

Māori Electoral Engagement

- A Review of Existing Data

[July 2006]



WELLINGTON 3 Collina Terrace Thorndon WELLINGTON <u>NEW ZEALAND</u>	AUCKLAND 11 Earle Street Parnell AUCKLAND <u>NEW ZEALAND</u>	SYDNEY Level One, Suite 105 332-342 Oxford Street SYDNEY NSW 2022 <u>AUSTRALIA</u>	QUEENSLAND PO Box 972 Robina DC QUEENSLAND 4226 <u>AUSTRALIA</u>
Tel: +64 4 473 1061 Fax: +64 4 472 3501	Tel: +64 9 373 8700 Fax: +64 9 373 8704	Tel: +61 2 9386 1622 Fax: +61 2 9386 1633	Tel: +61 7 5562 2230 Fax: +61 4331 63995

Email: umr@umr.co.nz
www.umr.co.nz

Table of Contents

	<u>Page Number</u>
I. Introduction	3
II. Executive Summary	5
III. Theories of Turnout	7
IV. NZES Findings	9
V. Enrolment and Party Identification	11
VI. Satisfaction with Democracy	13
VII. Satisfaction with Society and the Economy	20
VIII. Media Habits	22
IX. Demographic Characteristics	23
X. Multivariate Analysis	27
XI. Regional Variations	32

I. Introduction

This report draws together data from a number of sources, the most important of which being a combined sample of UMR omnibus surveys from August 2002 to December 2004. The UMR omnibus is a nationwide telephone survey of a representative sample of n=750 New Zealanders aged 18 years or over. During the specified period the UMR omnibus was conducted every four weeks. It is New Zealand's longest running and most consistently taken omnibus poll, having been conducted since September 1991.

Some questions are asked in virtually every omnibus, including:

- Current vote
- Previous vote
- National mood (right track/ wrong track)
- Most demographics
- Government performance
- Government performance in managing the economy
- Economic expectations
- Interest rate expectations
- Standard of living expectations
- Unemployment expectations.

A number of questions relevant to this study are asked more sporadically, or began being asked only towards the end of the period designated above. As a result, the combined sample for these questions is considerably smaller, and in some cases should be treated as indicative only.

It should be noted that the Electoral Commission has asked us to mine data collected previously for the information presented in this report. Because the questions were asked for clients other than the Electoral Commission, the questions were not designed to fit directly with similar sources of information such as the New Zealand Election Survey. There are a number of areas where we have seldom asked questions (if at all), such as interest in politics and efficacy, because they were not felt to be of particular relevance to the clients for whom the questions were originally asked. We can, however, provide some insight into these areas by way of implication (e.g. being able to express an opinion on a party leader suggests a certain base level of knowledge and therefore interest in politics).

Similarly, the omnibus does not address some demographic indicators, such as educational achievement, that may well have an impact on likelihood of voting.

The primary focus of this analysis is on Māori non-voters. The following definitions have been used for the purposes of this analysis:

- 'Non-voters' are those who admit not voting at the 2002 election, even though they were old enough to do so
- A respondent qualifies as 'Māori' if they identify themselves as Māori in a multiple response question (i.e. someone who says they are both Māori and Samoan qualifies as Māori for the purpose of this research). This is in line with the question used in the census.

We compare Māori non-voters with three other groups:

- Māori voters
- Non-Māori non-voters
- Non-Māori voters.

This type of comparison helps us to identify which characteristics are associated with being a Māori voter, which are associated with being a non-voter, and which are unique to Māori non-voters.

The number of Māori non-voters recruited in each n=750 nationwide sample is of course small, and we have used the combined sample of August 2002 to December 2004 to ensure that the number of Māori non-voters is large enough for robust analysis.

We have chosen to exclude all those aged 18 or 19 from the sample, in order to remove distortions caused by those who did not vote at the July 2002 election because they were not old enough. There will be a small number of respondents from surveys conducted from August to December 2004 who had just turned 20 when they were surveyed and were therefore aged less than 18 years in July 2002. As age is collected in bands rather than as birthdates we have no way of excluding those who fall into this category, although the number of people in this category is likely to be negligible given the overall sample sizes.

The table below outlines the sample sizes for the four groups.

