

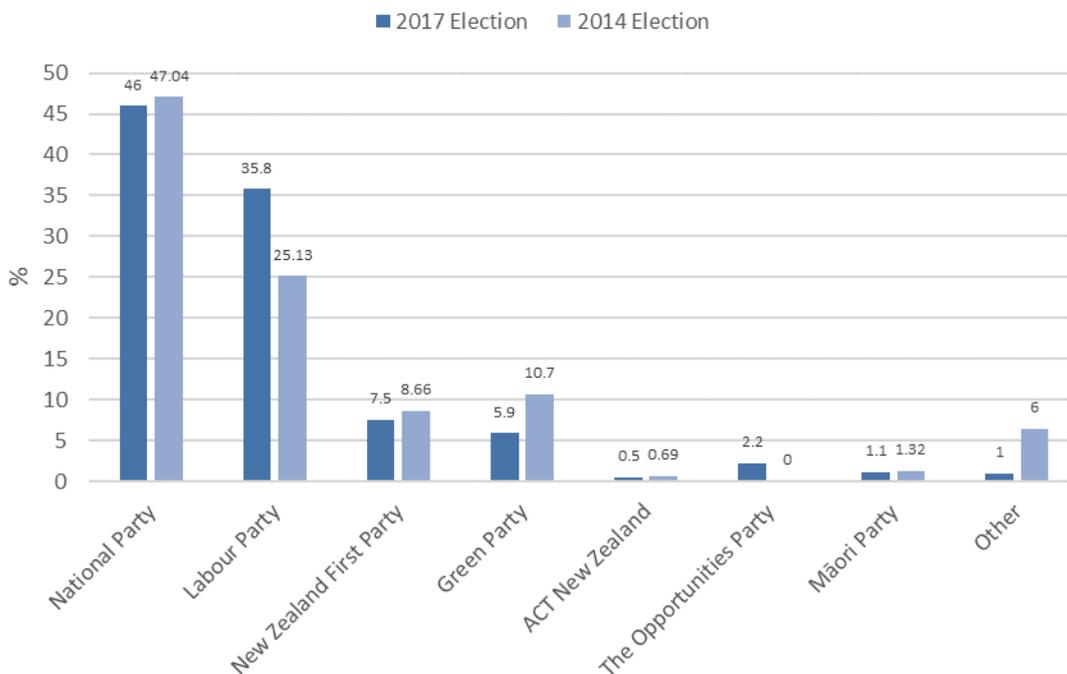
Barton Deakin Brief: New Zealand Election Results

26 September 2017

New Zealand's election was held on Saturday 23 September. The governing National party, led by Prime Minister Bill English, won the largest share of the vote (46%) but not enough seats in Parliament to govern alone. This means National will need to negotiate with New Zealand First to form a coalition government. There remains the possibility that the Labour opposition could form a coalition government with support of both the Green Party and New Zealand First.

Figure 1 below shows the vote results. National received the largest share of the popular vote (46%) over Labour (35.8%) who were led in the election by their newly elected leader Jacinda Ardern.

Figure 1: Percentage of vote, 2017 preliminary count and 2015 official result¹



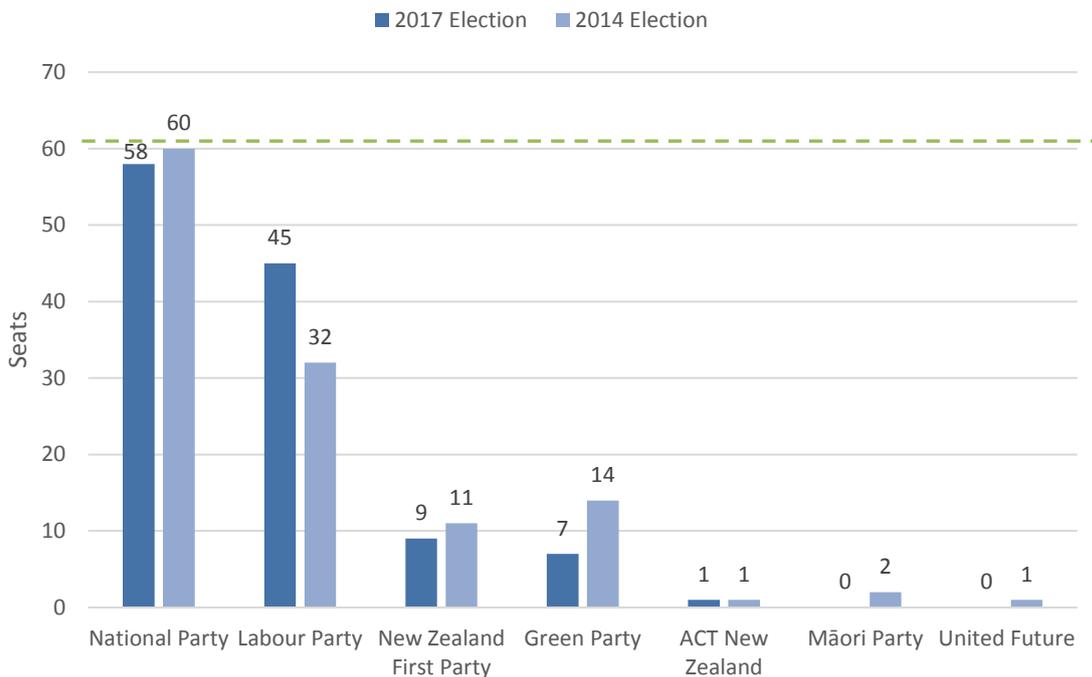
The result is largely in line with public polling before the election.

New Zealand's parliament has 120 seats, meaning a majority of 61 seats is needed by a party to govern. New Zealand's Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) voting system means that coalitions or agreements between political parties are usually needed before Governments can be formed. If no majority is possible through a coalition, then a minority government can be formed with a confidence and supply arrangement. Figure 2 below shows the projected total seats. National's popular vote translated to a predicted 58 seats, two seats short of majority.

¹ Electoral Commission New Zealand



Figure 2: Seats in Parliament, 2017 projected and 2014 final²



In 2014, National, then led by John Key, formed government with confidence and supply agreements with ACT, the Māori Party and United Future.

After Saturday's election, both National and Labour can form coalition governments, though National is in a stronger position.

The Greens have ruled out working with National and would be more likely to agree to a three-party arrangement with Labour and New Zealand First. This means both major parties need to gain the support of New Zealand First, led by Winston Peters, who has previously backed the party with the largest number of votes. Negotiations will likely take several weeks but the most likely scenario is an agreement between National and New Zealand First to form Government.

Special vote count

A final tally of the election results is due on 7 October, when "special votes", which will make up 15 per cent of the total including overseas votes, are released.

National is expected to drop up to two seats after special votes are counted. Labour is likely to pick up one seat and the Green Party may also pick up a seat.

Winston Peters has indicated New Zealand First will not make any decisions or further announcements until after the special votes come in. New Zealand First may hold discussions with Labour and National in the meantime.

² Electoral Commission New Zealand



Interim arrangement

Mr English remains as caretaker Prime Minister in the interim.

Parliament will not be re-called until a Government is finalised.

Barton Deakin will be keeping a close eye on developments and update this brief accordingly.

To view the results from the New Zealand Electoral Commission, click [here](#).

For more information, please contact Barton Deakin's New Zealand Director [Jenna Raeburn](#) or call +64 21 249 9769.

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