take in the future. A key component of this is the ability for the Commission to influence participation through enduring relationships with groups who are hardest to access. Although the increase in resources for the strategy team is modest, a key feature of Scenario 5 is that it enables the Commission to think more strategically. The resources allied to digital transformation in the community engagement area is part of this shift as is the additional planning resources that are added in the voting services business unit.

In this regard, the key difference between Scenario 5 and the previous scenarios is that it positions the Commission as a more sustainable organisation. The greater emphasis on planning over a longer time horizon helps with future proofing the Commission and, just as importantly, the administration of future elections.

Our assessment of this Scenario 5 is summarised in the diagrams below.

Risk, service and cost assessment

	Core objective achievement	Quality and timeliness of services	Strategic priority achievement	Resilience to disruptions	Sustainability of the Commission	Value-for-money	Cost ($m)
Scenario 5							251
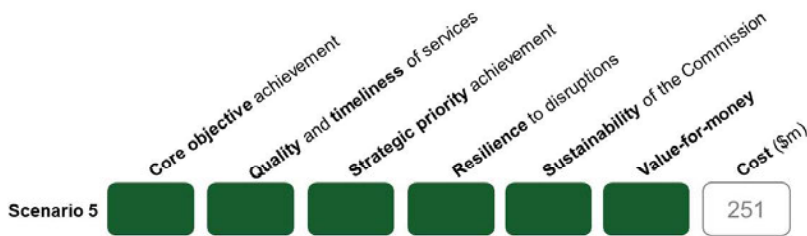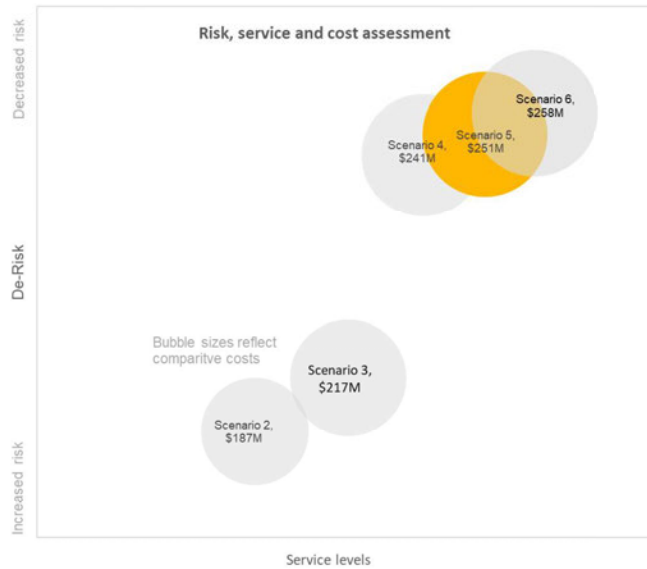
This scenario has merit. It aligns well with all of the criteria we have used in order to assess the scenarios. It builds on the service enhancements and de-risking that is a key feature of Scenario 4 and adds to the resilience and sustainability of the Commission.

We stop short of recommending this as the preferred option, however, for the reason that the extent of change between current state and the vision of Scenario 5 is significant and we are unsure as to how well placed the Commission is to effect such a large change. The change in total FTE staff numbers is large under Scenario 4 (52 FTE in FY23) but larger still under Scenario 5 (89 FTE in FY23) and this will create a range of change management challenges. Recruiting such a large number of additional staff may also be very challenging in the current labour market with, historically, very low rates of unemployment and many employers struggling to find staff.

The Commission's corporate support functions are, currently, under-developed and there are several areas of relative immaturity. That being the case, we consider that a staged approach that heads in the direction of Scenario 5 (or Scenario 6) but does not seek to move there in one large step is warranted. In short, we favour Scenario 4 as a means of re-building the foundations of the Commission, including its corporate support functions, with a view to that laying the foundations for a subsequent shift to the two-cycle approach to election administration.

Moreover, the staged approach that we have in mind would allow further time for working through the design of, and planning for, the change management programme. We consider there is a need for more work to better understand the dynamic impacts of Scenario 5 on the future shape and operating model of the Commission. In this regard, we note that work on the Commission's operating model is currently underway and this could well address the points we are making above and, therefore, provide a firmer basis for supporting Scenario 5.

Scenario 6

Overview

This scenario involves the Commission taking a 10-year horizon to its planning focus.

The defining feature of this scenario compared to Scenario 5 is the ability for the Commission to focus not only on the next election event, but on the future of elections more generally. In addition, the Commission will invest more in improving the current suite of systems and also planning for system replacements. Whereas, Scenario 5 implies an incremental approach to the uptake of technology, in Scenario 6 the Commission has some capacity to take a dual delivery approach in the lead up to GE26 (e.g. running newly automated processes alongside manual processes).

Background and context

The Commission does not currently have the depth of resource capacity to take a 10 year view of how election administration will need to evolve and to analyse, plan, advise on, and build for the sort of change that might be needed. The Commission's current resource level necessitates a focus on the next election event and only allows a three year planning focus.

Description

Voter Experience

Scenario 6, voter experience summary

2,550 Election day voting places	Total voting hours →	Enrolment rates ↗	Turnout rates ↗
700 Advance voting places	Voter satisfaction ↗	Equality of voting ↗	EasyVote Yes
75,500 Advance & election day hours			
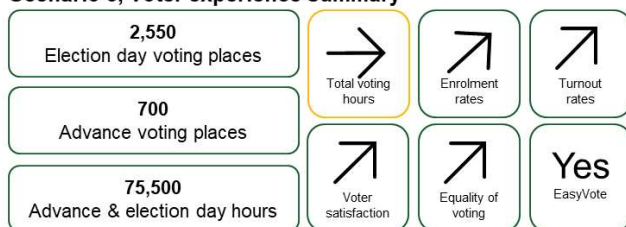
From a voter's perspective, they are unlikely to observe much change, compared to Scenarios 4 and 5, in terms of the options open to them to exercise their vote. Under Scenario 6, a further three FTE staff are added to the Voting Services business unit as follows:

- Administrator
- Advisor
- Trainer.

These roles help to support the longer term planning horizon that is they key feature of Scenario 6.

Although the changes, from a voter perspective, are unlikely to be significant for GE23, the changes may become more noticeable further out. This scenario, more than the others, would enable the Commission to better meet the changing needs of voters and to begin the transition towards digital transformation.

Compared to Scenario 3, Scenario 6 is based on requiring 25 extra FTE staff in the Voting Services business unit for FY23.

Engagement, education and communications

There is no change in the level of resources for the Enrolment and Community Engagement business unit compared to Scenario 5.

Five FTE staff are added to the Communications and Education business unit over and above Scenario 5 in FY23 as follows:

- 1 x Communication Advisor
- 2 x Specialist Digital and Data Communications Advisors
- 2 x Educators.

These resources are intended to enable an enhanced focus on civic education and additional investment to support the uptake of digital technology.

Investing in the Commission

The main change to resource levels under Scenario 6 is in the strategy area.

Scenario 6 includes an additional eight FTE staff, over and above Scenario 5, all of whom would support the strategy work of the Commission. The purpose behind these roles is to strengthen the data analytics and insights capability of the Commission and support the enhanced use of data and planning for digital transformation. The positions established under Scenario 6 are:

- 3x IT Technicians
- 1x Database Administrator
- 1x Data Engineer
- 1x Platform Administrator
- 1x Developer
- 1x Researcher.

The roles combine to enhance the gathering of intelligence and data, turning that into usable information and analysing that information to generate actionable insights at strategic and operational levels. For the purposes of this report, it has been assumed, based on discussions with the Commission, that these roles would sit as part of the strategy team (under which existing data analytical capability currently sits) but it is possible that some positions might fall under IT reflecting the strong systems orientation of some of the roles.

In addition, there are also minor changes across other corporate support functions compared to Scenario 5. A Strategy and Planning Advisor position is added to the Corporate Services business unit reflecting the Commission taking a longer-term view to its planning.

One position is added to the legal team to support analysis of the policy and legislative implications of potential changes which may be required for future elections.

The resourcing requirements for International, IT and Office of the Chief Executive remain unchanged from Scenario 5.

Information Technology

Core IT personnel numbers remain unchanged from Scenario 5 (10 FTE staff). However, there is a significantly enhanced amount of capital expenditure in this scenario ($8 million) compared to Scenario 5 ($4.75 million). The capital expenditure is directed toward:

- undertaking more detailed planning for digital transformation
- running dual systems in the 2023 General Election to enable the transition to greater automation with lower risk.

These investments remediate the current IT environment to a level of service that is more manageable, de-risk improvements to the current system and enable a more strategic approach to the pathway towards digital transformation.

Resources

The resource implications for Scenario 6, compared to Scenario 3, are summarised in the table below. There is a much greater investment in this scenario in Strategy resourcing to enable the Commission to consider the future shape of elections. Compared to Scenario 5, there are also further small increases across Voting Services, Communications and Education, Corporate Services and Legal business units.

Scenario 6 FTE staff	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	158.50	226.08	268.75
Voting Services	+3.81	+15.75	+13.84
E&CE	-	+9.00	+9.00
Communications and Education	-	+14.67	+15.50
International	-	+2.50	+2.50
Corporate support functions	+4.67	+52.42	+50.92
Scenario 6 Total	166.98	320.42	360.51

Costs

The operating cost implications associated with Scenario 6 are shown in the table below. Like Scenario 5, provision has been made for extra accommodation costs reflecting the further increase in personnel numbers.

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	$36.847	$69.130	$111.052	**$217.028**
Voting Services	+$0.414	+$3.370	+$10.365	**+$14.149**
E&CE	$ -	+$0.952	+$1.009	**+$1.961**
Communications and Education	$ -	+$1.868	+$2.079	**+$3.947**
International	$ -	+$0.364	+$0.386	**+$0.749**
Corporate support functions	+$0.614	+$8.138	+$11.057	**+$19.809**
Scenario 6 Total	$37.875	$83.821	$135.947	$257.643

In addition, Scenario 6 includes $8 million of capital expenditure over and above Scenario 3.

Assessment

A key point of difference between this scenario and Scenario 5 is that the resources added under Scenario 6 help to drive a much stronger focus on the future way in which elections are conducted and what this means for how the Commission supports and undertakes the administration of elections. In this regard, Scenario 6 goes beyond planning and preparedness to give greater focus to the future evolution of elections.

This scenario will reveal earlier (but, potentially, also more efficiently) the scope and scale of digital transformation, and the benefits this could confer, and could enable the Commission to be world leading in the conduct of elections.

From a system perspective, this scenario could assist the Ministry of Justice in its stewardship of the Electoral Act as a result of the Commission becoming better placed to influence and consider what legislative changes might be required to support the future conduct of elections.

We consider that this scenario has merit because it strengthens an analytical and evidence/data based approach to the longer term strategy for the administration of elections. Like Scenario 5, it rates highly against the assessment criteria as shown below.

Risk, service and cost assessment

Decreased risk

Scenario 6, $258M

Scenario 5, $251M

Scenario 4, $241M

De-Risk

Bubble sizes reflect comparitve costs

Scenario 3, $217M

Scenario 2, $187M

Increased risk

Service levels

	Core objective achievement	Quality and timeliness of services	Strategic priority achievement	Resilience to disruptions	Sustainability of the Commission	Value-for-money	Cost ($m)
Scenario 6							258

However, like Scenario 5, we stop short of recommending this Scenario ahead of either Scenario 4 or 5. Our reasons reflect those explained in the context of Scenario 5; that is, there is a considerable amount of change implied by Scenario 6. From a change management perspective (and taking into account the constraints inherent in the current labour market), a staged approach is warranted. Scenario 4 helps to establish a platform from which the opportunities to pursue Scenario 6 can be considered further. Scenario 6 has considerable attraction but more work is needed to better understand its implications (e.g. for the Commission's operating model) and what would be involved in its implementation.

Scenario 6 (and 5) should be kept on the table for further consideration once progress has been made with implementing Scenario 4.

4   Funding arrangements

We have considered the timing and structure of the funding arrangements required to support the Commission.

Current funding arrangements
The Commission is funded for all its activities (baseline and election event activities) through one 'Non-Departmental Output Expense' appropriation in Vote Justice.

The appropriation has an embedded 'baseline' amount which covers funding for the Commission's day-to-day operations (largely National Office costs). Additional funding is provided to the baseline to cover:

- The election – the Commission prepares and presents a budget bid to government on a roughly three yearly cycle to cover the forecast costs of the election event.
- New initiatives – if the Commission requires additional funding for new technologies/policies or processes, it prepares a budget bid for these.

Requests for additional funding are usually prepared and submitted in the same year as the election occurs. This is to fit with the Budget timeline whereby bids are typically submitted in December, decisions occur in February/March and decisions are formally announced as part of the Budget in May.

The situation for GE23 is a bit unusual. Ordinarily, decisions would have been made at the recent Budget (in May 2021) regarding the funding for GE23. These decisions were not made, and the Commission will be seeking funding in the lead up to Budget22.

Challenges presented by current arrangements
The current arrangements create a range of problems for the Commission as summarised in the table below.

Issue	Description
Capacity	The practice of requesting funding in the same year as an election places significant pressure on the Commission at a critical time.
Sequencing	The budget bid has to be submitted before the review of the general election has been completed and work on planning for the next election has got underway. This means the bid is not as well informed as it needs to be. The bid sets the funding envelope for the three year election cycle before the work has been done to determine what funding is needed for the next election. In short, budgeting is running ahead of planning which is the wrong way around.
Flexibility	There are three issues: 1) The current funding profile is heavily weighted towards years two and three of the three-year election cycle. This does not reflect the profile of real activity and reduces the ability for the Commission to plan and make investments earlier in the three-year cycle. 2) While the Commission can request a transfer of funding into outyears, it can't bring funding forward, which reinforces a focus on the election year and reduces the amount of planning and preparation that can be undertaken. 3) The current funding arrangements do not provide any flexibility for cost increases that are outside the control of the Commission. There are two parts to these: • Volume driven cost increases – relating to population growth/higher than expected voter turnout. • Input driven cost increases – relating to the core costs of the election (people, postage, paper, printing and property). These

Issue	Description
	costs have gone up by significantly more than inflation and these costs have gone up within a three year cycle (e.g. NZ Post adjustment of prices, introduction of living wage), yet the funding is capped at the start of a three year cycle.
Independence	The Commission cannot choose not to run the elections and the Government is limited in its ability (rightfully so) to influence the Commission's activities. Notwithstanding these points, every three years the Commission has to request funding from the Government for elections. Each funding request places the Government at risk of being perceived to interfere with the administration of elections and, hence, the independence of the Commission and its requirement to run elections in an impartial manner.
Focus	The current funding process focuses the resourcing needs on the election event without active consideration of the Commission's own baseline funding requirements to support the event. This distinction is false and misleading. It has contributed to a situation where the Commission's baseline funding (systems, processes and people) is not sufficient to support elections.

In summary, the current arrangements are administratively burdensome, cut across the Commission's ability to plan effectively for the next election and plan in a more strategic manner, and expose the Government and Commission to independence risks.

Options

We have considered several options to address the challenges outlined above. For the purposes of this analysis, and consistent with our terms of reference, we have excluded consideration of funding arrangements for by-elections, local body elections, referenda, the Māori Electoral Option and the Representation Commission.

The first four options listed below focus on modifications to current arrangements but do not, of themselves involve moving away from the existing approach which is based on annual non-departmental output expense appropriations.

The fifth and sixth options involve shifting to a multi-year appropriation or a Permanent Legislative Authority respectively.

One or more of options 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be combined with options 5 and 6.

1. **Re-phase the appropriation to more accurately reflect the level of activity within a three-year cycle.** A theme associated with most of the scenarios discussed earlier in this report is the importance of early planning and preparation for running an election. Reflecting this, it is desirable that the Commission have as much flexibility as possible to fund planning and preparedness work early in the election cycle. The problem with current arrangements is that it is not possible to bring forward appropriations from one year to earlier years. To alleviate this constraint, there is a case for over-weighting (compared to current practice) the appropriation in year one of the cycle recognising that there is the opportunity to seek a transfer of unspent funds from year one to year two and/or three as required. Instead of transferring unspent funds into an increased appropriation in following years, another option to achieve the same end is to grant the Commission an exemption from having to repay surpluses.[4] Option 1 would still involve the Commission bidding as part of the budget process on a three-yearly basis.