Group	Sample Size	Margin of error*
Māori non-voters	330	±5.4
Māori voters	1811	±2.3
Non-Māori non-voters	2309	±2.0
Non-Māori voters	16418	±0.8

*Margins of error expressed for a 50% figure at the 95% confidence level

We have also provided some reworked data from the New Zealand Election Study 2002. This information is useful because it is more directly targeted at issues of political participation (as opposed to party preference), although the fact that the combined sample size is considerably smaller (a total of n=5579 spread over 3 surveys compared with n=20,868) means that it is not able to provide as substantial a sub-sample size for Māori non-voters).

We are due to provide updated data on equivalent results for the period after the 2005 election in November 2006. In 2005 the UMR omnibus began being conducted every two weeks instead of every four weeks. While not all of the questions above are included in every omnibus now the survey has increased to once every two weeks, we should still have a substantial sample of Māori non-voters to analyse by November.

II. Executive Summary

■ Key Findings

- Our analysis indicates clear differences between Māori non-voters and Māori voters. For the most part, these are similar to the differences between non-Māori non-voters and non-Māori voters.
- The evidence suggests that lower participation rates amongst Māori mostly reflect the demographic characteristics of the Māori population, rather than factors intrinsic to Māori. Māori are known to be younger and less well-off on average than non-Māori, and these are factors strongly associated with non-voting. 51% of Māori non-voters were aged 20-30 years.

Multivariate analysis did not identify being Māori as a statistically significant predictor of propensity to vote once age, household income and gender were taken into account. This finding does however need to be treated with caution, as this analysis was conducted retrospectively on a survey that was not specifically dedicated to political questions. At the same time, the number of respondents included was very large (n=20,868).

The clearest demographic difference between Māori non-voters and non-Māori non-voters when compared with voters is that Māori non-voters are comparatively likely (compared with Māori voters) to live in provincial areas, whereas non-Māori non-voters are relatively likely (compared with non-Māori voters) to live in Auckland.

- Māori non-voters are less likely to be enrolled on the Māori roll, a finding that may imply that they are less likely to be involved in Māori society and politics. It may be that they are disengaged from Māori politics just as much as they are disengaged from national and regional politics. The data also suggests that Māori non-voters do not regard the opportunity to vote for Māori candidates as sufficiently motivating to get them to vote.
- Māori non-voters do not appear to be especially dissatisfied with national and regional politics, but are simply disengaged from it. They are less likely, for example, to have strong opinions of the party leaders, but no more likely to have negative opinions of them.
- While they are disengaged from national politics, the evidence suggests that Māori non-voters are not disengaged from New Zealand society as a whole. They are as likely as Māori voters to have opinions on prospects for the economy, their personal standard of living, and for unemployment, amongst other factors.

■ Hypotheses

- The table below lists the five hypotheses included in the research brief to explain lower participation, along with the evidence that we have found for and against them.

HYPOTHESIS	OBSERVATIONS
<p>Low levels of participation are not about being Māori, they are about poverty and education levels and the different age profile</p>	<p>Multivariate analysis clearly supports this hypothesis. Using a very large database of records, we have found that the strongest demographic predictor (out of ethnicity, gender, age, personal income and household income) to be age, followed by gender and household income. For example, 28% of Māori 20-30 year olds in our sample said that they did not vote at the 2002 election, compared with 29% of all 20-30 year olds (12% of all respondents aged 20 years or over in our sample admitted not voting).</p> <p>This hypothesis does not, however, completely explain low turnout, and it is apparent that attitudes towards politics also have a part to play.</p>
<p>Māori are strongly engaged in iwi and Māori politics, just not in national elections</p>	<p>Māori non-voters are less likely to be enrolled on the Māori roll, and our previous research suggests that this means that they are less likely to be involved in 'Māori society'. We therefore have no evidence to support this hypothesis.</p>
<p>Turnout in Māori electorates is lower because Māori on the Māori roll have strong Māori identity and so are more involved in iwi politics and not involved in national politics</p>	
<p>Māori are interested in politics but do not take part because they think their voice is not heard or of value</p>	<p>Māori non-voters are generally less likely to have strong opinions about political figures. This suggests that the main issue is interest rather than efficacy.</p>
<p>Candidates are more important than party to Māori voters</p>	<p>We have no evidence from our polling to prove or disprove this hypothesis. At the same time, the number of party votes cast was higher than the number of electorate votes cast at the 2005 election in each of the seven Māori seats. As our analysis suggests that Māori enrolled on the Māori roll are likely to be more conscious of their Māori heritage, the 2005 election results therefore do not support this hypothesis.</p> <p>On the other hand, our data suggests that Māori enrolled on the Māori roll are more likely to vote than those enrolled on the general roll, which may be related to the opportunity to vote for a Māori candidate.</p>

