



## **Fijian Rugby Players and the Rugby World Cup**

The New Zealand government has banned all Fiji military personnel from entering New Zealand. Within the military in Fiji are several rugby players who play for the Fiji national team. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Murray McCully, has stated that the ban on persons linked to the military regime continues to be the government's policy. At the same time, the International Rugby Board continues its efforts, although behind the scenes, to persuade the New Zealand government to change its stance.

Research New Zealand decided to test the level of public support for the suggestion that the New Zealand government should relax its ban to allow a national rugby team from Fiji to play in the Rugby World Cup irrespective of any links the team members may have to the military regime. Accordingly, a question about this was included in Research New Zealand's most recent social poll.

A small minority of New Zealanders, at 43 percent, favour relaxing the ban, while 49 percent wish the ban to be enforced. Among males 47 percent believe the ban should be relaxed, while 40 percent of females express this view.

The support for relaxing the ban is highest among young people in the 15–34 year age group at 65 percent. In the age groups 35–54 years and 55 years and over, support for retaining the ban is particularly strong at 62 percent and 58 percent respectively.

Support for relaxing the ban is particularly strong among Maori/Pacific People at 61 percent compared with 40 percent among NZ European/Pakeha respondents. There were no differences of note by geographic region.

It is interesting that among those earning \$80,000 or more per year, 29 percent favour the ban being relaxed, compared with 64 percent who want it retained. In the income group under \$40,000 per year, 58 percent want the ban to be relaxed, while 33 percent want the ban to be enforced.

“A small majority favour the ban remaining in force, but there are deep differences between people of different ages and income groups”, said Research New Zealand Director, Emanuel Kalafatelis. “This issue therefore has the potential to become very divisive”.

*The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone on 7–15 June 2011. The maximum margin of error for the sample as a whole is +/- 4.8 % (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 organization, but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.*

**Contact:** Emanuel Kalafatelis  
Director  
Research New Zealand Limited  
P O Box 10-617  
Wellington 6143  
Ph. 04-462-6401 (DDI); 027-500-4401 (M)



**Table 1:**

*Q21b. The policy of the New Zealand government is that any Fijians associated with the military regime in Fiji are not permitted to enter New Zealand. In your view, should this ban be relaxed so that any rugby player selected for the Fijian team, can come*

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	500*	230	270
	%	%	%
Yes, the ban should be relaxed	43	47	40
No, the ban should not be relaxed	49	50	49
Don't know	7	3	10
Refused	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*Sub-sample based on those respondents...

**Table 2:**

*Q21b. The policy of the New Zealand government is that any Fijians associated with the military regime in Fiji are not permitted to enter New Zealand. In your view, should this ban be relaxed so that any rugby player selected for the Fijian team, can come*

	Total	15-34 years	35 to 54 years	55 years and over
Base =	500*	106	164	230
	%	%	%	%
Yes, the ban should be relaxed	43	65	30	34
No, the ban should not be relaxed	49	28	62	58
Don't know	7	7	7	6
Refused	0	0	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*Sub-sample based on those respondents...

**Table 3:**

*Q21b. The policy of the New Zealand government is that any Fijians associated with the military regime in Fiji are not permitted to enter New Zealand. In your view, should this ban be relaxed so that any rugby player selected for the Fijian team, can come*

	Total	NZ		Other
Base =	500*	European/Pakeha	Maori/Pacific	65
	%	%	%	%
Yes, the ban should be relaxed	43	40	61	43
No, the ban should not be relaxed	49	52	34	51
Don't know	7	7	5	6
Refused	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*Sub-sample based on those respondents...



**Table 4:**

*Q21b. The policy of the New Zealand government is that any Fijians associated with the military regime in Fiji are not permitted to enter New Zealand. In your view, should this ban be relaxed so that any rugby player selected for the Fijian team, can come*

	Total	Upper North Island	Lower/Central North Island	South Island
Base =	500*	232	109	159
	%	%	%	%
Yes, the ban should be relaxed	43	41	46	46
No, the ban should not be relaxed	49	53	50	43
Don't know	7	6	5	9
Refused	0	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*Sub-sample based on those respondents...

**Table 5:**

*Q21b. The policy of the New Zealand government is that any Fijians associated with the military regime in Fiji are not permitted to enter New Zealand. In your view, should this ban be relaxed so that any rugby player selected for the Fijian team, can come*

	Total	Under \$40,000	At least \$40,000 but less than \$80,000	\$80,000 or more
Base =	480*	180	154	146
	%	%	%	%
Yes, the ban should be relaxed	43	58	41	29
No, the ban should not be relaxed	50	33	54	64
Don't know	7	9	4	7
Refused	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*Sub-sample based on those respondents who were willing to disclose their income.

**Research New Zealand is an independent, New Zealand-owned research organisation undertaking social and business research.**

[www.researchnz.com](http://www.researchnz.com)