2. **Remove the arbitrary distinction that has been drawn between the Commission's core business-as-usual funding and event funding.** Although the current annual appropriation does not make this distinction, it is clear to us that such a distinction exists within the Commission's approach to budgeting. While that might make some sense in terms of how the Commission wants to manage itself financially, the distinction is artificial. When it comes determining the

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[4] This is provided for under section 165 of the Crown Entities Act (2004) and would require the Commission to be added to Schedule 1 of the Crown Entities Act.

funding the Commission needs to perform its role, distinguishing between BAU and the event is not helpful and is not consistent with the fact that an election runs on a three-year cycle.

3. **Bid for five years funding but review once every three years (i.e. following a general election).** Under the Public Finance Act, appropriations can be for a maximum of five years. There is an opportunity to take advantage of this provision so as to provide the Commission with as much funding certainty as possible at each budget bid process. In addition, the three year process helps to ensure the Commission has full certainty of funding for each election cycle (with the exception of the first) at least five years out from the election.

4. **Include cost-pressures within the approval process**. When budget bids are submitted, an option is to seek approval for cost increases which are outside the control of the Commission. Examples include:

   a. Volume pressures – e.g. additional funding is automatically provided to the Commission (within a specified amount) if the volume of enrolments/voters is more than a certain number

   b. Cost pressures – e.g. additional funding is automatically provided to the Commission (within a specified amount) if the cost of specified inputs is greater than forecast and these cost increases were not able to be managed by the Commission. Further discussion with The Treasury is required to ensure the accounting treatment is understood, but this may be a contingent liability on the Crown accounts.

Under this arrangement, joint Ministers (i.e. Justice and Finance) would be expected to approve the adjustments unless there were good reasons to the contrary. We note that the approach to budgets for Census is to use the cost of the last Census as the starting point for determining the funding for the next Census. This is a not dissimilar approach and could also be considered in the Commission's case.

In addition to the four options set out above, there are two other options both of which are alternatives to the current approach which is based on annual appropriations.

5. **Multi-Year Appropriation (MYA).** Like annual appropriations, the maximum period for a MYA is five years (section 10 (2) and (3) Public Finance Act 1989 refer). The main advantage of the MYA over an annual appropriation is the increased flexibility to shift funding between years. A five-year MYA would not give the Commission funding certainty beyond one election cycle, but it would assist longer term planning (of relevance to Scenarios 5 and 6 in particular) as well as giving it greater flexibility within the election cycle. The nature of the Commission's activities and its costs appear to be consistent with the purpose and intent of a MYA.[5] We note the Census (also a large event of national significance) is funded by a MYA.

6. **Permanent Legislative Authority (PLA)**. PLAs enable expenditure to be incurred outside an appropriation Act. Reflecting this, the determination of funding falls outside the budget bid process. They are generally used where approval is needed for spending of a technical nature (e.g. GST), or the government needs to give assurance about its ability to make payments, or where Parliament wants to signal a commitment not to interfere in certain transactions. Although there are no examples directly comparable with the Commission's situation, we note that PLAs are provided for aspects of expenditure incurred by the Office of the Auditor General and the Office of the Ombudsman. Notwithstanding the lack of direct comparator, the unique role performed by the Commission, and need to be seen to be completely free of any hint of ministerial influence, argue for funding arrangements that are outside of mainstream Budget processes. The PLA option helps in this regard.

Based on the foregoing, there are two main groups of options.

1. Options 1-5 (MYA option): shift funding to a MYA to give greater flexibility to bring forward and push out expenditures; seek funding on a five-year basis so that the Commission can plan into the second election cycle; and include provisions to better manage cost pressures. This option gives the Commission a lot more flexibility and control than it currently has. The main downside is that it would need to still prepare a 'bid' while it is reviewing the previous election. This issue could be mitigated slightly by getting approval of the Minister of Justice and Minister of Finance

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[5] Treasury (2013) A guide to appropriations. Accessed 19 June 2021. https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/guide/guide-appropriations-html#section-4

for the Commission to be able to bid, and for the bid to be as late as possible so that the final or indicative findings of the review are included.

2. Options 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 (PLA option). This option would give the Commission a greater level of independence from the Government and would address the timing issues. The Crown would need assurance that the Commission was acting in a fiscally responsible way, so even if funding approval was easier, the Crown would need to think about the governance, accountability and reporting requirements.

This PLA option would require legislation to implement. While we consider this option has merit and is worth considering, it is not an option in the short-term because of the need for legislation.

Recommendation

From a first-principles perspective, there is a strong case for the Commission being funded by PLA. However, because this option would require legislative change, it is unlikely to be an option in the short-term. Accordingly, and as a good interim arrangement, the MYA option (options 1-5 above) is recommended.

Appendix A: Restrictions

This report has been prepared for the Electoral Commission. This report has been prepared solely for this purpose and should not be relied upon for any other purpose. We accept no liability to any party should it be used for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

This report has been prepared solely for use by the Electoral Commission and may not be copied or distributed to third parties without our prior written consent.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, PwC accepts no duty of care to any third party in connection with the provision of this report and/or any related information or explanation (together, the "Information"). Accordingly, regardless of the form of action, whether in contract, tort (including without limitation, negligence) or otherwise, and to the extent permitted by applicable law, PwC accepts no liability of any kind to any third party and disclaims all responsibility for the consequences of any third party acting or refraining to act in reliance on the Information.

We have not independently verified the accuracy of information provided to us and have not conducted any form of audit in respect of the Electoral Commission. Accordingly, we express no opinion on the reliability, accuracy, or completeness of the information provided to us and upon which we have relied.

The statements and opinions expressed herein have been made in good faith, and on the basis that all information relied upon is true and accurate in all material respects, and not misleading by reason of omission or otherwise.

The statements and opinions expressed in this report are based on information available as at the date of the report.

We reserve the right, but will be under no obligation, to review or amend our report, if any additional information, which was in existence on the date of this report, was not brought to our attention, or subsequently comes to light.

This report is issued pursuant to the terms and conditions set out in our Consultancy Services Order dated 12 May 2021

Appendix B: Service and capability description for Scenario 1

Scenario 1 is based on the assumption that GE23 has to be delivered for $136 million.

As we have discussed in the report, we do not view this as being a realistic scenario. The Commission has attempted to identify cuts in services levels and capabilities that would need to be made in order to bring the cost of delivering GE23 for $136 million. This is set out below.

Voter experience
To try and fit within a budget of $136m, the level of service experienced by voters would be significantly inferior to that in GE20.

- Advance voting would be limited to the statutory minimum, which is one advance voting place per electorate, and would be available for only a very short time ahead of election day. There would be no advance voting mobile managers (who visit those unable to get to a voting place). There would be no early count of votes. The 68% of voters who chose to take advantage of advance voting in GE20 would have to make other, less convenient, arrangements.

- The number of election day voting places would increase slightly to around 2800 compared to 2,567 election day voting places in GE20. This is needed in order to accommodate voters who will be forced into voting on election day.

- Dictation voting services would be cut back. Services would continue for overseas voters who meet eligibility criteria (because this is a statutory requirement) but nothing beyond that.

- Takeaway and postal voting services would be reduced and communications to raise awareness of them would also be reduced. We note that as part of GE20, and in part for COVID-19 contingency) the Commission had built capacity for 380,000 postal votes.

- Approximately 80% of voting places would be schools as these are among the least cost form of voting place (and schools are required, under the Electoral Act, to provide facilities for voting).

- There would be fewer more convenient, but expensive, voting places including, for example, supermarkets and shopping centres.

- Cuts would be made to the number of staff that would otherwise fulfil roles in electorate headquarters and regional offices and, accordingly, there would be less support and customer service in the lead up to the election and through the delivery of services. Those staff that are hired will be brought on closer to the time of the election.

- Minimal physical security would be provided at electorate headquarters and voting places.

- Cuts would be made in voting-related supplies and there would be less contingency across all of the main consumables such as carboard items, paper for ballot papers, the number of special vote declarations, ballot papers and so on.

- The level of effort directed toward planning and preparing for GE23 would be pared back. For example, this would result in less training of field staff and less collateral to support their training and less input from field staff into election processes (e.g. reduced face-to-face training, no dress rehearsals or simulations to ensure that processes work as intended and that staff are fully familiar with those processes all of which are an important part of ensuring smooth voting place operations).

- Normally, there is a large surge in the number of enrolments leading up to election day. As part of GE20, the Commission brought on three data entry teams to deal with the surge. Under Scenario 1, the number of teams would have to be cut which means it would take longer for the Commission to process enrolment applications. In turn, this has the potential to delay delivery of election results.

Engagement, education and communications
Voters would not receive the level of information and encouragement to enrol and vote as they did in GE20 (or GE17).

- The EasyVote pack will be removed. This artefact is a key part of preparing electors for the election and reminding them of the upcoming election. The pack is something that voters are expected to bring with them when they vote as it facilitates the process when they arrive at a voting place. Reliance would be placed on using the website to convey the information contained

in the EasyVote pack. This will disadvantage those who do not have access to, or prefer not to use, the internet and, more generally, will mean voters are less informed and prepared

- Less activity will be undertaken aimed at encouraging enrolment and voting, and reducing barriers to voting. Communications and education will be "plain vanilla" with campaigns limited to mainstream audiences. The nature of advertising campaigns is transactional (e.g. reminding people there is an election) rather than being motivational (i.e. promoting the importance and benefits of voting).

- There will be a reduced number and duration of mainstream advertising (e.g. no reminder or last chance messaging).

- The Commission would not be able to repeat some types of communications activity undertaken as part of GE20. For example, it would not be able provide date-driven voting place information on outdoor screens, mobile phones and locally distributed materials.

- There will be no targeted activity directed to priority groups including Māori, Pacific peoples, other ethnic communities and youth.

- There will be no work with communities.

- There will be little, or no, civics education. Substantial cuts will have to be made to the schools programme and the kids voting programme. The Commission would probably not be able to keep curriculum-aligned teaching resources up-to-date.

Cuts in Commission capability

Under Scenario 1, the Commission would be forced to retrench in order to live within available funding. A number of functions are scaled back and some are terminated.

- There would be no programme management functionality to support planning for, and delivery of, the election.

- Strategy-related work-streams would be pared back to only the highest priority – risk and security management which focuses on major risks to elections and mitigating and responding to those risks. The Commission would strive to continue to be a part of the inter-agency group it established to address security issues but the need to cut back on resources means it is unlikely that the Commission could continue to lead this group (or, at least, do so effectively).

- Work on a future-focused services strategy would be curtailed and, in all likelihood, paused indefinitely. The Commission's intention to build a more strategic approach to its work would not be fulfilled.

- Data analysis/analytics would be pared back. Updating of data would be less frequent, there would be less analysis of that data and business units across the Commission would have reduced access to data insights to help inform business strategy and plans.

- Corporate support functions that are already under-strength for the size and complexity of the organisation would also be pared back slightly although the scope for doing this is fairly limited. The Corporate Services team currently comprises a manager plus 14 staff (excluding casual staff but including a vacancy in the HR team and three positions recently approved by the Board relating to finance, procurement and property). The new positions would continue but the vacancy in the HR team would not be filled. Cuts would be made to casual staff and the size of the administration team (currently three staff) would be reduced to two staff.

- The cuts in corporate support functions means that managers in external facing parts of the Commission (e.g. voting services) would have even less support than they do now (and support is already below what is needed). More so than is true currently, managers will have less time to manage because of reduced support. Managers, and the organisation more generally, would be very reactive (i.e. responding to issues as they arise) with no or little capacity to engage in proactive management of issues.

- Cuts would be made to non-personnel costs including mail and stationary, lease costs, phones and IT including cuts to the level of support for core systems.

- A proposed new applicant management system which is being implemented in FY22 would proceed but only for Voting Services and not the rest of the Commission. Investment in a replacement FMIS would proceed as planned.

- IT services would be reduced. Several contract, fixed term and permanent positions are disestablished which removes programme management, system analyst support and system security capability. Cuts are also made in the amounts spent on third party providers in relation to system development services. Certification and accreditation of systems and system providers (which provides assurance that information and its associated technology are well managed), is pared back to the most critical core election systems only.

Appendix C: Resource and cost tables

This appendix provides a more detailed breakdown of the resource and cost tables that are included in the body of the report.

Scenario 1 is not included below as it is discussed in Appendix B and is not considered feasible make the level of cuts that would be needed to align with the current appropriation of $136 million.

The tables below indicate the FTE staff and cost implications for each of the scenarios.

For scenarios 2, 4, 5 and 6, the tables show the reduction in, or addition of, FTE staff, and costs, relative to Scenario 3. That is, they describe the level of change compared to Scenario 3.

In contrast, the tables relating to Scenario 3 show the number of FTE staff and operating costs for that scenario. As explained earlier in the report, Scenario 3 is, for the most part, is based on plans for GE23 that were developed in December 2020. Scenario 3 is, in effect, the scenario against which all other scenarios are compared.

Scenario 3 Total FTE staff

Business group (FTE staff)	FY22	FY23	FY24
Voting Services	17.50	25.00	25.00
E&CE	81.50	125.00	163.75
Communications and Education	9.00	13.00	10.50
International	0.00	0.50	0.50
Corporate Services	20.00	28.58	35.00
IT	18.00	20.00	20.00
Legal & Policy	5.00	5.00	5.00
Office of CEO	5.00	5.00	5.00
Strategy	2.50	4.00	4.00
Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**

Scenario 3 Total Operating Costs

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Voting Services	$4.713	$21.128	$50.860	**$76.701**
E&CE	$1.085	$9.720	$10.037	**$20.842**
Communications and Education	$2.487	$5.853	$10.170	**$18.510**
International	$0.065	$0.158	$0.184	**$0.407**
Corporate Services	$17.288	$18.802	$19.114	**$55.204**
IT	$8.459	$9.486	$17.966	**$35.912**
Legal & Policy	$0.594	$0.615	$0.685	**$1.895**
Office of CEO	$1.538	$2.461	$1.455	**$5.453**
Strategy	$0.618	$0.906	$0.581	**$2.105**
Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**

FTE staff – scenario comparisons

Scenario 2

Business group (FTE staff)	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**
Voting Services	-	-	-
E&CE	(12.50)	(56.00)	(95.75)
Communications and Education	-	-	(1.00)
International	-	(0.50)	(0.50)
Corporate Services	-	(0.58)	(1.00)
IT	-	(2.00)	(1.00)
Legal & Policy	-	-	-
Office of CEO	-	(1.00)	(1.00)
Strategy	-	(2.00)	-
Scenario 2 Total	**146.00**	**164.00**	**168.50**

Scenario 4

Business group (FTE staff)	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**
Voting Services	+0.31	+10.50	+7.84
E&CE	-	+5.00	+5.00
Communications and Education	-	+5.67	+6.50
International	-	+0.50	+0.50
Corporate Services	+2.00	+17.42	+13.75
IT	-	+7.00	+7.00
Legal & Policy	-	-	-
Office of CEO	-	+3.00	+3.00
Strategy	-	-	+1.00
Scenario 4 Total	**160.81**	**275.17**	**313.34**

Scenario 5

Business group (FTE staff)	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	**158.50**	**226.08**	**268.75**
Voting Services	+3.81	+15.75	+10.84
E&CE	-	+9.00	+9.00
Communications and Education	-	+9.67	+10.50
International	-	+2.50	+2.50
Corporate Services	+2.67	+25.42	+23.92
IT	-	+10.00	+10.00
Legal & Policy	+1.00	+1.00	+1.00
Office of CEO	-	+3.00	+3.00
Strategy	-	+3.00	+3.00
Scenario 5 Total	**165.98**	**305.42**	**342.51**

Scenario 6

Business group (FTE staff)	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scenario 3 Total	158.50	226.08	268.75
Voting Services	+3.81	+15.75	+13.84
E&CE	-	+9.00	+9.00
Communications and Education	-	+14.67	+15.50
International	-	+2.50	+2.50
Corporate Services	+2.67	+26.42	+24.92
IT	-	+10.00	+10.00
Legal & Policy	+2.00	+2.00	+2.00
Office of CEO	-	+3.00	+3.00
Strategy	-	+11.00	+11.00
Scenario 6 Total	166.98	320.42	360.51

