

Barton Deakin Brief: New Zealand 2023 Election Results

3 November 2023 - Official election results released

Updating Barton Deakin Brief of 16 October 2023

The 2023 New Zealand general election was held on Saturday 14 October.

New Zealand's general election delivered a decisive win for the centre-right National Party, ending six years of Labour-led government.

The New Zealand Electoral Commission released the official results for the 2023 general election on Friday 3 November 2023.

Results

New Zealand's Parliament will have the following composition:

	National	ACT	NZF	Labour	Greens	TPM	Total
Seats	48*	11	8	34	15	6	122*

Two 'overhang' seats were created due to Te Pāti Māori winning additional electorate seats beyond those won through their party vote (compared to one overhang seat on the preliminary results), increasing the size of Parliament to 122.

Forming Government

National's need to work with other parties to secure a Parliamentary majority is a common outcome of New Zealand's elections as parliaments are elected under a mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral system. See [here](#) for an explanation of New Zealand's MMP voting system.

National and ACT had 61 of 121 seats in the preliminary results, a one seat majority.

The official results give them 59 of 122 seats, meaning National, with ACT, are not able to form a majority without support from New Zealand First.

(*) Due to the death of ACT candidate Neil Christensen, a by-election will be held for the safe National seat of Port Waikato on 25 November. This is expected to be won by National, and will



increase National’s tally to 49 seats, and the total number of seats in Parliament to 123. The number of seats required for a majority will remain at 62.

National, ACT, and New Zealand First commenced informal talks ahead of the official results. Negotiations will now begin, Incoming Prime Minister Chris Luxon and New Zealand First Leader Winston Peters have both indicated they want to reach an agreement quickly, in the week following official results on 3 November 2023.

International engagements, including the Pacific Island Forum on 6 to 10 November and the APEC Leaders’ meeting on 11 to 17 November, have been noted by PM-elect Luxon and Mr Peters as reasons to swear in the new government quickly.

National also has an extensive 100-Day Plan, which includes passing several pieces of legislation through all stages, introducing others into Parliament, and repealing laws from the previous government. To achieve this, the new government will need Parliament to sit for as much time before Christmas as possible - the earliest Parliament may be opened is 10 November 2023.

Until the new government is agreed and formally sworn in, the outgoing Labour government remains in office in a ‘caretaker’ role.

Changes from the Preliminary Results

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The official results included 603,257 special and overseas votes that were not included in the preliminary results. These represent one in five (20.9% of) votes and again skewed the result slightly to the left compared to preliminary results, driving changes between the preliminary and official results.

Change in total seats

(determined by share of the party vote, and any ‘overhang’ seats where a party wins more electorates than its seat entitlement under the party vote)

	National	ACT	NZF	Labour	Greens	TPM	Total
Seats	-2	0	0	0	+1	+2**	+1**

** Te Pāti Māori’s (TPM’s) six electorate victories give it more seats than its entitlement under the party vote of four, this increases the total number of seats in Parliament to 122

Very close results mean that recounts in come seats are a possibility;

- Te Pāti Māori's Takutai Tarsh Kemp won Tāmaki Makaurau by just 4 votes;
- Labour’s Helen White held Mt Albert (formerly held by Prime Ministers Jacinda Ardern and Helen Clark) by just 20 votes, and
- Labour's Rachel Boyack held Nelson by just 29 votes).



The result

National's vote settled a little above 38%. Labour suffered an historic defeat, dropping from over 50% of the vote in 2020 to just under 27% in 2023.

The Labour Party lost 27 electorate seats, including both marginal seats won from National in 2020 and a number of previously safe Labour seats. In Auckland, a series of suburban Labour seats including Mt Roskill fell to National. In Wellington, Wellington Central and Rongotai were won by the Greens.

The scale of Labour's defeat has been attributed to high inflation and rising interest rates, the aftermath of Covid-19, a relatively timid policy agenda, challenges with delivering policies and a series of high-profile ministerial scandals.

Outgoing Prime Minister Chris Hipkins is expected to stay on as Labour leader to ease the party's transition into opposition and allow for an orderly leadership election in due course. Under the Labour Party's constitution, Mr Hipkins will need to win a leadership endorsement vote to remain leader.

Preliminary and Final Counts

PRELIMINARY			FINAL	
Party Vote	Total Seats	Party	Party Vote	Total Seats
38.95%	50	National	38.06%	48
26.9%	34	Labour	26.91%	34
10.77%	14	Green Party	11.6%	15
8.98%	11	ACT	8.64%	11
6.46%	8	NZ First	6.08%	8
2.61%	4	Te Pāti Māori	3.08%	6
5.29%	0	Other	5.63%	0

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About Christopher Luxon

National Party leader Christopher Luxon will become New Zealand's 42nd Prime Minister. The former Chief Executive Officer of Air New Zealand has been in Parliament for just one term, making him New Zealand's shortest-serving MP to become Prime Minister.

Christopher Luxon was born in Christchurch and raised in Howick, Auckland. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in commerce from the University of Canterbury.





Prior to entering Parliament, Mr Luxon worked for Unilever in various international roles, including as CEO of Unilever Canada. In 2011, he joined Air New Zealand and became its CEO in 2013, a position he held until he entered Parliament.

In his maiden speech to Parliament, Mr Luxon said his personal and professional life were guided by National Party values of freedom and choice, rights and responsibilities, limited yet better government, competitive enterprise, and equal opportunity in citizenship.

National's and partner party priorities

National has committed to an ambitious [100-day plan](#), which includes the following initiatives:

Economy

- Remove the Auckland Regional Fuel Tax
- Remove the Reserve Bank's dual mandate
- Restore 90-day employment trial periods for all businesses
- Repeal Labour's Fair Pay Agreements legislation
- Cancel Labour's planned fuel tax increases
- Stop work on the income insurance scheme
- Instruct public sector Chief Executives to start identifying back-office savings and report their spending on consultants

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Health

- Extend free breast cancer screening for women aged up to 74

Environment

- Repeal Labour's Three Waters legislation
- Repeal Labour's Resource Management Act ("RMA") 2.0 laws
- Repeal the Clean Car Discount ('ute tax')
- Stop work on the Lake Onslow scheme

Justice

- Ban gang patches, stop gang members from gathering in public, and stop known gang offenders from communicating with one another
- Give police greater powers to search gang members for firearms and make gang membership an aggravating factor at sentencing
- Stop taxpayer funding for cultural reports which can be used for weakening sentences for offenders
- Extend the eligibility for remand prisoners to access rehabilitation programmes
- Crackdown on serious youth offending
- Encourage more virtual participation in court proceedings



Social

- Ban cell phones in schools
- Require primary and intermediate schools to prepare to teach an hour a day each of reading, writing and maths
- Stop blanket speed limit reductions
- Introduce a fast-track consenting regime
- Establish a Priority One category on the social housing waitlist to more quickly move families out of emergency housing and into permanent homes

ACT's [priorities](#) include:

- A referendum redefining the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, as a bottom line in coalition negotiations
 - Christopher Luxon described such a referendum as "divisive and not helpful" and said he won't support it.
- Reduce government spending including reducing the number of public servants by 15,000, opposing co-governance with Māori
- Binging back charter schools
- Repealing the Zero Carbon Act

New Zealand First's [priorities](#) include:

- Increasing investment in the regions
- Increasing Pharmac's budget by \$1 billion (publicly subsidised medicine)
- Opposing co-governance with Māori
- Repealing the Therapeutic Products Act
- Holding "credible, fully independent Inquiry" into New Zealand's Covid-19 response

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

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