

MEDIA RELEASE

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Poll finds Kiwis not so keen on MMP

Prime Minister John Key may believe New Zealanders are happy with MMP, but only 45 percent of us are keen on our current electoral system and keeping MMP, according to a Research New Zealand poll.

The poll taken between 8 to 10 September found 42 percent of New Zealanders were not in favour of MMP and a further 13 percent were unsure.

A government-initiated referendum was among National's pre-election promises and this week Mr Key said he would hold the referendum to honour his party's pledge, but didn't believe there was a mood for changing the system.

Research New Zealand Director Emanuel Kalafatelis said the poll results demonstrated that the MMP debate remained wide open.

"Mr Key believes that New Zealanders are 'comfortable' with MMP but our poll shows our opinion is divided. Less than half of us support MMP so that leaves a huge number of voters who are dissatisfied with the system."

Mr Kalafatelis said younger people (18-24) were more likely to support MMP at 58 percent in comparison to older New Zealanders (38 percent of 55 to 64 year olds, and 42 percent of over 65s).

Research New Zealand polled New Zealanders' attitudes to MMP both prior to, and following, the 2008 general election.

An August 2008 poll found 46 percent of those asked favoured MMP, and when the question was polled again in November 2008 the percentage of support had risen to 53 percent.

Mr Kalafatelis said the drop in support for MMP in the latest poll was a significant shift in opinion.

"We are far from having overwhelming support for the way we elect our Government," he said.



The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 18 and over was conducted by telephone between the 8 September and 10 September. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.5 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

Participants were asked: Prior to the last election, the National Party promised to hold a binding referendum at or before the 2011 election, to determine if New Zealanders want to keep the MMP voting system which is currently used in parliamentary elections. If that referendum is in favour of a change, a further referendum will be held to determine what will replace the MMP system of voting.

Are you in favour, or not in favour, of keeping the current MMP system?

Table 1: In favour or not in favour of replacing MMP system

Prior to the last election, the National Party promised to hold a binding referendum at or before the 2011 election, to determine if New Zealanders want to keep the MMP voting system which is currently used in parliamentary elections. If that referendum is in favour of a change, a further referendum will be held to determine what will replace the MMP system of voting.

Are you in favour, or not in favour, of keeping the current MMP system?

	Total	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 years and over
Base =	500	64	66	100	100	85	85
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, in favour	45	58	46	41	47	38	41
No, not in favour	42	21	27	48	45	57	48
Don't know	13	22	27	11	8	5	11
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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