Operating costs – scenario comparisons

Scenario 2

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	$36.847	$69.130	$111.052	$217.028
Voting Services	-$0.007	-$0.197	-$11.597	-$11.800
E&CE	-$0.841	-$3.956	-$7.004	-$11.801
Communications and Education	$ -	$ -	-$4.610	-$4.610
International	$ -	-$0.093	-$0.099	-$0.192
Corporate Services	$ -	-$0.101	-$0.174	-$0.275
IT	$ -	-$0.533	-$0.503	-$1.036
Legal & Policy	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Office of CEO	$ -	-$0.100	-$0.107	-$0.207
Strategy	$ -	-$0.252	$ -	-$0.252
Scenario 2 Total	$35.999	$63.898	$86.959	$186.855

Scenario 4

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	$36.847	$69.130	$111.052	$217.028
Voting Services	+$0.019	+$2.786	+$9.515	+$12.320
E&CE	$ -	+$0.479	+$0.507	+$0.986
Communications and Education	$ -	+$0.693	+$0.833	+$1.527
International	$ -	+$0.093	+$0.099	+$0.192
Corporate Services	+$0.308	+$2.349	+$1.896	+$4.553
IT	$ -	+$1.177	+$2.239	+$3.415
Legal & Policy	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Office of CEO	$ -	+$0.383	+$0.406	+$0.789
Strategy	$ -	$ -	+$0.259	+$0.259
Scenario 4 Total	$37.174	$77.089	$126.806	$241.070

Scenario 5

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**
Voting Services	+$0.414	+$3.370	+$9.915	**+$13.699**
E&CE	$ -	+$0.952	+$1.009	**+$1.961**
Communications and Education	$ -	+$1.240	+$1.413	**+$2.653**
International	$ -	+$0.364	+$0.386	**+$0.749**
Corporate Services	+$0.367	+$3.635	+$3.655	**+$7.656**
IT	$ -	+$1.681	+$3.352	**+$5.033**
Legal & Policy	+$0.150	+$0.150	+$0.150	**+$0.449**
Office of CEO	$ -	+$0.423	+$0.446	**+$0.869**
Strategy	$ -	+$0.532	+$0.564	**+$1.096**
Scenario 5 Total	**$37.777**	**$81.475**	**$131.942**	**$251.195**

Scenario 6

Function ($m)	FY22	FY23	FY24	Three year total
Scenario 3 Total	**$36.847**	**$69.130**	**$111.052**	**$217.028**
Voting Services	+$0.414	+$3.370	+$10.365	**+$14.149**
E&CE	$ -	+$0.952	+$1.009	**+$1.961**
Communications and Education	$ -	+$1.868	+$2.079	**+$3.947**
International	$ -	+$0.364	+$0.386	**+$0.749**
Corporate Services	+$0.367	+$3.756	+$3.783	**+$7.906**
IT	$ -	+$1.646	+$4.387	**+$6.034**
Legal & Policy	+$0.248	+$0.248	+$0.248	**+$0.743**
Office of CEO	$ -	+$0.423	+$0.446	**+$0.869**
Strategy	$ -	+$2.065	+$2.193	**+$4.258**
Scenario 6 Total	**$37.875**	**$83.821**	**$135.947**	**$257.643**

Report into the 2020 General Election

Prepared by Kantar New Zealand for the Electoral Commission

December 2020

Contents

Tables

Background

The Electoral Commission is responsible for registering electors and maintaining electoral rolls, conducting parliamentary elections and referendums, advising Ministers and Select Committees of Parliament on electoral matters, promoting public awareness of and engagement in electoral matters and supporting the Representation Commission in its determination of electoral boundaries.

The Electoral Commission undertakes a survey of voters and non-voters following each General Election. The primary objectives of the survey are to:

– Measure voter satisfaction with the services the Electoral Commission provides
– Understand the level of engagement with the voting process, barriers to voting, and how to address these barriers for each identified population group

The Electoral Commission commissioned Kantar to conduct a survey with voters and non-voters after the General Election in 2020. Similar surveys have been conducted on behalf of the Electoral Commission and its predecessor the Chief Electoral Office since 2005. Where possible this report includes comparisons to the 2017 results.

Groups of particular interest to the Electoral Commission who have had lower levels of participation are those people who identify themselves as:

– Māori
– Pasifika
– Asian
– Youth (18-29)
– Non-voters

Results for these groups have been highlighted throughout this report.

Methodology

Questionnaire

One questionnaire was developed to meet the research objectives, covering both voters and non-voters. The questionnaire was largely based on that used in 2014 and 2017. Some extra questions/sections were added and these have been noted throughout this report.

The final average interview length (via telephone) was 24 minutes.

Sample design/ quotas

The post-Election study was conducted through multiple data collection methods to ensure the most robust and representative sample possible. The total sample was broken into the following targets:

– A random sample of 750 people eligible to vote, which was collected through CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) surveying by random digit dialling, rather than from lists generated from the electoral roll. This was to ensure we collected the views and attitudes of people who didn't enrol. Some of the following target groups were also collected in this sample:

– A minimum sample of 150 people who identified themselves as Māori and were eligible to vote, which was achieved through random digit dialling and CATI surveying of those identified as being of Māori ethnicity;

– A minimum sample of 150 people who identified themselves as Pasifika ethnicity and who were eligible to vote, which was collected through a mixture of nationwide CATI and face to face surveying in Auckland;

– A minimum sample of 150 people who identified themselves as Asian ethnicity and who were eligible to vote, which was collected through a mixture of nationwide CATI and face to face surveying in Auckland;

– A minimum sample of 150 people aged between 18-29 (Youth) who were eligible to vote, which was collected through nationwide CATI surveying;

– A minimum sample of 150 people who were eligible to vote but did not vote in the 2020 General Election, which was collected through nationwide CATI surveying.

The following sample sizes were collected:

Group	Sample size
European	623
Māori	158
Pasifika	153
Asian	155
Youth (18-29)	155
Non-voters	157*
Total	**1038**

*Please note there were five respondents in the sample who only voted in the referendums and not the general election. They are therefore classified as non-voters for some questions where the sample size will be 162.

Weighting

All data was post-weighted to ensure it was representative of the New Zealand population (based on the 2018 Census where applicable) by:

– Age group (18-29 years, 30-49 years, 50 years plus)
– Gender
– Region (Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Other North Island, Other South Island)
– Ethnicity (European, Māori, Pasifika, Asian) allowing for multiple ethnicities
– Voters and non-voters
– Disability

Response rate

In total the CATI survey received a response rate of 15%. The main reason for non-response was refusal to participate.

Fieldwork period

The surveying was conducted between the 20th of October 2020 and the 24th of November 2020.

Margin of error

The table below shows the sample sizes and accompanying margins of error for the key quota groups. These margins of error are shown to give an indication of the robustness of the results for each group. A 95% confidence level is used for significance testing and 50% test proportion assumed in order to give a maximum margin of error for each group.

Quota group	Sample size	Margin of error
Māori	158	+/- 7.8%
Pasifika	153	+/- 7.9%
Asian	155	+/- 7.9%
Youth (18-29)	155	+/- 7.9%
Disabled	241	+/- 6.3%
Non-voters	157	+/- 7.8%
Total	**1038**	**+/- 3.0%**

Note that arrows (↓ ↑) are used in tables to indicate 2020 results that are significantly higher or lower than in 2017.

Notes on reading this report

The results for the 2020 survey have been compared to 2017 where applicable however there are a number of situations where a comparison is not possible and this has been indicated by a dash (-) in the relevant table.

Situations which result in data being unavailable for 2017 include:

– The question has been added for 2020
– The question wording/code frame has changed significantly enough to make results incomparable

Not all columns in this report add to 100% due to rounding or questions with multiple response categories.

Enrolment status and behaviour

This section of the study focused on understanding enrolment status and behaviour.

Enrolled to vote in the 2020 NZ General Election

In total 94% of eligible voters surveyed say they were enrolled to vote in the 2020 General Election which is very close to the actual rate of 94.1%. This is similar to the survey result in 2017 (92%).

Table 1: Enrolled to vote in the NZ General Election

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	92%	94%	77%↓	86%↑	91%	93%	78%	88%	91%	92%	95%	96%	64%	69%
No	6%	4%	17%↑	10%↓	7%	5%	15%	8%	8%	6%	4%	3%	29%	24%
Not sure (but I know what enrolment is)	1%	1%	4%	3%	1%	3%	5%	3%	1%	2%	0%	1%	4%	5%
Not sure what enrolment is	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	2%
n =	*1164*	*1038*	*284*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*179*	*153*	*186*	*155*	*184*	*241*	*163*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to report being enrolled in 2020:

– Those of European ethnicity (96% versus 90% for non-European ethnicity)
– Those aged 50+ (99% versus 91% aged 18-49)

The following people were *less likely* to report being enrolled in 2020:

– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (88% versus 95% for non-Pasifika ethnicity)
– Those who are female (92% versus 96% for male)

The following people were *more likely* to report being enrolled in 2020 compared to 2017:

– Those who are male (96% versus 91% for males in 2017)
– Those aged 18-29 (86% versus 77% for Youth in 2017)

Reasons for initially enrolling to vote

Two in five eligible voters (42%) said they enrolled to vote because they wanted their opinion to count, one third (33%) said because it is compulsory, and one in ten (9%) did so because they want to make a difference. Seventeen percent of people gave another reason for enrolling. The number of eligible voters enrolling because it is compulsory is significantly higher than for the 2017 General Election, while the number of people enrolling to make a difference is significantly lower than the 2017 General Election.

Table 2: Reasons for initially enrolling to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Wanted my opinion to count	44%	42%	37%	37%	44%	40%	51%	46%	52%	45%	44%	36%	24%	30%
You have to, it's the law	16%↓	33%↑	12%↓	20%↑	18%	21%	24%	27%	21%	27%	13%↓	36%↑	22%↓	34%↑
Wanted to make a difference	19%↑	9%↓	12%	12%	19%	12%	40%↑	17%↓	36%↑	18%↓	21%↑	8%↓	9%	4%
Someone I know encouraged me to	6%	6%	18%	17%	3%	8%	13%	8%	6%	7%	4%	7%	16%	17%
I saw an ad that encouraged me to enrol*	-	1%	-	3%	-	1%	-	0%	-	0%	-	1%	-	1%
Someone from the Electoral Commission talked to me about enrolling*	-	1%	-	3%	-	4%	-	1%	-	0%	-	0%	-	4%
Another reason	29%↑	17%↓	28%	20%	22%	20%	10%	17%	22%	17%	28%↑	15%↓	29%↑	15%↓
Not sure	3%	3%	5%	1%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	5%	4%	3%	8%	6%
n =	1092	983	236	132	180	150	149	136	177	141	175	233	94	110

New statement added in 2020

Of the 17% who gave another reason for enrolling, the majority were:

– It's a good thing to do (e.g. "For New Zealand", "It's my right to vote")
– It's a duty or obligation
– Became of age since the last election
– Received papers in mail so enrolled

People who say it was because they *wanted their opinion to count* were more likely to have voted (44% versus 30% for those who didn't vote). These people were less likely to be disabled (36% versus 44% for non-disabled).

People who say it was because *you have to it's the law* were more likely to be aged between 30-49 (39% versus 30% for other age groups), of European ethnicity (37% versus 23% for non-European ethnicity). These people were less likely to be aged 18-29 (20% versus 37% for 30+) and Māori (21% versus 35% for non-Māori).

People who say it was because they *wanted to make a difference* were more likely to be of Pasifika ethnicity (17% versus 9% for non-Pasifika ethnicity), of Asian ethnicity (18% versus 8% for non-Asian ethnicity), and to have voted (10% versus 4% for those who didn't vote). People who say it was because they *wanted to make a difference* were less likely to be aged 50+ (7% versus 11% aged under 50) and of European ethnicity (7% versus 15% for non-European ethnicity).

People who say it was because *someone they knew encouraged them to* were more likely to be aged 18-29 (17% versus 3% aged 30+) and female (8% versus 4% for males).

Intention to enrol

[% who have not enrolled but are eligible to do so].

Among those who are not enrolled but are eligible to do so (6% of our sample), fifteen percent say they definitely intend to enrol with almost one third (31%) saying they intended to. There are no statistically significant differences between intention to enrol compared to the 2017 General Election.

Table 3: Intention to enrol

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes, definitely	18%	15%	14%	15%	14%	46%	16%	27%	28%	0%	4%	33%	18%	13%
Yes, I intend to	18%	31%	24%	32%	19%	32%	34%	27%	25%	40%	26%	26%	18%	32%
Not sure	25%	29%	24%	34%	38%	23%	34%	26%	47%	35%	21%	14%	25%	29%
Probably not	18%	11%	24%	14%	19%	0%	12%	6%	0%	20%	36%	12%	18%	11%
Definitely not	21%	14%	14%	6%	10%	0%	4%	14%	0%	6%	14%	14%	21%	15%
n =	*71*	*53*	*48*	*23*	*16*	*8*	*29*	*17*	*9*	*12*	*9*	*8*	*70*	*50*

Base size is too small to look at differences between groups

Attrition voting rate

[% eligible to vote in both 2020 and 2017].

Three quarters (76%) of respondents eligible to vote in both 2017 and 2020, did vote in both elections. This is consistent with 2017 when 77% of respondents eligible to vote in the 2014 and 2017 General Elections said they had voted in both general elections.

The voting attrition rate remained stable, with 7% of people eligible to vote in 2017 and 2020 voting in the 2017 General Election and not the 2020 General Election.

Table 4: Voting behaviour of those eligible in the most recent and last election

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Voted in 2017 Election but not the 2020 Election (attrition rate)	5%	7%	11%	12%	4%↓	11%↑	15%	6%	6%	10%	7%	8%
Voted in 2017 Election and the 2020 Election	77%	76%	48%	50%	73%	64%	63%	73%	80%	70%	76%	79%
Did not vote in 2017 Election but did in 2020 Election (acquisition rate)	5%	7%	13%	15%	8%	10%	5%	13%	7%	8%	4%	7%
Did not vote in either Election	12%	10%	28%	23%	16%	14%	18%	8%	7%	12%	13%↑	6%↓
n =	*1015*	*960*	*161*	*107*	*162*	*152*	*151*	*126*	*145*	*133*	*166*	*229*

The following people were *more likely* to have voted in both the 2020 and 2017 General Elections:

– Those aged 50+ (91% versus 65% for those aged 18-49 or 30-49)
– Those of European ethnicity (79% versus 68% for non-European)
– Males (79% versus 74% for females)

The following people were *less likely* to have voted in both the 2020 and 2017 General Elections:

– Those of Māori ethnicity (64% versus 78% for non-Māori ethnicity)
– Those aged 18-29 (50% versus 82% aged 30+)
– Those aged 30-49 (72% versus 79% for other age groups)

Awareness and knowledge of the General Election

Understanding of the voting process

The 2020 study measured the level of understanding of the voting process overall and key aspects of the process. The chart below summarises the results at the overall level and the following sections provide more information. In total, understanding is high with over half saying they have an excellent understanding of the overall voting process, how to vote and where to vote. While there is still understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place (69% good or excellent understanding), understanding of this aspect is weakest with 31% saying they have a poor or little to no understanding.