III. Theories of Turnout

Turnout is an area much discussed in political science, and there have been a range of theories developed for explaining variations in turnout. Two common theories are as follows:

- Voting is an act of participation, and people are more likely to vote if they feel that they are an active participant in society
- Voting is intended to deliver change, and therefore people are more likely to vote if they are motivated to bring about change (usually because of dissatisfaction with the status quo).

Turning these theories around to explain non-voting rather than voting, they become:

- People are less likely to vote if they feel that they are not an active participant in society
- People are less likely to vote if they are not motivated to bring about change (usually because of satisfaction with the status quo).

Feeling that one is not an active participant in society could logically manifest itself in one of two ways. A person might feel angry about the situation, and express dissatisfaction with society. Alternatively, a person might not be especially interested in being an active participation in society. If this first interpretation were true, then we would expect non-voters to say that they are dissatisfied with the institutions of government. If the second interpretation were true, on the other hand, we would expect non-voters to have positive or neutral opinions on the institutions of government, or to not have an opinion at all.

Turnout in New Zealand has historically been much lower amongst Māori than amongst non-Māori. Many factors associated with feeling that one is not an active participant in society (or specifically in the political process) are known to be higher amongst Māori, including:

- Lower income
- Younger population
- Lower education
- Uncompetitive elections.

The Māori electorate seats are clearly more competitive today than was the case under first past the post, where the Māori seats were all won by Labour in every general election from 1935 to 1990, but a range of other factors remain true.

If the disengagement suggested by the above demographic factors is true, then it is worth considering the extent to which Māori non-voters are disengaged. Scenarios include:

- Being disengaged from the society in general
- Being disengaged from politics, but engaged with society in general
- Being disengaged from national politics, but engaged with iwi politics.

We have no solid information available as yet on involvement in iwi and hapu affairs, but can give some information on the extent to which Māori non-voters are involved in 'Māori society'. A person might be assumed to be relatively involved in Māori society if they spoke Māori, if they were enrolled on the Māori electoral roll, and/ or if they shared opinions on issues relevant to Māori with other Māori (e.g. treaty issues). Therefore, if the reason that Māori non-voters do not participate in general elections is because they are already participating in Iwi politics, then we would expect them to be more likely to speak Māori, to be enrolled on the Māori roll, and to have strong opinions on 'Māori' issues.

IV. NZES Findings

Vowles (in Proportional Representation on Trial, 2002, p109) states that:

Between 1996 and 1999, if people developed lower expectations of government accountability because of coalition government, expressed less satisfaction with democracy, felt they were less effective in having their voices heard, and thus became less interested in politics, less attentive to the mass media, and less concerned about civic duty, we would surely expect them to be less inclined to bother voting... If people came to feel that their votes were less effective in determining the shape of post election government, turnout would likely suffer. Finally, if people felt more alienated from political parties and party identification declined, a drop in turnout would also follow.

...[in the NZES 1999] most but not all these expectations were met in reality.

Vowles' observations provide a useful enough framework for our analysis of differences in turnout between different demographic groups. If a specific group were less satisfied with democracy and the performance of the government, believed that the country was headed in the wrong direction, felt disconnected from politics and that politicians were disconnected from them, then we would expect them to have lower turnout. Conversely, if a particular group is identified as being less likely to vote, then we would expect it to share these attitudinal factors. Much of the analysis on the following pages is designed to shed light on this question.

The table below summarises one from Vowles' article:

NZES – ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS AND NON-VOTING		
	1999 mean (0= min, 10 = max)	Correlation with 1999 non-vote (0= min, 1= max)
Civic duty	8.1	-0.24*
Interest in politics	5.9	-0.20*
Follow campaign in newspapers	6.1	-0.15*
Strength of party identification	3.4	-0.10*
Satisfaction with democracy	5.2	-0.08*
Political efficacy	4.2	-0.05*
Economic dissatisfaction	5.1	0.06*
Coalition approval	5.3	0.01
*Statistically significant at the 99% confidence level		

A few definitions are worth noting here. Firstly, 'coalition approval' refers to satisfaction with the idea of coalitions, rather than with the current governing coalition. Secondly, 'economic dissatisfaction', 'coalition approval' and 'political efficacy' are combined variables each based on responses to several different questions.

