

20 May 2025

By email to: [REDACTED]

Kia ora

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/26

On Tuesday, 22 April 2025, you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

We are seeking information related to the electoral makeup and voting behaviour of constituents in the Rotorua Lakes Council area, with a view to promoting civic engagement and improving democratic representation.

Specifically, we request:

1. Electorate Demographics

- ***The total enrolled population for Rotorua Lakes Council, broken down by:***
 - *Age bands*
 - *Ethnicity (if available)*
 - *Gender (if available)*
 - *Suburb/statistical area (or electoral subdivisions used)*
- ***Any available historical trends or reports showing changes in enrolment or voting turnout in the Rotorua district across the past two local election cycles.***

2. Voting Turnout and Patterns

- ***Data on voter turnout by suburb or statistical area for the 2022 local government election.***
- ***Any available analysis or datasets that indicate voter density, such as % of eligible electors who voted per suburb or ward.***

3. Unenrolled Voter Information

- ***Any estimates or data on unenrolled or partially enrolled individuals (e.g. incomplete or out-of-date addresses) in the Rotorua Lakes Council area, by suburb or age bracket.***
- ***Information on any targeted initiatives or communications planned to encourage voter enrolment in Rotorua ahead of the 2025 local body elections.***

On 28 April 2025, we transferred the following questions to Rotorua Lakes District Council to respond to, as these voting turnout questions relate more closely to their functions:

1. Electorate Demographics

- ***Any available historical trends or reports showing changes in voting turnout in the Rotorua district across the past two local election cycles.***

2. Voting Turnout and Patterns

- ***Data on voter turnout by suburb or statistical area for the 2022 local government election.***
- ***Any available analysis or datasets that indicate voter density, such as % of eligible electors who voted per suburb or ward.***

Please find answers to your request below.

Electorate demographics

In response to your request for data on the total enrolled population for Rotorua Lakes Council, we have presented this data as table A in the attached appendix. This data is presented by age band and represents data as of 30 April 2025.

You have asked that the data requested is broken by ethnicity. A person must be of Māori descent to enrol on the Māori roll, and therefore information about whether an elector is of Māori descent is collected on the enrolment form. Other ethnicity information, however, is not required in an application to enrol and for that reason we cannot provide the ethnicity breakdown that you have requested. As the information requested is not held this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

Gender is not required in an application to enrol and for that reason we are unable to provide you with a breakdown of gender information that you have requested. As the information requested is not held this aspect of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

You have requested total enrolled population for this same region, broken down by suburb or statistical area. Enrolment statistics for Rotorua District local authority at a Community Board, Regional Council, Regional Constituency and Ward level can be found here <https://elections.nz/stats-and-research/enrolment-statistics/enrolment-by-local-council-voting-area/?name=Rotorua+District>

In response to your request for historical trends or reports showing changes in enrolment, we have included enrolment data for Rotorua Lakes district from 8 October 2022. This can be found in table B of the attached appendix, presented in the same manner as the 30 April data in table A.

For further information on local authority election statistics, you may find the information published by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) helpful. The DIA publishes most of your requested data on their website, including data from previous local elections, available as CSV or Excel documents here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Local-Elections-Local-Authority-Election-Statistics-2022#two>

Unenrolled voter information

Unenrolled elector info for Rotorua District by age is included in Appendix A. We don't hold information by suburb and so have to refuse this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

However, if it helps, here are the current enrolment figures for the wards within Rotorua district as of 30 April 2025:

- Rotorua Rural General Ward: 4,762,
- Te Ipu Wai Auraki General Ward: 32,871,

- Te Ipu Wai Taketake Māori Ward: 13,584 enrolled.

Information on any targeted initiatives or communications planned to encourage voter enrolment in Rotorua ahead of the 2025 local body elections.

In early April, the Electoral Commission wrote to all enrolled New Zealanders to check their enrolment details are up to date and to provide information to Māori about the choice to change rolls. It is also delivering a nationwide public information programme to raise awareness about the need to be correctly enrolled for this year's local elections. The programme includes advertising on national and regional channels, resources for stakeholders to share with their communities, media and social media engagement. The campaign is designed to ensure we reach all New Zealanders, including those in Rotorua. Messages about the Māori Electoral Option will continue until the deadline to change rolls on 10 July and other enrolment messages will continue until 1 August, when the rolls close for Councils to prepare postal voting papers.

In Rotorua, we partner with Local and Regional councils to deliver key LBE/MEO campaign messages. We are also working alongside various Pasifika, tangata whenua, ethnic communities, disabilities, and youth groups to promote understanding and encourage enrolment and participation in the local elections. We have also been attending expos and events, community festivals and marae wānanga in the Rotorua region.

The Community Education Fund and Grant was established to support local initiatives aimed at enhancing awareness and understanding of Local Body Elections (LBE) 2025 and the Māori Electoral Option (MEO). We were interested in Community Groups that had a wide reach within their communities that would be able to support our campaign messaging about Local Body Elections and critical enrolment dates that would impact all voters. There were no successful applicants from Rotorua.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Beth Kreitzer
Principal Advisor Data and Insights