Figure 5: Aspects of understanding of the voting process (total sample)
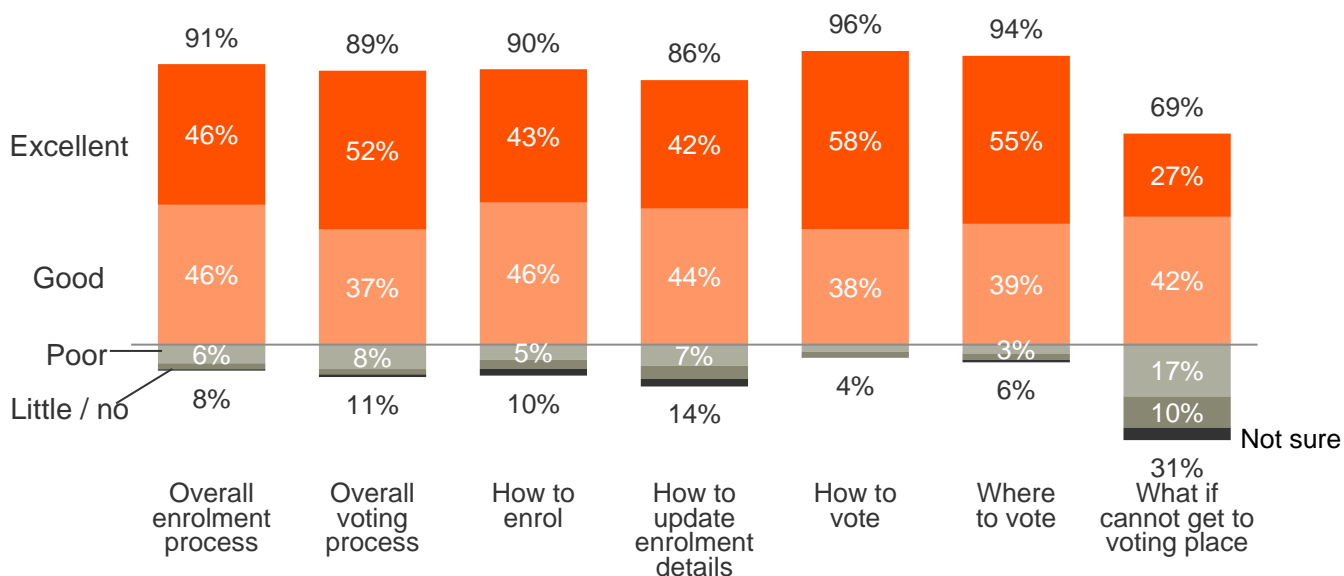
Overall understanding of the voting process

A majority (89%) of people said they had at least a good understanding of the process for voting in the General Election, including how to vote, where, when and what do to if you can't get to a voting place, with a large proportion (52%) saying they had an excellent understanding. Only 10% said they had a poor or very poor understanding.

Table 6: Overall understanding of the voting process

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Very good understanding	54%	52%	31%	31%	51%	47%	44%	47%	38%	50%	51%	47%	20%	20%
Good understanding	35%	37%	44%	47%	30%↓	42%↑	45%	41%	43%	33%	39%	45%	45%	47%
Poor understanding	8%	8%	21%	17%	12%	9%	9%	7%	11%	13%	7%	7%	26%	23%
Very poor understanding	2%	2%	4%	4%	5%↑	1%↓	2%	4%	6%	3%	2%	0%	8%	9%
Not sure	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
n =	*1005*	*1038*	*251*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*102*	*153*	*107*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*149*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or very poor** understanding of the voting process:

– Those aged 18-29 (21% versus 6% aged 30+)
– Those of Asian ethnicity (16% versus 9% for non-Asian ethnicity)
– Those who didn't vote in 2020 (31% versus 5% for those who did vote)
– Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (36% versus 8% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or very poor** understanding of the voting process:

– Those of European ethnicity (8% versus 15% for non-European ethnicity)
– Those aged 50+ (3% versus 14% aged 18-49)

Overall understanding of the enrolling process

The vast majority (91%) of people said they had at least a good understanding of the process for enrolling in the General Election, including how to enrol, and when and how to update your details, with nearly half (46%) saying they had an excellent understanding.

Table 7: Overall understanding of the enrolment process

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Very good understanding	48%	46%	23%	27%	51%	42%	40%	48%	34%	43%	44%	47%	21%	25%
Good understanding	42%	46%	48%	55%	34%↓	49%↑	46%	39%	46%	45%	45%	45%	50%	54%
Poor understanding	7%	6%	23%↑	14%↓	8%	7%	11%	8%	13%	8%	6%	6%	20%↑	13%↓
Very poor understanding	3%	2%	6%	3%	6%	2%	3%	4%	5%	3%	4%↑	1%↓	8%	8%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1005*	*1038*	*251*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*102*	*153*	*107*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*149*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or very poor** understanding of the enrolment process:

– Those aged 18-29 (17% versus 5% aged 30+)
– Those who didn't vote in 2020 (21% versus 5% for those who did vote)
– Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (29% versus 7% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or very poor** understanding of the enrolment process:

– Those of European ethnicity (6% versus 12% for non-European ethnicity)
– Those aged 50+ (3% versus 11% aged 18-49)

Understanding of how to enrol

The large majority (90%) of people said they had at least a good understanding of how to enrol to vote, with a large proportion (43%) saying they had an excellent understanding. Only eight percent said they had a poor or little or no understanding.

Table 8: Understanding of how to enrol to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent understanding	47%	43%	27%	31%	53%↑	42%↓	36%	49%	35%	46%	41%	45%	20%↓	28%↑
Good understanding	42%	46%	49%	55%	30%↓	51%↑	54%↑	36%↓	50%	45%	45%	44%	51%	51%
Poor understanding	6%	5%	14%	8%	7%	5%	5%	9%	10%	5%	9%	5%	15%	11%
Little or no understanding	4%	3%	9%↑	4%↓	10%↑	1%↓	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	13%↑	7%↓
Not sure	1%↓	2%↑	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%↓	3%↑
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1005*	*1038*	*251*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*102*	*153*	*107*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*149*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of how to enrol to vote:

– Those aged 18-29 (12% versus 7% aged 30+)
– Those who didn't vote in 2020 (18% versus 6% for those who did vote)
– Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (30% versus 7% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of how to enrol to vote:

– Those aged 50+ (5% versus 10% aged 18-49)
– Those of European ethnicity (7% versus 11% for non-European ethnicity)

Understanding of how to update your enrolment details

A majority (86%) of people said they had at least a good understanding of how to update your enrolment details, with a large proportion (42%) saying they had an excellent understanding. Only 11% said they had a poor or little or no understanding.

Table 9: Understanding of how to update your enrolment details

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent understanding	46%	42%	24%	28%	49%	41%	39%	46%	39%	44%	41%	42%	22%	26%
Good understanding	39%↓	44%↑	40%	46%	32%↓	46%↑	36%	37%	35%	41%	40%	44%	37%	44%
Poor understanding	9%	7%	21%	14%	10%	9%	16%	10%	13%	9%	14%↑	5%↓	24%↑	14%↓
Little or no understanding	5%	4%	13%	9%	9%↑	2%↓	9%	6%	8%	6%	5%	5%	15%	11%
Not sure	1%↓	2%↑	2%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	5%	0%	0%	2%	1%↓	5%↑
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1005*	*1038*	*251*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*102*	*153*	*107*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*149*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of how to update your enrolment details:

– Those aged 18-29 (24% versus 7% aged 30+)
– Those who didn't vote in 2020 (25% versus 8% for those who did vote)
– Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (41% versus 9% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of how to update your enrolment details:

– Those aged 50+ (4% versus 16% aged 18-49)
– Those of European ethnicity (8% versus 18% for non-European ethnicity)

Understanding of how to vote

The large majority (96%) of people had at least a good understanding of how to vote, with most of these (58%) saying they had an excellent understanding. Only 4% said they had a poor or little or no understanding.

Table 10: Understanding of how to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent understanding	62%	58%	42%	40%	58%	51%	41%	57%	47%	56%	57%	58%	24%	30%
Good understanding	31%↓	38%↑	39%↓	52%↑	25%↓	40%↑	50%	33%	43%	38%	35%	40%	47%	51%
Poor understanding	5%↑	2%↓	13%↑	6%↓	10%	9%	6%	5%	8%↑	1%↓	5%↑	1%↓	19%↑	10%↓
Little or no understanding	3%	2%	5%	2%	7%	0%	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%	1%	10%	8%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Rather not say	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1005*	*1038*	*251*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*102*	*153*	*107*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*149*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of how to vote:

– Those aged 18-29 (8% versus 3% aged 30+)
– Those of Māori ethnicity (9% versus 3% for non-Māori ethnicity)
– Those who didn't vote in 2020 (18% versus 1% for those who did vote)
– Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (21% versus 3% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of how to vote:

– Those aged 50+ (1% versus 6% aged 18-49)
– Those of European ethnicity (3% versus 6% for non-European ethnicity)
– Those who are disabled (2% versus 5% for non-disabled)

Understanding of where you can vote

The large majority (94%) of people had at least a good understanding of where to vote, with most of these (55%) saying they had an excellent understanding. There were fewer people saying they had an excellent understanding compared to the 2017 General Election (55% versus 63% in 2017). Only 5% said they had a poor or little or no understanding.

Table 11: Understanding of where you can vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent understanding	63%↑	55%↓	41%	37%	60%↑	48%↓	51%	58%	52%	52%	62%↑	49%↓	29%	30%
Good understanding	31%↓	39%↑	42%	51%	29%↓	47%↑	41%	32%	42%	42%	31%↓	41%↑	49%	51%
Poor understanding	4%	3%	12%	6%	7%↑	2%↓	6%	4%	2%	3%	6%	6%	14%↑	6%↓
Little or no understanding	2%	2%	5%	3%	2%	1%	3%	4%	4%	3%	0%	1%	7%	9%
Not sure	0%↓	1%↑	0%	2%	1%	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%↓	4%↑
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1005*	*1038*	*251*	*155*	*196*	*158*	*102*	*153*	*107*	*155*	*179*	*241*	*149*	*162*

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of where to vote:

–   Those aged 18-29 (10% versus 3% aged 30+)
–   Those who didn't vote in 2020 (15% versus 3% for those who did vote)
–   Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (15% versus 4% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of where to vote:

–   Those aged 50+ (2% versus 7% aged 18-49)

Understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place

Two thirds (69%) of people had at least a good understanding of what to do if you could not get to a voting place, of which 27% had an excellent understanding and 42% had a good understanding. There were fewer people saying they had an excellent understanding compared to the 2017 General Election (27% versus 35% in 2017). Just over a quarter of people (27%) said they had a poor or little or no understanding.

Table 12: Understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent understanding	35%↑	27%↓	12%	12%	38%↑	25%↓	29%	38%	25%	31%	35%	30%	11%	9%
Good understanding	33%↓	42%↑	30%↓	39%↑	27%↓	43%↑	42%	33%	45%	41%	29%↓	44%↑	29%	38%
Poor understanding	20%	17%	35%	29%	19%	24%	18%	14%	20%	16%	24%↑	14%↓	37%	31%
Little or no understanding	9%	10%	21%	19%	12%↑	5%↓	9%	13%	6%	10%	7%	9%	20%	18%
Not sure	3%	4%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	5%	4%	3%	5%
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	1005	1038	251	155	196	158	102	153	107	155	179	241	149	162

The following people were *more likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place:

– Those aged 18-29 (48% versus 21% aged 30+)
– Those who didn't vote in 2020 (49% versus 22% for those who did vote)
– Those who didn't enrol to vote in 2020 (50% versus 26% for those who did enrol)

The following people were *less likely* to have a **poor or little or no** understanding of what to do if you cannot get to a voting place:

– Those aged 50+ (12% versus 38% aged 18-49)

Information sources people would use to enrol or change enrolment address

A range of channels would be used by people if they **needed to enrol or change their enrolment address**. Most commonly the Electoral Commission's website would be used by 55%. This is significantly higher than the 2017 General Election (55% versus 47% in 2017). Calling the Electoral Commission's 0800 number is second most common overall at 6%. Other channels are less common including: emailing the Electoral Commission (1%); and visiting various government offices (local council 4%, local MP's office 1%, Registrar's or Returning Officer's office 1%).

Twelve percent of people **do not know** what channels they would use, and this is particularly true for people aged 50+ (15%), those who are disabled (16%) and those who are not enrolled (21%).

Table 13: Information sources would use to enrol or change enrolment address

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Visit the Electoral Commission website	47%↓	55%↑	52%↓	68%↑	40%↓	62%↑	37%↓	48%↑	49%↓	64%↑	34%↓	47%↑	32%↓	52%↑
Call the Electoral Commission 0800 number	8%	6%	4%	2%	6%	5%	28%↑	12%↓	18%↑	10%↓	6%	9%	4%	6%
Email the Electoral Commission	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	4%	3%	9%	4%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Text the Electoral Commission	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Electoral Commission's Facebook page	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Voting place*	-	1%	-	3%	-	1%	-	2%	-	5%	-	1%	-	2%
Ask my local MP's office	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	9%↑	0%↓	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%
Visit a registrar's office	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	1%	3%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Visit a returning officer's office	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Local council	3%	4%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	2%	1%	4%	5%	2%	2%
Library	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	3%	5%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Other	12%↓	29%↑	10%↓	21%↑	16%↓	27%↑	8%↓	18%↑	7%↓	16%↑	15%↓	34%↑	13%↓	34%↑
Don't know	15%↑	12%↓	30%↑	11%↓	22%↑	12%↓	18%	18%	21%↑	12%↓	18%↑	16%↓	31%↑	14%↓
n =	*1,162*	*1,026*	*284*	*151*	*196*	*158*	*179*	*147*	*184*	*149*	*184*	*240*	*163*	*161*

New statement added in 2020

Communications

Awareness of advertising about the voting process

Seventy two percent of people recalled advertising about the voting process. This is significantly higher than the 2017 General election (72% versus 52% in 2017).

Table 14: Awareness of electoral advertising

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	52%↓	72%↑	43%↓	80%↑	49%↓	77%↑	42%↓	58%↑	37%↓	71%↑	48%↓	72%↑	35%↓	66%↑
No	45%↑	26%↓	54%↑	19%↓	50%↑	22%↓	55%	39%	59%↑	29%↓	48%↑	25%↓	59%↑	32%↓
Don't know	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%	3%	1%	4%	2%	6%	2%
n =	*1165*	*845*	*284*	*117*	*196*	*100*	*180*	*133*	*186*	*120*	*184*	*189*	*164*	*46*

The following people were *more likely* to recall advertising about the voting process:

– Those aged 18-29 (80% versus 70% for other age groups)

The following people were *less likely* to recall advertising about the voting process:

– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (58% versus 73% for those of non-Pasifika ethnicity)

Where did people see advertising about the voting process?

[% Among those who recalled advertising]

Television remains the most recalled source of advertising about the voting process, with sixty nine percent of those who recalled advertising saying they had seen it on TV. This is significantly lower than the 2017 result (78%). Social media was the second most recalled source of voting process advertising, being significantly higher than the 2017 result (23% versus 14% for 2017).

Table 15: Source of electoral advertising awareness

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Television	78%↑	69%↓	60%	53%	77%	65%	80%	63%	74%↑	59%↓	85%↑	64%↓	67%	63%
Social media	14%↓	23%↑	34%	40%	21%	30%	20%	24%	16%	27%	10%	17%	17%	25%
Newspapers	18%	20%	5%	5%	18%↑	7%↓	28%	12%	32%	20%	13%	22%	10%	9%
Pamphlets or fliers	10%↓	17%↑	7%↓	15%↑	9%	19%	24%	9%	18%	9%	10%↓	20%↑	5%	5%
Radio	21%↑	15%↓	17%	14%	14%	17%	39%↑	17%↓	34%↑	11%↓	16%	16%	10%	6%
Other website	11%	13%	15%	9%	9%	15%	7%	14%	8%	16%	10%	9%	14%	16%
Signs	11%	10%	10%	14%	11%	11%	35%	17%	39%↑	18%↓	9%	10%	7%↓	21%↑
Word of mouth	5%↑	2%↓	7%	3%	6%	3%	14%	4%	15%↑	5%↓	4%	1%	4%	1%
Bus shelters	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%	1%	7%	3%	4%	8%	0%	1%	2%	4%
Street posters	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Another place	5%↑	0%↓	0%	0%	4%	0%	3%	0%	2%	1%	5%	0%	2%	0%
Not sure	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	4%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%
n =	*764*	*590*	*167*	*86*	*119*	*71*	*110*	*85*	*108*	*82*	*111*	*126*	*78*	*32*

The main sources of electoral advertising vary by age and show the importance of digital channels in reaching the Youth segment.

Those aged 18-29 were less likely to notice television advertising (53% versus 74% aged 30+) and newspaper advertising (5% versus 25% aged 30+); but they had the highest recall of advertising via social media (40% versus 18% aged 30+).

Those of Māori ethnicity were less likely to notice newspaper advertising (7% versus 21% for non-Māori).

Those of Asian ethnicity were less likely to notice television advertising (59% versus 70% for non-Asian ethnicity) or pamphlets (9% versus 18% for non-Asian), and were more likely to notice advertising from signs (18% versus 9% for non-Asian ethnicity) and bus shelters (8% versus 1% for non-Asian).

Non-voters were more likely to notice signs (21% versus 10% for voters) and street posters (4% versus 1% for voters).

What was the message of the advertising?

[% Among those who recalled advertising]

Among those who recalled advertising, the key messages being taken from the advertising were: Orange Guy and Pup (34%), 'Enrol. Vote. Be Heard' (28%) and don't forget to enrol to vote (28%).