These categories match somewhat irregularly with the data we have collected previously.

ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS AND NON-VOTING – COMPARISON	
NZES CATEGORY	UMR MATCH
Civic duty	No regular match
Interest in politics	Implied through intensity of opinion on political issues ('no opinion' suggests less interest in politics)
Follow campaign in newspapers	No regular match
Strength of party identification	Soft voters (leaning towards a party rather than being committed to one)
Satisfaction with democracy	Satisfaction with life in New Zealand
Political efficacy	No regular match – some implied
Economic dissatisfaction	Expectations on four economic measures
Coalition approval	Approval of government performance

As will be shown, our results for Māori non-voters are broadly in line with these results for all non-voters, where the categories match up reasonably well.

V. Enrolment and Party Identification

It is not surprising to see that Māori non-voters are less likely to be enrolled or, if they are enrolled, to know which roll they are on. Māori non-voters who are enrolled are less likely to be on the Māori roll than Māori voters.

CHOICE OF ELECTORAL ROLL		
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %
On Māori electoral roll	40	55
On General roll	44	42
Not enrolled	7	2
Unsure	9	1
Soft voters*	16	12

*A soft voter is someone who says that they are not sure who they would vote for, or who expresses a preference but only leans towards that party.

16% of Māori on the general roll in our sample declared that they did not vote in 2002, compared with 12% of Māori on the Māori roll.

CHOICE OF ELECTORAL ROLL		
	On Māori roll (n=1128) %	On General Roll (n=906) %
Voted in 2005	88	84
Did not vote in 2005	12	16

Findings from our other work, such as the 2004 Māori omnibus, generally suggest that Māori who choose to enrol on the Māori roll are more committed to Māori culture. They are, for example, more likely to speak Māori:

MĀORI LANGUAGE EXPERTISE		
	FROM UMR MĀORI OMNIBUS, AUG 2004	
	On Māori Roll %	On General Roll %
Speak Māori fluently	21	7
Not fluent but can understand a bit	41	23
Can only understand a little	31	52
Can understand hardly any Māori language	7	18

MĀORI LANGUAGE EXPERTISE				
	FROM UMR MĀORI OMNIBUS, AUG 2004			
	Under 30 (n=158) %	30-44 years (n=169) %	45-59 years (n=92) %	60 Plus (n=45) %
Speak Māori fluently	10	11	16	37
Not fluent but can understand a bit	35	31	26	37
Can only understand a little	46	41	47	18
Can understand hardly any Māori language	9	17	11	8

Similarly, Māori on the Māori roll were in 2004 more likely to support the Māori Party, and considerably less likely to vote National. We may here have an effects running in two directions:

- National and Māori Party supporters choosing the roll where they believe they can cast their electorate vote most effectively
- People on the Māori roll being more supportive of the issues raised by the Māori Party, and less supportive of National's position on treaty issues.

PARTY VOTE		
	FROM UMR MĀORI OMNIBUS, AUG 2004	
	On Māori Roll %	On General Roll %
Labour	46	52
Māori Party	33	6
Green	7	7
National	6	23
New Zealand First	6	7
Other	3	1
United Future	0	3

We have recently begun asking Māori whether they have registered as part of an iwi or hapu, which is another potential indicator of involvement in the Māori culture. These results should be ready in time for the November report. The limited evidence we have, however, suggests that Māori non-voters may be less inclined to be involved in Māori culture.

VI. Satisfaction with Democracy

Most of the numbers in this section point to disengagement from politics rather than dissatisfaction with it. In other words, the main difference tends to be in the number of people with no opinion, rather than in the number with negative opinions. These trends are true for both Māori non-voters and non-Māori non-voters.

We only asked occasionally during the sample period about electoral system preference, but the findings on a small sample size do point in the general direction of the above hypothesis. 23% of Māori non-voters had no preference for MMP or FPP, as did 35% of non-Māori non-voters. By contrast, 10% of Māori voters and 8% of non-Māori voters had no preference.