Comparisons to 2017 have not been conducted due to differences in advertising and media strategy, and message takeout.

Table 16: TV advertising message

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Orange Guy/pup	-	34%	-	28%	-	30%	-	19%	-	10%	-	30%	-	37%
Enrol. Vote. Be Heard.	-	28%	-	30%	-	33%	-	15%	-	29%	-	35%	-	10%
Don't forget to enrol to vote	-	28%	-	19%	-	19%	-	23%	-	25%	-	24%	-	13%
Enrol to vote in the referendums	-	7%	-	9%	-	4%	-	3%	-	7%	-	7%	-	0%
You can vote now	-	7%	-	5%	-	13%	-	5%	-	7%	-	7%	-	1%
Enrol early to make voting quick and easy	-	7%	-	3%	-	7%	-	3%	-	3%	-	9%	-	0%
Check the mail for your enrolment pack	-	7%	-	3%	-	8%	-	5%	-	7%	-	6%	-	0%
There's an election and referendums coming up	-	7%	-	5%	-	6%	-	11%	-	8%	-	5%	-	0%
Referendum questions (End of Life Choice and/or Cannabis)	-	5%	-	3%	-	2%	-	7%	-	9%	-	3%	-	5%
You can vote in two referendums	-	5%	-	4%	-	4%	-	1%	-	6%	-	6%	-	0%
Vote Ghost	-	4%	-	5%	-	1%	-	3%	-	3%	-	3%	-	0%
More voting places this year	-	4%	-	4%	-	3%	-	5%	-	5%	-	5%	-	0%
Stacey and Scotty Morrison	-	3%	-	0%	-	4%	-	1%	-	1%	-	1%	-	2%
You can get help to vote	-	2%	-	2%	-	5%	-	0%	-	2%	-	3%	-	0%
Election date has changed	-	2%	-	4%	-	0%	-	1%	-	4%	-	2%	-	1%
First time voter	-	1%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	1%	-	0%
Vote close to home	-	1%	-	2%	-	0%	-	0%	-	2%	-	2%	-	0%
Didn't get an EasyVote pack	-	1%	-	1%	-	1%	-	1%	-	3%	-	2%	-	0%
Vote Like a Boss	-	1%	-	0%	-	0%	-	3%	-	5%	-	1%	-	1%
Another message	-	18%	-	24%	-	28%	-	7%	-	11%	-	21%	-	15%
Not sure	-	17%	-	14%	-	18%	-	38%	-	27%	-	16%	-	33%
n =	-	*574*	-	*84*	-	*70*	-	*79*	-	*76*	-	*125*	-	*31*

Those who are disabled were more likely to recall 'Vote. Enrol. Be Heard' (35% versus 26% for non-disabled), as were voters (29% versus 10% for non-voters).

Those aged 30-49 were more likely to recall the messages 'don't forget to enrol' (36% versus 25% for other age groups). and 'there's an election and referendums coming up' (10% versus 5% for other age groups).

Pre-Election Day behaviour

Recall receiving an EasyVote pack

[% Among those enrolled]

Ninety three percent of those enrolled recall receiving an EasyVote pack in the mail. This is consistent with the 2017 result (94%).

Table 17: Recall receiving an EasyVote pack

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	94%	93%	85%	84%	94%	88%	90%↑	74%↓	90%	91%	92%	94%	83%↑	60%↓
No	5%	7%	13%	15%	6%	12%	8%↓	26%↑	8%	7%	7%	6%	14%↓	40%↑
Don't know	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	0%
n =	1,093	822	236	106	180	95	150	122	177	116	175	186	93	25

The following people were *more likely* to recall receiving an EasyVote pack in the mail:

– Those who voted in 2020 (94% versus 60% for non-voters)
– Those aged 50+ (97% versus 89% aged 18-49)
– Those of European ethnicity (96% versus 85% for non-European)
– Females (95% versus 91% for males)

The following people were *less likely* to recall receiving an EasyVote pack in the mail:

– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (74% versus 94% for those of non-Pasifika ethnicity)
– Those aged 18-29 (84% versus 95% aged 30 years and over)

How thoroughly people read the EasyVote pack

[% Among those who recalled receiving EasyVote pack]

Over half of those who recalled receiving an EasyVote pack read most or all of it. This is a significant increase compared to the 2017 General Election result (55% versus 46% in 2017).

Table 18: How thoroughly people read the EasyVote pack

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Read most or all of it	46%↓	55%↑	46%	53%	43%↓	62%↑	32%	36%	41%	46%	50%↓	68%↑	22%	15%
Read some of it	24%↑	19%↓	26%↑	15%↓	21%	16%	38%	21%	37%	25%	16%	15%	20%↓	46%↑
Glanced at it	16%	14%	14%	15%	17%	12%	16%	26%	16%	22%	14%↑	7%↓	23%	23%
Didn't read it	13%	12%	11%	15%	17%	11%	13%	17%	4%	5%	17%↑	10%↓	35%	16%
Note sure	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*1,031*	*763*	*206*	*86*	*169*	*86*	*136*	*94*	*163*	*106*	*166*	*175*	*74*	*19*

The following people were *more likely* to read most or all of the EasyVote pack:

– Those of European ethnicity (58% versus 45% for non-European ethnicity)
– Those aged 50+ (61% versus 49% aged 18-49)
– Those who voted in 2020 (55% versus 15% for non-voters)
– Those who are disabled (68% versus 50% for non-disabled)

The following people were *less likely* to read most or all of the EasyVote pack:

– Those aged 30-49 (47% versus 59% for other age groups)
– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (36% versus 56% for non-Pasifika ethnicity)
– Those of Asian ethnicity (46% versus 56% for non-Asian ethnicity)
– Non-voters (15% versus 55% for voters)

The following people were *more likely* to not read any of the EasyVote pack:

– Those aged 30-49 (16% versus 9% for other age groups)
– Those who voted on Election Day (17% versus 9% for those who voted before Election Day)

Ease of finding the EasyVote card

[% Among those who read the EasyVote pack]

Ninety seven percent of those who read their EasyVote pack found the EasyVote card easily. This is significantly higher than the 2017 result (95%).

Table 19: Did people find the EasyVote card easily

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	95%	97%↑	95%	93%	91%↓	98%↑	96%	91%	96%	96%	93%	97%	75%↓	87%
No	3%	2%↓	3%	3%	7%↑	0%↓	3%	9%	2%	2%	4%	1%	16%↑	13%
Not sure	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%	3%	2%	8%	0%
n =	*929*	*700*	*189*	*77*	*145*	*80*	*124*	*87*	*158*	*103*	*142*	*161*	*65*	*16*

Those aged 18-29 were less likely to easily find the EasyVote card (93% versus 98% for 30+), along with those of Pasifika ethnicity (91% versus 97% for non-Pasifika ethnicity).

Usefulness of the EasyVote pack

[% Among those who read the EasyVote pack]

Sixty two percent of those who read their EasyVote pack found it very useful. Eighty eight percent of people rated it a 4 or a 5 out of 5, which is significantly higher than the 2017 result (88% versus 85% for 2017). At the other end of the scale only four percent did not find it very useful; there is a significant decrease in the amount of people who found their EasyVote pack not at all useful (1% versus 4% for the 2017 General Election).

Table 20: How useful people found the EasyVote pack

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Very useful (5)	68%↑	62%↓	63%↑	49%↓	70%	66%	74%	60%	69%	59%	63%	70%	30%	42%
4	17%↓	26%↑	20%↓	37%↑	11%	20%	16%	19%	16%↓	29%↑	19%	22%	14%	12%
3	9%	8%	11%	8%	10%	5%	7%	9%	11%	10%	8%	6%	26%	16%
2	1%	2%	1%	4%	1%	5%	2%	7%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%↓	18%↑
Not very useful (1)	4%↑	1%↓	5%	2%	8%	4%	0%	5%	3%	1%	9%↑	1%↓	25%	11%
Don't know	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
n =	*926*	*698*	*185*	*77*	*145*	*80*	*121*	*86*	*158*	*102*	*142*	*161*	*52*	*16*

The following people were *more likely* to find the EasyVote pack very useful:

– Those aged 50+ (69% versus 56% aged 18-49)
– Those who are disabled (70% versus 59% for non-disabled)

The following people were *less likely* to find the EasyVote pack very useful:

– Those aged 18-29 (49% versus 65% aged 30+)

Searching for additional voting information

One in five (20%) of eligible voters looked for additional information on how to vote. This is significantly higher than for the 2017 General Election (20% versus 12% for 2017).

Table 21: Looked for additional voting information

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	12%↓	20%↑	21%	26%	14%↓	23%↑	12%	17%	18%	22%	7%↓	18%↑	10%	13%
No	87%↑	79%↓	79%	73%	86%	77%	87%	83%	80%	77%	92%↑	82%↓	89%	87%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
n =	1159	818	282	108	196	99	176	116	184	111	184	186	160	39

The following people were *more likely* to look for additional voting information:

– Those aged 18-29 (26% versus 19% aged 30+)
– Those aged 30-49 (27% versus 17% for other aged groups)
– Females (23% versus 17% for males)

The following people were *less likely* to look for additional voting information:

– Those aged 50+ (13% versus 26% aged 18-49)

Where people look for additional voting information

[% Among those who looked for additional voting information]

Nearly half (47%) of those who looked for additional voting information conducted a general online search for information. This is significantly higher than the 2017 result (47% versus 35% in 2017). One quarter (28%) visited the Electoral Commission's website in search of additional information. See Table 23 on page 30 for a rating of the website's usefulness, though note low sample sizes for this analysis.

Table 22: Source of additional voting information

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voters	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Did a Google search / searched elsewhere online	35%↓	47%↑	34%↓	56%↑	19%	33%	28%	49%	30%	36%	48%	31%	28%	66%
Visited the Electoral Commission website	35%	28%	41%	30%	23%	29%	9%↓	34%↑	42%	37%	9%	32%	25%	26%
Asked someone I knew	16%	14%	25%	17%	17%	10%	23%	23%	29%	34%	21%	8%	29%	60%
Visited the referendums website*	-	13%	-	12%	-	15%	-	0%	-	8%	-	16%	-	0%
Called the Electoral Commission 0800 number	5%	4%	2%	0%	14%	10%	15%	0%	4%	0%	4%	12%	0%	0%
On Facebook/Twitter	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	9%	8%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	4%	0%
A political party or candidate*	-	1%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%
Emailed the Electoral Commission	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Visited a registrar or returning officer's office	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asked my local MP's office	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	18%↑	1%↓	7%	3%	29%↑	0%↓	22%	20%	5%	0%	31%↑	0%↓	19%	0%
Not sure	1%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%	8%	18%	0%	3%	4%	0%	4%	0%
n =	*162*	*145*	*60*	*26*	*29*	*20*	*28*	*19*	*36*	*23*	*16*	*33*	*18*	*4*

*New statement added in 2020

Those of Asian ethnicity were *more likely* to ask someone they knew (34% versus 10% for non-Asian ethnicity) for additional voting information, whereas those of European ethnicity were *more likely* to google search (53% versus 32% for non-European). Those aged 30-49 were also *more likely* to google search for additional voting information (57% versus 40% for other age groups).

Those aged 50+ were *less likely* to google search (25% versus 56% aged 18-49) for additional voting information but *more likely* to visit the referendums website (22% versus 10% for aged 18-49) or call the Electoral Commission 0800 number (8% versus 2% aged 18-49). Those who are disabled were also *more likely* to call the Electoral Commission 0800 number (12% versus 2% for non-disabled) and *less likely* to google search (31% versus 51% for non-disabled).

Usefulness of the Electoral Commission's website

[% Among those who visited the website in search of additional voting info]

Sixty three percent of those who visited the Electoral Commission's website found it very useful. This is consistent with the 2017 result of 65%. Zero percent rated the website as not very useful, however note low sample size for this analysis.

Table 23: How useful did people find the Electoral Commission's website

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Very useful (5)	65%	63%	60%	70%	75%	87%	100%	59%	55%	41%	100%	32%	0%	0%
4	18%	16%	8%	24%	25%	13%	0%	12%	17%	49%	0%	29%	0%	100%
3	9%	15%	22%	6%	0%	0%	0%	29%	28%	10%	0%	39%	23%	0%
2	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	0%
Not very useful (1)	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	38%	0%
Don't know	4%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%
n =	53	35	23	9	7	4	2	7	14	7	1	7	5	1

Significance tests have not been conducted on the various segments due to low sample size.

Additional information people would have liked

Thirty seven percent could not think of any additional information around voting that they required. This is lower than the 2017 result (43%). Of those who wanted additional information, the most requested topics were more information on voting place locations (9%), party policies/ candidates (6%), and information on the referendums (3%).

Table 24: Additional voting information wanted

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled		Non-voter	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Not sure	43%↑	37%↓	42%	34%	50%	39%	41%↓	57%↑	36%↓	57%↑	46%↓	32%↓	45%	59%
Voting place locations	6%↓	9%↑	6%↓	13%↑	4%	8%	13%↑	3%↓	21%↑	9%↑	2%↓	7%↑	6%	4%
More info on party policies/ candidates	7%	6%	12%	9%	5%	6%	7%	5%	10%↑	3%↓	10%	8%	8%	0%
More information on the referendums	-	3%	-	2%	-	2%	-	0%	-	1%	-	2%	-	3%
Electorate candidates	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	6%↑	1%↓	16%↑	0%↓	2%	6%	1%	2%
Date and time of voting	4%↑	2%↓	3%	4%	1%	4%	15%↑	1%↓	18%↑	1%↓	2%	3%	1%	1%
Special/ advanced voting	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	3%	0%
Explanation on MMP	2%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Party lists	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%	3%	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%
Information about EasyVote	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%
How to mark ballot papers	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Other	38%	42%	35%	40%	35%	41%	30%	32%	25%	24%	39%	46%	37%	35%
n =	1,115	822	269	114	196	99	156	122	162	108	181	185	154	42

The following people were *more likely* to want more information on the **voting place location**:

– Those aged 18-29 (13% versus 7% aged 30+)

The following people were *more likely* to want more information on **party policies/ candidates**:

– Those aged 30-49 (10% versus 4% for other age groups)

The following people were *more likely* to want more information on the **referendums**:

– Those aged 30-49 (5% versus 1% for other age groups)

The following people were *more likely* to want more information on the **electorate candidates**:

– Those who are disabled (6% versus 1% for non-disabled)
– Those of European ethnicity (3% versus 1% for non-European ethnicity)

Voting and Election Day behaviour

Did people place an ordinary or special vote?

[% Among those who voted]

Ninety one percent of voters surveyed said they cast an ordinary vote this election. This is consistent with the 2017 result.

Table 25: Type of vote placed

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Ordinary	93%	91%	76%	85%	91%	95%	85%	75%	93%	85%	91%	92%
Special	7%	9%	23%	14%	7%	5%	15%	25%	7%	13%	8%	7%
Not sure	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
n =	999	802	196	102	163	93	130	108	163	119	156	186

The following people were *more likely* to say they placed an ordinary vote:

– Those aged 50+ (95% versus 87% aged 18-49)
– Those of European ethnicity (92% versus 86% of non-European ethnicity)

The following people were *less likely* to place an ordinary vote:

– Those aged 18-29 (85% versus 92% aged 30+)
– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (75% versus 91% for non-Pasifika ethnicity)
– Those of Asian ethnicity (85% versus 91% for non-Asian ethnicity)

The following people were *more likely* to place a special vote:

– Those aged 18-29 (14% versus 7% aged 30+)
– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (25% versus 8% for non-Pasifika ethnicity)
– Those of Asian ethnicity (13% versus 8% for non-Asian ethnicity)

Voting on or before Election Day

[% Among those who voted]

Three quarters (74%) of voters surveyed voted before Election Day. This is similar to actual advance voting in the 2020 General Election which was 68%. This rise in advance voting was driven by increases across all target groups.

Table 26: Voted on or before Election Day

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Voted on Election Day	54%↑	26%↓	48%↑	30%↓	43%↑	27%↓	54%↑	28%↓	48%↑	27%↓	51%↑	20%↓
Voted before Election Day	46%↓	74%↑	52%↓	70%↑	57%↓	73%↑	46%↓	70%↑	52%↓	73%↑	49%↓	80%↑
n =	*998*	*809*	*196*	*104*	*163*	*91*	*130*	*109*	*162*	*119*	*156*	*185*

The following people were more likely to vote *on* Election Day:

– Those aged 30-49 (30% versus 23% for other age groups)

The following people were more likely to vote *before* Election Day:

– Those aged 50+ (79% versus 69% aged 18-49)

Where people voted

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly all voters (97%) voted at a voting place or advance voting place. This is consistent with the 2017 result. Those who are disabled were more likely to vote somewhere else (5% versus 2% for non-disabled).

Table 27: Where people voted

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Voting place (or advance voting place)	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	95%	96%	98%	95%	97%	96%	95%
Somewhere else	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	5%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
n =	*1000*	*802*	*196*	*102*	*163*	*93*	*131*	*108*	*163*	*119*	*156*	*186*

People who accompanied voters to the voting place

[% Among those who voted at a voting place]

Nearly half (47%) of those who voted at a voting place were accompanied by family members. This is significantly lower than the 2017 General Election (47% versus 52%). Forty seven percent of those who voted went by themselves. This is consistent with the result in 2017 (44%).

Table 28: People that accompanied voters to the voting place

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
With other family members	52%↑	47%↓	45%	47%	54%	53%	59%	59%	58%	50%	45%	49%
By myself	44%	47%	42%	43%	41%	43%	39%	38%	38%	45%	50%	45%
With other people (not family members)	5%	6%	16%	10%	6%	5%	4%	3%	4%	5%	7%	7%
n =	976	780	192	99	160	88	128	106	156	116	151	174

The following people were *more likely* to be accompanied by **family members**:

– Those who voted on Election Day (59% versus 43% for those who voted before Election Day)

The following people were *more likely* to vote **with other people (excluding family members)**:

– Those aged 18-29 (10% versus 4% aged 30+)

Voted at the same voting place as in 2017

[% Among those who voted in 2017]

One quarter (24%) of people who voted in 2020 voted at the same place in 2017. This is significantly lower than the 2017 result (41%). Three quarters of voters (73%) voted at a different place to where they voted in 2017, which is significantly higher than the 2017 result.

Table 29: Voted at the same voting place

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	41%↑	24%↓	29%	15%	46%↑	15%↓	43%↑	19%↓	34%	21%	46%↑	25%↓
No	57%↓	73%↑	68%↓	85%↑	53%↓	82%↑	56%↓	79%↑	65%	75%	52%↓	73%↑
Not sure	2%	2%	3%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%
n =	*825*	*705*	*90*	*65*	*124*	*77*	*105*	*95*	*122*	*99*	*134*	*155*

Those who voted on Election Day were *more likely* to have voted in the same place as they did last election (44%, versus 18% for those who voted before Election Day), as well as those aged 50+ (28% versus 20% aged 18-49).

Those aged 18-29 were *more likely* to vote at a different place in 2020 as they did in 2017 (85% versus 72% aged 30+).

Why people voted at a different voting place in 2020

[% Among those who voted at a different place in 2020]

The main reason for voting at a different voting place is that a different, more convenient place was available (53%). This is consistent with the 2017 result (58%).

Table 30: Reasons for voting at a different voting place in 2020

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
A different voting place was more convenient	58%	53%	52%	40%	66%	58%	46%	36%	45%	45%	61%	60%
I have moved since the last New Zealand general election	21%	24%	34%	44%	14%	25%	31%	36%	35%	35%	14%	21%
The place I voted last time wasn't a voting place this time	19%	17%	13%	5%	20%	16%	21%	8%	17%	7%	24%↑	12%↓
Other reason	0%↓	7%↑	1%	6%	0%	9%	1%	5%	1%	8%	0%	9%
Not sure	5%↑	2%↓	3%	5%	6%	0%	2%	15%	4%	6%	3%	1%
n =	*479*	*509*	*62*	*53*	*67*	*61*	*61*	*75*	*80*	*78*	*69*	*109*

The following people were *more likely* to cite **having moved since the last election**:

– Those of Asian ethnicity (35% versus 22% for non-Asian ethnicity)
– Those aged 18-29 (44% versus 20% aged 30+)
– Those who voted on Election Day (37% versus 21% for those who voted before Election Day)

The following people were *more likely* to have changed voting places **due to another one being more convenient**:

– Those of European ethnicity (57% versus 44% for non-European ethnicity)

The following people were *more likely* to have changed voting places **due to the place they voted last time not being a voting place in 2020**:

– Those aged 50+ (22% versus 12% aged 18-49)
– Females (21% versus 13% for males)

How people knew where to vote in 2020

[% Among those who voted]

The main information source (31%) about where to vote in 2020 was seeing it on signage. This is significantly higher than in 2017 (23%). Getting information from the internet (28%), seeing it while walking or driving (24%) and from local newspapers (14%) were also significantly higher than the 2017 result.

Voters were significantly less likely to get information from the mail compared to the 2017 General Election (3% versus 39% in 2017). It is worth noting that voting place information was not included in EasyVote packs, which was a change from previous elections.

Table 31: Source of information about voting place location*

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Signs/signage	23%↓	31%↑	23%	29%	22%	22%	18%↓	38%↑	20%	18%	24%	30%
From the website / internet	12%↓	28%↑	21%↓	36%↑	11%↓	41%↑	9%↓	23%↑	18%	27%	6%↓	21%↑
Was driving/walking/going past and saw it	16%↓	24%↑	17%↓	29%↑	12%	15%	46%	35%	29%↓	44%↑	15%	17%
From information in the local newspapers	7%↓	14%↑	2%	0%	8%	16%	7%	5%	4%	3%	8%↓	20%↑
Family/friends/workmates, etc. told me there	18%↑	14%↓	26%	21%	18%	14%	39%↑	10%↓	30%	20%	14%	11%
I've voted there in the past	17%↑	11%↓	10%↑	3%↓	17%↑	6%↓	26%↑	4%↓	18%↑	7%↓	13%	10%
Read about it in something I received in the mail	39%↑	3%↓	31%↑	3%↓	34%↑	2%↓	51%↑	5%↓	52%↑	3%↓	38%↑	6%↓
From advertising (in general)	4%	3%	4%	0%	5%	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%	7%↑	2%↓
Expected to find it at the school	6%↑	2%↓	5%	4%	6%	5%	3%	2%	0%	0%	8%↑	3%↓
Information from the local electorate	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Information from the Citizens Advice Bureau	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Was working at the elections/voting place	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	4%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Information from the Council Offices	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Another way	2%↓	9%↑	2%	8%	2%↓	13%↑	3%	3%	1%↓	7%↑	1%↓	14%↑
No other way	53%↑	47%↓	58%	47%	57%	55%	29%	19%	36%	29%	58%	52%
Not sure	3%↑	1%↓	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	5%↑	1%↓
n =	*976*	*761*	*192*	*96*	*160*	*88*	*128*	*95*	*156*	*108*	*151*	*173*

* Note: Only responses greater than 1% shown for purposes of clarity

The following people were *more likely* to know where to vote via **signs/signage**:

– Those of European ethnicity (34% versus 22% for non-European ethnicity)

The following people were *more likely* to know where to vote via **website/internet**:

– Those aged 18-29 (36% versus 26% aged 30+)
– Those aged 30-49 (34% versus 25% for other age groups)
– Those of Māori ethnicity (41% versus 27% for non-Māori)

The following types of people were *more likely* to know where to vote via **driving/ walking/ going past a voting place**:

– Those aged 18-29 (29% versus 22% aged 30+)
– Those of Asian ethnicity (44% versus 20% for non-Asian ethnicity)

The following people were *more likely* to know where to vote via **local newspaper**:

– Those aged 50+ (27% versus 4% aged 18-49)
– Those who are disabled (20% versus 13% for non-disabled)
– Those of European ethnicity (18% versus 5% for non-European ethnicity)
– Females (17% versus 12% for males)

The following people were *more likely* to know where to vote via **friends and family**:

– Those aged 18-29 (21% versus 12% aged 30+)

Polling place behaviour and satisfaction

The time of day when people voted

[% Among those who voted]

42% of voting occurred before 12pm. 42% of voting also took place between 12pm and 2pm, with a peak occurring between 12:00pm and 12:59pm. Voters were less likely to vote later in the day, with 14% voting after 3:00pm.

Table 32: Time of day when voted

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
9.00am – 9.59am	8%	9%	4%	3%	8%	5%	10%	9%	11%	12%	8%	7%
10.00am – 10.59am	15%	16%	8%	12%	15%	18%	20%	12%	14%	10%	12%	18%
11.00am – 11.59am	20%	17%	19%	11%	16%	14%	11%	15%	20%	19%	20%	15%
12.00pm – 12.59pm	14%↓	18%↑	19%↓	30%↑	23%	29%	21%	18%	12%	18%	14%	19%
1.00pm – 1.59pm	10%	11%	13%	15%	14%	8%	8%	14%	3%	7%	9%	15%
2.00pm – 2.59pm	9%↓	13%↑	8%	11%	6%	13%	8%	11%	12%	15%	13%	14%
3.00pm – 3.59pm	9%	6%	8%	8%	8%	3%	10%	8%	10%↑	3%↓	8%	5%
4.00pm – 4.59pm	6%	4%	9%	5%	3%	4%	5%	9%	6%	5%	6%	2%
5.00pm – 5.59pm	5%↑	2%↓	4%	1%	3%	3%	4%	0%	5%	5%	6%↑	1%↓
6.00pm or later	2%	2%	4%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%	4%	3%	2%	1%
Not sure	2%	2%	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Rather not say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

There was little difference in when different groups voted, with the exception that those aged 18-29 were more likely to have voted between 12:00pm – 12:59pm (30% versus 15% aged 30+), whereas those aged 30-49 were more likely to have voted before 10:00am (16% versus 6% for other age groups). Māori were also more likely to vote between 12:00pm – 12:59pm (29% versus 17% for non-Māori).

Those who voted on Election Day were more likely to vote between 9:00am – 9.59am (17% versus 7% for those who voted before Election Day). Those who voted before Election Day were more likely to vote between 11:00am – 11:59am (19% versus 11% for those who voted on Election Day) and 2:00pm – 2:59pm (14% versus 8% for those who voted on Election Day).

Incidence of people having to queue before voting

[% Among those who voted]

Less than one quarter of people (22%) who voted said that they had to queue before voting. This is significantly lower than the 2017 result (31%).

Table 33: Incidence of people having to queue before voting

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	31%↑	22%↓	40%↑	22%↓	31%	20%	28%	21%	34%↑	17%↓	27%	21%
No	69%↓	78%↑	60%↓	78%↑	69%	80%	72%	79%	66%↓	83%↑	73%	79%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

There were no significant differences between groups by incidence of having to queue.

Items taken to the voting place

[% Among those who voted]

Eighty two percent of those who voted took along their EasyVote card which is consistent with the 2017 result (80%). Sixteen percent did not take along anything and the small remainder of people took along a letter from the Electoral Commission (3%).

Table 34: Items taken to the voting place

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Your EasyVote card	80%	82%	74%	70%	76%	84%	72%	57%	84%	78%	78%	81%
A voting slip from the Electoral Commission	3%	3%	2%	4%	5%	3%	10%↑	1%↓	6%	5%	5%	4%
None of the above	19%	16%	25%	26%	23%	16%	23%↓	43%↑	13%	17%	20%	17%
n =	*976*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*128*	*107*	*156*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to take along their EasyVote card (87% versus 78% aged 18-49) as well as those of European ethnicity (85% versus 74% for non-European ethnicity).

Those of Pasifika ethnicity were *less likely* to take along their EasyVote card (57% versus 84% for non-Pasifika ethnicity) as well as those aged 18-29 (70% versus 85% aged 30+).

Length of time taken to vote

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly half (48%) of those who voted took less than 5 minutes to vote. This is significantly lower than in 2017 (59%). The majority of the remainder (33%) took between 5 and 10 minutes to vote.

Table 35: Length of time taken to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Up to 5 minutes	59%↑	48%↓	48%	47%	58%	47%	65%	48%	55%	54%	56%	54%
5-10 minutes	27%↓	33%↑	27%	30%	28%	30%	24%	37%	31%	28%	32%	29%
11-15 minutes	7%↓	11%↑	11%	12%	5%↓	15%↑	6%	10%	8%	13%	4%↓	11%↑
16-20 minutes	4%	3%	6%	8%	4%	1%	3%	2%	4%	3%	2%	4%
21-25 minutes	0%↓	1%↑	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
26-30 minutes	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%	5%	0%	4%	1%	2%	3%↑	0%↓
More than 30 minutes	1%	1%	3%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*975*	*782*	*191*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*128*	*107*	*155*	*117*	*151*	*174*

There was little difference in length of time taken to vote, with the exception of those aged 18-29 who were more likely to say that the process of voting took between 16-20 minutes (8% versus 2% aged 30+).

There were no significant differences between the length of time taken to vote by those who voted on Election Day and those who voted before Election Day.

Satisfaction with the length of time taken to vote

[% Among those who voted]

The vast majority (98%) of those who voted said that they were satisfied with the amount of time it took to vote and that it was a reasonable amount of time, given what they had to do. This was consistent with the 2017 General Election (96%). Only two percent said the voting process took too long which is significantly lower than the 2017 result (3%).

Table 36: Satisfaction with the length of time taken to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
A reasonable amount of time given what you had to do	96%	98%	93%	96%	96%	96%	94%	95%	96%	99%	97%	98%
Too long	3%↑	2%↓	6%	3%	3%	0%	6%	5%	3%	1%	3%	2%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	4%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
n =	975	781	192	98	159	88	128	106	156	117	150	174

The level of satisfaction with the amount of time it took to vote was fairly consistent across different groups, with the exception of those aged 18-29 who were less likely to say they were satisfied with the amount of time it took to vote (96% versus 98% aged 30+) and those who voted on Election Day (96% versus 99% for those who voted before Election Day).

Those who thought voting took a reasonable amount of time had higher levels of satisfaction with the overall voting process (71% rated excellent versus 23%* who thought voting took too long).

Small sample (n=13) data is indicative only.

Satisfaction with the convenience of the voting location

[% Among those who voted]

Satisfaction with the convenience of the voting location was very high, with almost all (98%) rating it 4 or 5 out of 5, and most of these rating it as excellent (85%). Overall and across most groups, the convenience of voting locations was rated consistently with the 2017 General Election.

Table 37: Satisfaction with the convenience of the voting location

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	87%	85%	78%	79%	87%	83%	83%	75%	80%	82%	85%	86%
4	11%	13%	16%	20%	8%	16%	12%	20%	16%	16%	12%	12%
3	2%	1%	4%	1%	4%	2%	4%	4%	4%	1%	3%	1%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
n =	978	782	192	99	160	88	129	107	157	117	151	174

Although over four out of five (85%) of people rated the convenience of the location of the voting place excellent, the following people were *less likely* to rate the **convenience of the location as excellent**:

– Those aged 18-29 (79% versus 86% aged 30+)
– Those of Pasifika ethnicity (75% versus 86% non-Pasifika)

The following people were *more likely* to rate the **convenience of the location as excellent:**
– Those of European ethnicity (88% versus 78% for non-European ethnicity)

Satisfaction with how identifiable the voting place was

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly four in five voters (79%) rated the voting place as identifiable, with very few voters thinking it was poorly identifiable.

Table 38: Satisfaction with how identifiable the voting place was

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**
5 - Excellent	78%	79%	69%	73%	79%	78%	81%	72%	74%	78%	75%	76%
4	16%	13%	20%	16%	12%	15%	14%	22%	16%	17%	17%	13%
3	4%	5%	8%	8%	5%	3%	4%	2%	10%↑	3%↓	5%	6%
2	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	3%	0%	3%	0%	2%
1 - Poor	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Satisfaction with the ability to identify voting places is consistent across all groups of voters with the exception of those aged 18-29 who were less likely to rate their satisfaction with how identifiable the voting place was as excellent (73% versus 81% aged 30+).

Those aged 50+ reported the highest levels of satisfaction (i.e. rating 5 out of 5) with the voting location (83% versus 76% aged 18-49) and those of European ethnicity also rated it highly (81% versus 74% for non-European).

Satisfaction with having easy to find voting screens

[% Among those who voted]

The majority of voters (81%) rated the ease of finding the voting screens at voting places as excellent (5 out of 5). No voters found the ease of finding the voting screens to be poor.

Please note, in 2017 the wording of this question rated the ease of finding voting *booths*.