ELECTORAL SYSTEM PREFERENCE				
	Māori non-voters (n=56*) %	Māori voters (n=202) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=304) %	Non-Māori voters (n=1688) %
	<i>Small sub-sample</i>			
MMP	48	57	30	43
First Past the Post	25	32	31	46
Unsure	23	10	35	8
Neither	4	1	4	3
* Note- small sample size Data taken from February and November 2003 and July 2004.				

Similarly, the favourability ratings for the party leaders can be used to illustrate the nature of Māori non-voters' disengagement with politics. If Māori non-voters were disillusioned and angry with the political system, we might expect them to have negative opinions of all politicians no matter which party they represent. If they were simply not interested in it, then we would expect them to either have no opinion about each leader, or at least to have no strong opinions.

Generally speaking, the more well-known the party leader, the less the difference between Māori voters and Māori non-voters, and between non-Māori voters and non-Māori non-voters.

As the incumbent Prime Minister, it is logical to expect most New Zealanders to have some opinion of Helen Clark even if they are almost totally disengaged from politics. Just 6% of Māori non-voters had no opinion of Helen Clark (compared with 2% of Māori voters). Combining the 'moderate' opinions with those with no opinion shows a clearer difference – 62% of Māori non-voters either had no opinion of Helen Clark, viewed her somewhat favourably, or somewhat unfavourably. This compares with 52% of Māori voters. Māori non-voters are again similar to non-Māori non-voters in this regard, with 60% of non-Māori non-voters viewing Helen Clark somewhat favourably, somewhat unfavourably, or having no opinion.

FAVOURABILITY RATING – HELEN CLARK				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Very favourable	26	36	27	31
Somewhat favourable	42	39	41	36
Somewhat unfavourable	14	11	14	16
Very unfavourable	12	12	13	16
Unsure/ Never heard of	6	2	5	1
Total favourable	68	75	68	67
Total unfavourable	26	23	27	32
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	38	48	40	47
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	56	50	55	52

The National Party had two different leaders during the sample period, Bill English and Don Brash. 17% of Māori non-voters did not have an opinion of Bill English, compared with 8% of Māori voters. This trend was also seen amongst non-Māori (non-Māori non-voters 20% unsure, non-Māori voters 5% unsure).

30% of Māori non-voters did not have an opinion of Don Brash, compared with 11% of Māori voters. Don Brash took over the National leadership in October 2003 and made the Orewa speech on treaty issues in January 2004, so most of the data was collected after the Orewa speech. Bearing this in mind, 25% of Māori non-voters had unfavourable opinions of the National party leader, compared with 41% of Māori voters.

FAVOURABILITY RATING- BILL ENGLISH				
	Māori non-voters (n=234) %	Māori voters (n=958) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=1325) %	Non-Māori voters (n=8692) %
Very favourable	9	5	6	6
Somewhat favourable	29	30	31	33
Somewhat unfavourable	25	28	26	34
Very unfavourable	21	29	18	22
Unsure/ Never heard of	17	8	20	5
Total favourable	38	35	37	39
Total unfavourable	46	57	44	56
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	30	34	24	28
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	54	58	57	67

FAVOURABILITY RATING – DON BRASH				
	Māori non-voters (n=170) %	Māori voters (n=770) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=1218) %	Non-Māori voters (n=6769) %
Very favourable	6	8	15	21
Somewhat favourable	16	21	29	34
Somewhat unfavourable	23	19	19	19
Very unfavourable	25	41	15	19
Unsure/ Never heard of	30	11	22	6
Total favourable	22	29	44	55
Total unfavourable	48	60	34	28
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	31	49	44	40
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	39	40	34	53

While Winston Peters is the best known of the minor party leaders, Māori non-voters and non-Māori non-voters are relatively unlikely to have a strong opinion of the New Zealand First leader. 32% of Māori non-voters viewed Winston Peters either very favourably or very unfavourably, while 10% had no opinion. The equivalent figures for Māori voters were 38% very favourable/ very unfavourable, 3% no opinion.

FAVOURABILITY RATING – WINSTON PETERS				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Very favourable	17	23	10	14
Somewhat favourable	36	39	31	34
Somewhat unfavourable	22	20	22	25
Very unfavourable	15	15	22	24
Unsure/ Never heard of	10	3	15	3
Total favourable	53	59	41	48
Total unfavourable	37	35	44	49
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	32	38	32	38
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	58	59	53	59

These trends become more pronounced when we look at the other minor party leaders. Substantial proportions of Māori non-voters do not have opinions of the other three minor party leaders we measured in this period. Once again, Māori non-voters follow similar patterns to non-Māori non-voters.