Table 39: Satisfaction with having easy to find voting screens

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	84%	81%	73%	77%	83%	79%	84%	69%	77%	84%	83%	82%
4	13%	11%	23%	14%	14%	8%	13%	26%	21%↑	11%↓	13%	9%
3	2%	3%	3%	6%	3%	5%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
2	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those of European ethnicity reported the highest levels of satisfaction (i.e. rating 5 out of 5) with the ease of finding voting screens (83% versus 77% for non-European).

Those of Pasifika ethnicity were less likely to rate the satisfaction of having easy to find voting screens as excellent (69% versus 82% for those of non-Pasifika ethnicity).

Satisfaction with having easy to find ballot boxes

[% Among those who voted]

The majority of voters (85%) rated the ease of finding the ballot box to put their voting papers in as excellent, with very few rating this aspect poorly.

Please note, in 2017 the wording of this question rated the ease of finding paper *deposit* boxes.

Table 40: Satisfaction with having easy to find paper ballot boxes

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	82%	85%	70%↓	82%↑	81%	82%	81%	72%	76%↓	87%↑	77%↓	86%↑
4	13%	12%	21%↑	9%↓	10%	18%	14%	27%	20%↑	11%↓	16%	10%
3	2%	2%	5%	4%	6%	0%	2%	0%	2%	2%	4%	2%
2	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those of European ethnicity were *more likely* to rate the ease of finding the ballot boxes excellent (87% versus 81% for non-European) along with females (88% versus 83% for males).

Those of Pasifika ethnicity were *less likely* to rate the ease of finding the paper ballot boxes excellent (72% versus 86% for those of non-Pasifika ethnicity).

Compared to 2017, the following people were *more likely* to rate the ease of finding the paper ballot boxes excellent:
– Those of Asian ethnicity (87% versus 76% in 2017)
– Those who are disabled (86% versus 77% in 2017)
– Those who are female (88% versus 81% in 2017)

Overall satisfaction with the ease of placing your vote

[% Among those who voted]

The majority of voters (88%) rated the overall process of placing their vote excellent, with very few rating the overall aspect poorly.

Table 41: Overall satisfaction with the ease of placing your vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**
5 - Excellent	88%	88%	81%	85%	88%	93%	86%	75%	80%↓	91%↑	88%	89%
4	10%	11%	15%	12%	10%	7%	11%	22%	15%	8%	11%	8%
3	1%	0%	4%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	4%	1%	1%	1%
2	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those of Pasifika ethnicity were *less likely* to rate the overall ease of placing their vote as excellent (75% versus 89% for those of non-Pasifika ethnicity).

Compared to 2017, those of Asian ethnicity reported a significant increase in satisfaction (rated as 5 out of 5) of ease of placing their vote (91% versus 80% for 2017).

Satisfaction with the voting papers having clear instructions

[% Among those who voted]

More than four in five voters (83%) rated the voting papers excellent on having clear instructions, with very few rating this aspect poorly.

Table 42: Satisfaction with the voting papers having clear instructions

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent – 5	81%	83%	74%	74%	79%	83%	80%	80%	72%	70%	76%	84%
4	15%	15%	21%	21%	16%	15%	13%	19%	22%	28%	18%	12%
3	3%↑	1%↓	4%	1%	2%	0%	6%↑	1%↓	5%	1%	2%	1%
2	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Poor – 1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
n =	*1,000*	**797**	*198*	*100*	*163*	*91*	*135*	*108*	*165*	*119*	*155*	*185*

Those of European ethnicity were *more likely* to rate the clarity of the voting paper instructions as excellent (86% versus 74% for non-European ethnicity) along with females (86% versus 79% for males).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate the clarity of the voting paper instructions as excellent (74% versus 85% aged 30+). Voters of Asian ethnicity were *less likely* to rate the clarity of the voting paper instructions as excellent (70% versus 85% for non-Asian ethnicity).

Satisfaction with the ease of finding the name of the person or party

[% Among those who voted]

The majority of voters (80%) said the voting papers were excellent for easily finding the person or party they wanted to vote for, with very few rating this as poor.

Table 43: Satisfaction with the ease of finding the name of the person or party

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent – 5	84%↑	80%↓	81%	75%	85%	75%	81%	76%	79%	71%	80%	77%
4	12%↓	17%↑	14%	21%	12%	19%	16%	22%	16%	25%	15%	19%
3	3%	1%	4%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%↓	5%↑	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Poor – 1	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%
n =	*1,000*	*797*	*198*	*100*	*163*	*91*	*135*	*108*	*165*	*119*	*155*	*185*

Those of European ethnicity were *more likely* to rate the ease of finding the name of the person or party as excellent (83% versus 73% for non-European ethnicity) along with females (84% versus 76% for males).

Voters of Asian ethnicity were *less likely* to rate the ease of finding the name of the person or party as excellent (71% versus 82% for non-Asian ethnicity).

Satisfaction with the privacy of the voting screen

[% Among those who voted]

Three quarters (74%) of all voters said that the privacy of the voting screens was excellent, with very few voters rating it as poor.

Please note, in 2017 the wording of this question rated the privacy of the voting *booth*.

Table 44: Satisfaction with the privacy of the voting screen

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent – 5	69%↓	74%↑	57%	61%	71%	68%	65%	73%	59%↓	75%↑	65%	73%
4	22%	19%	31%	25%	18%	21%	23%	26%	29%	19%	26%	18%
3	7%	5%	8%	9%	8%	7%	9%↑	1%↓	10%	5%	6%	5%
2	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%	5%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Poor – 1	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
n =	*978*	*788*	*194*	*99*	*161*	*90*	*131*	*107*	*159*	*118*	*150*	*179*

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to say the privacy of the voting screens was excellent (82% versus 69% aged 18-49), along with females (79% versus 70% for males).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to say the privacy of the voting screens was excellent (61% versus 78% aged 30+).

Satisfaction with the layout of the general election ballot paper

[% Among those who voted]

Three out of four voters (73%) rated the layout of the ballot paper as excellent. This was consistent with the 2017 result.

Table 45: Satisfaction with the layout of the ballot paper

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Excellent – 5	75%	73%	69%	69%	77%↑	64%↓	77%	71%	71%	71%	69%	73%
4	18%	20%	25%	24%	16%	26%	17%	27%	18%	25%	23%	19%
3	5%	5%	3%	7%	6%	7%	4%	1%	7%	3%	5%	6%
2	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Poor – 1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
n =	1,000	797	198	100	163	91	135	108	165	119	155	185

Female voters were *more likely* to say the layout of the ballot paper was excellent (78% versus 68% for males).

Overall satisfaction with the ballot paper

[% Among those who voted]

Nearly three quarters (72%) of all voters said that the ballot paper was excellent. This is significantly lower than the 2017 result (72% versus 77% in 2017) however the proportion of voters rating the ballot paper a 4 or 5 out of 5 is consistent with 2017 (96% in 2020 versus 94% in 2017).

Table 46: Overall satisfaction with the ballot paper

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	77%↑	72%↓	74%↑	62%↓	76%↑	62%↓	77%	73%	69%	69%	74%	68%
4	17%↓	24%↑	19%↓	35%↑	17%↓	33%↑	18%	24%	24%	27%	18%	25%
3	4%	3%	5%	3%	6%	5%	4%	1%	4%	3%	5%	5%
2	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
n =	1000	797	196	100	163	91	131	108	163	119	156	185

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to rate the ballot paper overall as excellent (5 out of 5) (77% versus 88% aged 18-49), along with females (77% versus 68% males).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate the ballot paper overall as excellent (5 out of 5) (62% versus 75% aged 30+), along with Māori (62% versus 73% non-Māori).

Compared to 2017, the following people were *less likely* to rate the ballot paper overall as excellent:
– Those of Māori ethnicity (62% versus 76% in 2017)
– Those aged 18-29 (62% versus 74% in 2017)
– Those who are male (68% versus 76% in 2017)

Rating of voting place staff being pleasant and polite

[% Among those who voted]

A majority (85%) of those who voted rated the staff as excellent on being pleasant and polite, with very few rating them poorly in this regard. This was consistent with the 2017 General Election.

Table 47: Rating of voting place staff being pleasant and polite

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	87%	85%	83%	79%	88%	78%	88%	79%	78%	84%	88%	88%
4	9%	12%	15%	17%	9%	18%	6%↓	18%↑	18%	16%	6%	8%
3	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	5%	0%	3%	1%	5%	3%
2	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1 - Poor	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those of European ethnicity were *more likely* to rate staff pleasantness and politeness as excellent (88% versus 79% for those of non-European ethnicity).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate staff pleasantness and politeness as excellent (79% versus 87% aged 30+) along with those of Māori ethnicity (78% versus 86% for those of non-Māori ethnicity).

Rating of voting place staff's ability to answer questions

[% Among those who voted]

The majority of voters (71%) who asked questions rated the voting place staff's ability to answer these as excellent. This is significantly higher than in 2017.

Table 48: Rating of voting place staff's ability to answer questions

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**
5 - Excellent	65%↓	71%↑	65%	76%	69%	65%	79%	72%	68%↓	80%↑	63%	68%
4	9%	10%	13%	12%	9%↓	19%↑	8%	22%	17%	14%	10%	9%
3	3%	4%	3%	7%	5%	1%	5%	2%	4%	1%	3%	4%
2	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%
1 - Poor	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those of Asian ethnicity were *more likely* to rate the voting place staff's ability to answer questions as excellent (80% versus 70% for those of non-Asian ethnicity).

Compared to 2017, the following people were *more likely* to rate staff's ability to answer questions as excellent:
– Those aged 30-49 (73% versus 62% in 2017)
– Those of European ethnicity (70% versus 62% in 2017)
– Those of Asian ethnicity (80% versus 68% in 2017)
– Females (73% versus 65% in 2017)

Rating of the efficiency of voting place staff

[% Among those who voted]

Four out of five voters (79%) rated the staff as being excellent on their efficiency. This is consistent with the staff efficiency rating for the 2017 General Election (81%).

Table 49: Rating of the efficiency of voting place staff

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**
5 - Excellent	81%	79%	75%	67%	86%↑	72%↓	81%	77%	75%	80%	83%	82%
4	15%	17%	19%	24%	9%↓	23%↑	13%	18%	19%	19%	14%	14%
3	2%	3%	3%	6%	5%	3%	4%	2%	4%	0%	2%	2%
2	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
1 - Poor	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those of European ethnicity were *more likely* to rate the staff as being excellent on their efficiency (85% versus 74% for those of non-European ethnicity).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate the staff as being excellent on their efficiency (67% versus 82% aged 30+) along with those who voted on Election Day (73% versus 81% for those who voted before Election Day).

Compared to 2017, those of Māori ethnicity were *less likely* to rate the staff as being excellent on their efficiency (72% versus 86% in 2017) along with males (77% versus 82% in 2017).

Rating of how comfortable and welcome voters felt

[% Among those who voted]

In the 2020 General Election a new statement was added rating how comfortable and welcome voters felt in voting places. The large majority of voters (80%) rated comfort and the welcome from staff as excellent, with very few rating them poorly.

Table 50: Rating of how comfortable and welcome voters felt

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	-	80%	-	74%	-	73%	-	73%	-	85%	-	81%
4	-	17%	-	24%	-	21%	-	23%	-	13%	-	16%
3	-	2%	-	1%	-	6%	-	2%	-	0%	-	2%
2	-	1%	-	1%	-	0%	-	0%	-	2%	-	0%
1 - Poor	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	3%	-	1%	-	0%
n =	-	*782*	-	*99*	-	*88*	-	*107*	-	*117*	-	*174*

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to rate comfort and feeling welcome as excellent (84% versus 77% aged 18-49) along with females (83% versus 77% for males).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate comfort and welcomeness as excellent (74% versus 82% aged 30+).

Overall rating of the voting place staff

[% Among those who voted]

Most voters (83%) said their overall impression of staff was excellent, with 'poor' ratings only given by 1% of Pasifika and Asian voters. This is consistent with the 2017 General Election.

Table 51: Overall rating of the voting place staff

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 - Excellent	84%	83%	78%	74%	84%	79%	87%	76%	76%	82%	84%	85%
4	12%	14%	18%	24%	12%	18%	8%	21%	20%	17%	12%	12%
3	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	2%
2	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
n =	*978*	*782*	*192*	*99*	*160*	*88*	*129*	*107*	*157*	*117*	*151*	*174*

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to rate overall impressions of staff as excellent (86% versus 81% aged 18-49) along with females (87% versus males 79%) and those of European ethnicity (85% versus 79% for non-European ethnicity).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate overall impressions of staff as excellent (74% versus 86% aged 30+).

Overall rating of the voting process

[% Among those who voted]

Two thirds (69%) of those who voted rated the overall voting process as excellent, with very few rating the process poorly. This is consistent with the 2017 General Election.

Table 52: Overall rating of the voting process

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**	**2017**	**2020**
5 - Excellent	71%	69%	61%	62%	75%	62%	76%	84%	65%	71%	69%	66%
4	23%	26%	27%	33%	13%↓	33%↑	19%	12%	26%	27%	23%	28%
3	4%	3%	11%↑	3%↓	8%	4%	3%	4%	7%↑	1%↓	7%	3%
2	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%
1 - Poor	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
n =	*1000*	*802*	*196*	*102*	*163*	*93*	*131*	*108*	*163*	*119*	*156*	*186*

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to rate the overall voting process as excellent (75% versus 65% for those aged 18-49) along with those of Pasifika ethnicity (84% versus 68% for non-Pasifika) and females (73% versus 65% for males).

Those aged 18-29 were *less likely* to rate the overall voting process as excellent (62% versus 71% aged 30+).

Incidence of encountering an issue when voting

[% Among those who voted]

Almost all (94%) of those who voted did not encounter any issue while voting. This is consistent with the 2017 General Election.

Table 53: Incidence of encountering an issue when voting

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
No issue while voting	95%	94%	96%	95%	91%	94%	97%	96%	99%	97%	95%	93%
Yes, had an issue while voting	5%	5%	4%	5%	7%	5%	3%	4%	0%	2%	3%	6%
n =	*999*	*801*	*196*	*102*	*163*	*93*	*130*	*108*	*163*	*118*	*156*	*186*

Those aged 30-49 were *more likely* to **encounter an issue** when voting (9% versus 4% for other age groups).

Those aged 50+ were *less likely* to encounter an issue when voting (3% versus 7% aged 18-49).

While there was a low incidence of encountering an issue, the main issue encountered was needing 'more information about how to vote' (13%, n=33).

Impact of the referendums and COVID-19

Very few voters (4%) said they only voted in the General Election because of the referendums.

Table 54: Referendum voting impact*

[% Among those who voted in the general election and the referendum]

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	-	4%	-	8%	-	5%	-	10%	-	12%	-	6%
No	-	96%	-	92%	-	94%	-	88%	-	87%	-	93%
Not sure	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	1%	-	1%	-	1%
n =	-	*830*	-	*98*	-	*117*	-	*114*	-	*119*	-	*189*

Those of Pasifika ethnicity were *more likely* to say they voted in the General Election because of the referendums (10% versus 4% for non-Pasifika), along with those of Asian ethnicity (12% versus 3% for non-Asian) and those who voted on Election Day (7% versus 3% for those who voted before Election Day).

Those aged 50+ were *less likely* to say they voted in the General Election because of the referendums (2% versus 6% aged 18-49), along with those of European ethnicity (1% versus 11% for non-European).

*Question not asked in 2017. Question Text: Did you vote this election only because of the referendums?

Before the General Election*, most voters (84%) said that COVID-19 made no difference to their intention to vote in the General Election.

Table 55: COVID-19 voting impact*

[% Among Eligible voters]

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Makes me more likely to vote	-	15%	-	17%	-	19%	-	29%	-	18%
Makes no difference to my intentions	-	84%	-	81%	-	80%	-	70%	-	79%
Makes me much less likely to vote	-	1%	-	3%	-	1%	-	1%	-	3%
n =	-	*786*	-	*172*	-	*97*	-	*93*	-	*196*

Those of Pasifika ethnicity were *more likely* to say that COVID-19 made them more likely to vote in the General Election (29% versus 14% for non-Pasifika).

Those aged 18-29 were *more likely* to say that COVID-19 made them less likely to vote in the General Election (3% versus 1% aged 30+), along with those of Asian ethnicity (3% versus 1% for non-Asian).