The percentage of Māori non-voters without an opinion was 38% for Rodney Hide, 55% for Jeanette Fitzsimmons, and 66% for Peter Dunne. The figures for Māori voters, by way of illustration, were 19% unsure for Rodney Hide, 32% for Jeanette Fitzsimmons, and 43% for Peter Dunne. The period of this survey does not include the formation of the Māori Party, so there are no equivalent figures for Tariana Turia, although this information will be available for the November update.

FAVOURABILITY RATING – RODNEY HIDE

	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Very favourable	1	2	3	4
Somewhat favourable	18	21	20	27
Somewhat unfavourable	21	26	19	29
Very unfavourable	22	32	16	27
Unsure/ Never heard of	38	19	43	12
<hr/>				
Total favourable	19	23	23	31
Total unfavourable	43	58	35	56
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	23	34	19	31
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	39	47	39	56

FAVOURABILITY RATING – JEANETTE FITZSIMONS

	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Very favourable	2	8	3	7
Somewhat favourable	22	30	17	25
Somewhat unfavourable	12	17	11	25
Very unfavourable	8	13	11	22
Unsure/ Never heard of	55	32	57	21
<hr/>				
Total favourable	24	38	20	32
Total unfavourable	20	30	22	47
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	10	21	14	29
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	34	47	28	50

FAVOURABILITY RATING – PETER DUNNE				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Very favourable	2	6	3	8
Somewhat favourable	14	23	18	35
Somewhat unfavourable	10	18	12	21
Very unfavourable	8	10	7	9
Unsure/ Never heard of	66	43	60	27
<hr/>				
Total favourable	16	29	21	43
Total unfavourable	18	28	19	30
Very favourable + Very unfavourable	10	16	10	17
Somewhat favourable + Somewhat unfavourable	24	41	30	56

The favourability ratings therefore show a consistent picture of Māori non-voters disinterested in politics rather than especially disillusioned with it. This pattern is also present in the Government performance numbers (both overall performance and performance in managing the economy), with around two thirds of Māori non-voters approving of the Government's performance. Approval is lower amongst Māori non-voters than amongst Māori voters, but disapproval is not substantially higher.

PERCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Strongly approve	11	18	11	13
Somewhat approve	54	52	52	51
Somewhat disapprove	18	17	19	21
Strongly disapprove	10	11	9	13
Unsure	7	3	9	2
Total approve	65	70	63	64
Total disapprove	28	28	28	34
Strongly approve + strongly disapprove	21	29	20	26
Somewhat approve + somewhat disapprove	72	69	71	72

PERCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE IN MANAGING THE ECONOMY				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Strongly approve	8	14	10	13
Somewhat approve	57	57	55	53
Somewhat disapprove	21	19	20	23
Strongly disapprove	8	7	8	8
Unsure	6	4	7	2
Total approve	65	71	65	66
Total disapprove	29	26	28	31
Strongly approve + strongly disapprove	16	21	18	21
Somewhat approve + somewhat disapprove	78	76	75	76

VII. Satisfaction with Society and the Economy

The trends are less clear cut for variables that do not have a direction connection with politics. The largest difference is for the overall mood, where 46% of Māori non-voters believed that New Zealand was on the right track, compared with 55% of Māori voters. As with the 'political' variables, this difference is largely caused by a higher percentage without an opinion rather than by a larger proportion with a negative view.

THE MOOD				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Right track	46	55	57	56
Wrong track	36	34	29	33

Māori non-voters are somewhat more pessimistic than Māori voters with regards interest rate and unemployment expectations, but are comparatively optimistic about their own standard of living. The numbers again do not suggest that Māori non-voters are especially disillusioned with life in New Zealand.