*Question not asked in 2017. Source: Electoral Commission Quantitative Pre-Election survey October 2020.

Non-voter behaviour and reasons for not voting

Possibility of voting in the 2020 NZ General Election

[% did not vote in 2020 election]

Over two thirds (70%) of people who did not vote in the 2020 General Election said that they had initially considered doing so. This is significantly higher than the 2017 result (50%) but consistent with the result for the 2014 General Election (70%).

Table 56: Possibility of voting in the NZ General Election

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Yes	53%↓	70%↑	55%↓	74%↑	46%↓	85%↑	57%	63%	69%	72%	57%↓	78%↑
No	40%↑	23%↓	37%↑	15%↓	50%↑	5%↓	25%	29%	15%	16%	40%↑	17%↓
Not sure	7%	7%	8%	11%	4%	10%	18%	8%	15%	12%	2%	5%
n =	166	162	89	51	33	34	50	30	23	32	28	36

Those of Māori ethnicity were *more likely* to have considered doing so (85% versus 66% for non-Māori).

Those aged 50+ who didn't vote were *more likely* to have not considered doing so (41% versus 20% aged 18-49).

When non-voters decided not to vote

[% did not vote in 2020 election].

One third (34%) of non-voters made the decision not to vote on Election Day itself. Almost a fifth (19%) decided up to a week before. Results are consistent with 2017 with the exception that the number of people deciding not to vote more than a month before the election decreased significantly during the 2020 Election (24% versus 38% for the 2017 General Election).

Table 57: When non-voters decided not to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
On Election Day	29%	34%	28%	40%	13%↓	49%↑	29%	42%	27%	40%	36%	33%
One week before Election Day	18%	19%	18%	26%	21%	24%	36%	15%	31%	18%	13%	18%
Two weeks before	3%↓	7%↑	5%	10%	4%	10%	2%	6%	11%	4%	0%	12%
About a month before	6%	9%	6%	3%	18%	5%	2%	0%	0%	10%	6%	13%
More than a month before	38%↑	24%↓	31%↑	17%↓	38%↑	6%↓	20%	29%	10%	23%	42%↑	19%↓
Not sure	7%	6%	11%	4%	6%	6%	11%	9%	21%	5%	3%	6%
n =	*165*	*162*	*88*	*51*	*33*	*34*	*50*	*30*	*22*	*32*	*28*	*36*

Māori non-voters were *more likely* to have made the decision not to vote on Election Day (49% versus 30% for non-Māori ethnicity), along with females (42% versus 24% for Males).

Those aged 50+ were *more likely* to have decided not to vote more than a month before Election Day (41% versus 21% aged 18-49).

Amount of effort invested in decision not to vote

[% did not vote in 2020 election].

Non-voters were asked how much effort they put into deciding whether or not to vote. About a third (31%) said they put a lot of thought into the decision, a third (38%) put in some thought, and another third (31%) no thought at all. This is consistent with the 2017 General Election.

Table 58: Amount of effort invested in decision not to vote

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
Put a lot of thought into deciding whether or not to vote	29%	31%	17%	18%	31%	51%	28%	32%	33%	15%	32%	39%
Put just a little thought into it	38%	38%	44%	46%	28%	31%	35%	34%	47%	45%	38%	38%
Didn't think about it at all	33%	31%	39%	37%	41%↑	18%↓	38%	34%	20%↓	41%↑	30%	23%
n =	*165*	*162*	*90*	*51*	*33*	*34*	*51*	*30*	*21*	*32*	*28*	*36*

Non-voters aged 50+ were more likely to have put a lot of thought into the decision (49% versus 28% of those aged 18-49) along with those of Māori ethnicity (51% versus 26% for those of non-Māori ethnicity).

18-29 year old non-voters were *less likely* to have put a lot of thought into the decision (18% versus 41% aged 30+) along with those of Asian ethnicity (15% versus 35% for those of non-Asian ethnicity).

Reasons for not voting

[% did not vote in 2020 election].

Non-voters were asked the main reason why they didn't vote in the 2020 election, and then what other reasons if any that they had. Non-voters were not prompted for reasons but the interviewers had a pre-code list available to code responses to, as well as an opportunity to record verbatim other reasons not on the pre-code list.

In Table 59 on page 66, the main and total reasons are listed, and compared to 2017 where applicable. Some reasons changed between 2017 and 2020 so not all reasons were comparable. For easier analysis, reasons have been grouped into high-level codes.

The biggest reason for not voting in 2020 was due to **self-stated personal barriers** such as personal (11%) or work (5%) commitments or religious reasons not to vote (8%). These reasons were 28% of all the 'main' reasons for not voting and 35% for the total reasons for not voting. This is significantly higher than 2017 (35% versus 20% in 2017).

- Those of Māori ethnicity were more likely to say they had work commitments (13% versus 3% for non-Māori ethnicity).

- Those aged 50+ were more likely to say they had religious reasons for not voting (18% versus 6% aged 18-49) along with those who are disabled (16% versus 6% for non-disabled) and females (12% versus 2% for males).

- Those aged 30-49 were more likely to say that they had health reasons for not voting (7% versus 0% for other ages groups).

- Those of Asian ethnicity were more likely to say they had personal commitments (22% versus 9% for non-Asian ethnicity)

The second main category for not voting was **not knowing who to vote for** at 22% of all main reasons given, which is consistent with 2017 (18%). This was a function of not knowing who to vote for (17%), not being able to work out who to vote for (5%), and not knowing the candidates (1%).

Voting process barriers accounted for 7% of main reasons for not voting. This is consistent with the 2017 result. This result was driven by people not being enrolled (4%) or not knowing where to vote (2%).

- Those aged 18-29 were more likely to say that they weren't enrolled (8% versus 1% aged 30+) or that they forgot (8% versus 1% aged 30+).

The amount of stated **access barriers** to not voting decreased compared to 2017 (2% main reasons 2020 compared to 7% in 2017).

There were also many non-voters who gave other reasons for not voting. Of these, most comments were related to non-voters feeling the election result was foregone or inevitable so their vote wouldn't make a difference.

Table 59: Main and total reasons for not voting*

	Main reason		Total reasons	
	2017	2020	2017	2020
Didn't know who to vote for	**18%**	**22%**	**20%**	**25%**
Didn't know who to vote for	-	17%	-	20%
Couldn't work out who to vote for	17%↑	5%↓	17%↑	6%↓
Didn't know the candidates	1%	0%	1%	0%
Voting process	**9%**	**7%**	**9%**	**13%**
Wasn't enrolled	7%	4%	7%	5%
Didn't know where to vote	0%	2%	1%	3%
Didn't get to the voting place on time	4%	1%	4%	4%
Didn't know how to vote	2%	0%	2%	0%
Didn't know when to vote	0%	0%	0%	0%
Couldn't work out how to vote in the referendums	-	0%	-	1%
Personal barrier	**19%**	**28%**	**20%↓**	**35%↑**
Had personal commitments	7%	11%	9%	16%
Religious reasons not to vote	11%	8%	12%	9%
Had work commitments	7%	5%	7%	7%
Health reasons	1%	3%	2%	5%
Disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Practical access barrier	**7%↑**	**2%↓**	**9%↑**	**2%↓**
Voting place too far away/ no transport	1%	0%	1%	1%
Away from home but still in New Zealand	1%	1%	1%	1%
Religious day (i.e., Sabbath, Holy Day)	0%	1%	0%	1%
Overseas at the time	5%↑	0%↓	7%↑	0%↓
Other	**22%**	**25%**	**37%**	**34%**
Don't believe in voting / couldn't be bothered	11%	11%	14%	13%
I forgot	3%	4%	3%	5%
Covid-19	-	0%	-	1%
Wasn't aware of election	-	0%	-	0%
Bad weather on voting day	-	0%	-	0%
No particular reason	1%	2%	1%	2%
Not sure	5%↑	0%↓	6%	8%
n =	*165*	*162*	*165*	*162*

Notes:

* Main reason is single response; total reasons include main plus any other reason(s) given for not voting

Confidence in fair and impartial elections

Electoral Commission conducts parliamentary elections fairly

Over half (59%) of eligible voters have total confidence that the Electoral Commission conducts parliamentary elections fairly. Most voters (87%) rated this a 4 or a 5 out of 5 for having total confidence which is significantly higher than 2017 (87% versus 78% in 2017).

Table 60: Confidence that the Electoral Commission conducts elections fairly

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 – Total confidence	57%	59%	35%	49%↑	45%	53%	41%	44%	52%	49%	49%	63%↑
4	21%	28%↑	24%	33%	21%	29%	17%	33%↑	20%	36%↑	22%	23%
3	17%	10%↓	30%	14%↓	25%	13%↓	34%	17%↓	24%	13%↓	21%	7%↓
2	4%	2%↓	7%	4%	6%	5%	4%	2%	3%	1%	4%	5%
1 – No confidence	2%	1%	4%	1%↓	4%	0%↓	4%	3%	0%	1%	3%	2%
n =	1165	976	284	152	196	134	180	146	186	149	184	228

Youth (49% versus 62% for those aged 30+), Asian (49% versus 60% for non-Asian) and Pasifika (44% versus 60% for non-Pasifika) were *less likely* to have total confidence (5 out of 5) in 2020.

Those of European descent were *more likely* to have total confidence (5 out of 5) (64% versus 47% for non-European).

Electoral Commission conducts parliamentary elections impartially

Over half (59%) of eligible voters have total confidence that the Electoral Commission conducts parliamentary elections impartially. Most voters (85%) rated this a 4 or a 5 out of 5 for having total confidence which is significantly higher than 2017 (85% versus 79% in 2017).

Table 61: Confidence that the Electoral Commission conducts elections impartially

	Total		Youth		Māori		Pasifika		Asian		Disabled	
	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020	2017	2020
5 – Total confidence	57%	59%	34%	48%↑	42%	48%	39%	46%	46%	50%	49%	63%↑
4	22%	26%↑	29%	26%	24%	27%	19%	31%↑	26%	30%	28%	23%
3	16%	12%↓	30%	22%	25%	21%	33%	15%↓	24%	16%	16%	9%↓
2	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	5%	2%
1 – No confidence	2%	1%	4%	2%	5%	0%↓	6%	5%	1%	1%	2%	3%
n =	1165	976	284	152	196	134	180	146	186	149	184	228

Youth (48% versus 62% for those aged 30+), Asian (50% versus 60% for non-Asian), Māori (48% versus 60% for non-Māori) and Pasifika (46% versus 60% for non-Pasifika) were *less likely* to have total confidence (5 out of 5) in 2020.

Those of European descent were *more likely* to have total confidence (5 out of 5) (63% versus 48% for non-European).

Appendix A: Overview tables (2020)

Overview: Voters and non-voters

The following table shows the answers to key questions asked of both voters and non-voters. Please refer to the tables in the main report for voter/non-voter specific questions.

Were you enrolled to vote in the New Zealand general election just been?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	94%	100%	69%
Base n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*
Why did you initially enrol to vote?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Wanted my opinion to count	42%	44%	30%
You have to, it's the law	33%	33%	34%
Wanted to make a difference	9%	10%	4%
Someone I know encouraged me to	6%	4%	17%
I saw an ad that encouraged me to enrol	1%	1%	1%
Someone from the Electoral Commission talked to me about enrolling	1%	1%	4%
Another reason (please specify)	17%	17%	15%
Not sure	3%	3%	6%
Base n =	*983*	*873*	*110*
Were you eligible to vote in the 2017 New Zealand general election?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	91%	92%	86%
Base n =	*1037*	*876*	*161*
Voting process (% 4 or 5 out of 5)	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Understand the voting process	89%	94%	67%
Understand the enrolling process	91%	94%	79%
How to enrol to vote	90%	92%	79%
How to update your enrolment details	86%	90%	71%
How to vote	96%	99%	81%
Where you can vote	94%	97%	81%
What to do if can't get to a voting place	69%	74%	47%
Base n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*
Recall receiving EasyVote pack	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	72%	72%	66%
Base n =	*845*	*799*	*46*

Where did you see or hear that advertising about how to enrol or vote?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Television	69%	69%	63%
Newspapers	20%	20%	9%
Radio	15%	15%	6%
Word of mouth	2%	2%	1%
Signs	10%	10%	21%
Website that isn't a social media website	13%	13%	16%
Social media website, e.g. Facebook, Instagram, etc.	23%	23%	25%
Pamphlets or fliers	17%	18%	5%
Bus shelters	2%	1%	4%
Street posters	1%	1%	4%
Another place (please specify)	0%	0%	0%
Not sure	0%	0%	1%
Base n =	*590*	*558*	*32*
Message outtake by channel grouped to overall	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Orange Guy/pup	34%	34%	37%
Enrol. Vote. Be Heard.	28%	29%	10%
Don't forget to enrol to vote	28%	29%	13%
Enrol to vote in the referendums	7%	8%	0%
You can vote now	7%	7%	1%
Enrol early to make voting quick and easy	7%	7%	0%
Check the mail for your enrolment pack	7%	7%	0%
There's an election and referendums coming up	7%	7%	0%
Referendum questions (End of Life Choice and/or Cannabis)	5%	5%	5%
You can vote in two referendums	5%	5%	0%
Vote Ghost	4%	4%	0%
More voting places this year	4%	4%	0%
Stacey and Scotty Morrison	3%	3%	2%
You can get help to vote	2%	2%	0%
Election date has changed	2%	2%	1%
First time voter	1%	2%	0%
Vote close to home	1%	1%	0%
Didn't get an EasyVote pack	1%	1%	0%
Vote Like a Boss	1%	1%	1%
There will be safety measures at voting places	0%	1%	0%
Master Voter	0%	0%	3%
Another message (please specify)	18%	18%	15%
Not sure	17%	16%	33%
Base n =	*574*	*543*	*31*

Do you recall receiving your EasyVote pack in the mail?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	91%	94%	51%
Base n =	*844*	*798*	*46*

Which of these categories best describes what you did with the EasyVote pack?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Read most or all of it	54%	55%	9%
Read some of it	19%	19%	37%
Glanced at it	14%	14%	13%
Didn't read it	12%	11%	41%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%
Base n =	*768*	*744*	*24*

There was an EasyVote card contained within the pack. Did you find it easily?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	97%	97%	89%
Base n =	*701*	*684*	*17*

On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is not very useful and 5 is very useful, overall, how useful did you find the EasyVote pack?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
(% 4 or 5 out of 5)	88%	88%	45%
Base n =	*699*	*682*	*17*

Appendix B: Sample profile

The following table shows the unweighted (i.e. the number of interviews conducted) sample sizes by demographics.

Gender	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Male	422	358	64
Female	613	515	98
Gender diverse	3	3	0
Total	*1038*	*876*	*162*
Age	Total	Voters	Non-voters
18-29	155	104	51
30-39	142	104	38
40-49	131	102	29
50-59	186	156	30
60-69	177	169	8
70+	247	241	6
n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*
Ethnicity	Total	Voters	Non-voters
New Zealand European	623	539	84
Māori	158	124	34
Samoan	53	45	8
Cook Island Māori	29	26	3
Tongan	31	21	10
Niuean	14	11	3
Other Pacific Island ethnic group (specify)	32	26	6
Chinese	28	19	9
Indian	80	69	11
Other Asian ethnic group	49	37	12
Other ethnic group	53	44	9
Rather not say	3	3	0
n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*
Highest completed qualification	Total	Voters	Non-voters
No qualification	95	79	16
School Certificate or NCEA level 1	123	111	12
Sixth Form Certificate, University Entrance or NCEA Level 2	118	97	21
Bursary, Scholarship or NCEA level 3 or 4	76	60	16
A Trade Qualification	63	52	11
A certificate or diploma that does not require a degree	125	102	23
A polytech degree	39	29	10
A university degree	240	202	38
Postgraduate qualification, e.g. Honours, Masters, Doctorate	142	128	14
Other	5	5	0
Not sure	10	9	1
Rather not say	1	1	0
n =	*1037*	*875*	*162*

Were you born in New Zealand?	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Yes	710	600	110
No	328	276	52
Rather not say	0	0	0
n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*
Gross household income	Total	Voters	Non-voters
>30k	139	117	22
30-50k	113	89	24
50-70k	110	104	6
70-100k	117	95	22
100-120k	78	70	8
120-150k	90	64	26
150k+	134	114	20
Not sure	180	150	30
Rather not say	77	73	4
n =	*1038*	*876*	*162*