ECONOMIC EXPECTATIONS				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Better	49	48	49	39
Worse	32	31	30	34
Same	13	16	16	22
Unsure	6	5	5	5

INTEREST RATE EXPECTATIONS				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Up	64	60	58	56
Down	14	15	15	13
Same	16	20	21	24
Unsure	6	6	6	6

UNEMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Up	38	33	34	30
Down	31	30	26	23
Same	28	34	36	44
Unsure	3	4	5	4

STANDARD OF LIVING EXPECTATIONS				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Better	66	57	56	39
Worse	18	19	18	22
Same	15	22	23	37
Unsure	2	2	2	2

The finding that Māori non-voters feel able to express opinions on economic matters but are less likely to have firm views on political matters suggests that their non-participation is driven more by disengagement with politics than with current events in New Zealand in general.

VIII. Media Habits

As noted earlier, this is not an area where we have a great deal of information available, although we can offer some basic insights. The logic outlined in the previous sections also applies here- if Māori non-voters were comparatively disassociated from society in general (rather than from the political system), then they would be less likely to have a media preference.

From the small sample that we have however, this does not really appear to be the case. Asked which channel they watched most for news and current affairs, 47% of Māori non-voters said that they preferred TV3 and 34% watched TV1. This compares with figures of 42% TV3 and 51% TV1 for Māori voters. There was a similar difference between non-Māori non-voters and non-Māori voters. The proportion with no preferred channel was small for all the groups.

In the following section we will demonstrate that Māori non-voters are disproportionately likely to be aged less than 30 years. We know that news preference is related to age, with younger people being more likely to watch TV3 and less likely to watch TV1. The channel preferences in this table therefore are likely to reflect differing age profiles than a useful trend in itself.

PREFERRED CHANNEL FOR NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS				
	Māori non-voters (n=40*) %	Māori voters (n=256) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=358) %	Non-Māori voters (n=1688) %
TV1	34	51	37	59
TV3	47	42	49	34
Other	14	3	7	4
None	3	4	5	2
Unsure/ All	3	-	2	1
*Note: Small sample size				

IX. Demographic Characteristics

Māori non-voters have a distinct demographic profile. Compared with Māori voters, they are younger, more likely to be male, and more likely to live in rural areas. Other demographic characteristics, such as income, are likely to be affected by these base characteristics.

As noted, Māori non-voters were somewhat more likely to be male than were Māori voters. Non-Māori non-voters are also comparatively likely to be male.

GENDER				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Male	48	40	52	48
Female	53	60	48	52

The clearest distinction between Māori non-voters and Māori voters was their age profile. 51% of Māori non-voters were aged under 30 years, compared with 26% of Māori voters. Just 12% were aged 45 or over.

This trend is also true amongst non-Māori non-voters, with 37% being aged under 30 years compared with 14% of non-Māori voters.

As discussed in the previous section, the age difference is likely to explain the higher TV3 viewership amongst Māori non-voters.

AGE				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
20-24	30	12	18	6
25-29	21	14	19	8
30-34	18	16	17	9
35-39	11	15	15	11
40-44	8	12	10	11
45-49	4	9	6	10
50-54		8	4	10
55-59	3	4	4	8
60-64	2	4	2	7
65-69	1	2	2	6
70-74	-	3	1	8
75 plus	-	1	2	7
Under 30 years	51	26	37	14
30-44 years	37	45	42	31
45-59 years	9	33	14	28
60 years or older	3	10	7	28

Income levels were lower for Māori non-voters than they are for Māori voters, but age again is likely to have had a substantial impact here.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
\$30,000 or less	32	27	24	26
\$30,000-70,000	47	33	45	40
More than \$70,000	15	22	22	26

PERSONAL INCOME				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
\$30,000 or less	67	51	48	45
\$30,001-\$50,000	25	27	26	25
More than \$50,000	9	15	16	19

31% of Māori non-voters lived in rural areas, compared with 23% of Māori voters. Similarly, 64% live in provincial areas (defined as anywhere other than Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch), compared with 55% of Māori voters. This is not the case however, when we compare non-Māori non-voters and non-Māori voters, where non-Māori non-voters were a little more likely to live in Auckland.

LOCATION				
	Māori non-voters (n=330) %	Māori voters (n=1811) %	Non-Māori non-voters (n=2309) %	Non-Māori voters (n=16,418) %
Rural	31	23	18	19
Auckland	22	27	33	27
Provincial	64	55	44	48
Christchurch	7	8	13	13
Wellington	8	11	11	11

X. Multivariate Analysis

We ran the August 2002 to December 2004 combined data through Answer Tree, one of our multivariate analysis tools. This uses P-values and Chi-square tests to establish the extent to which individual factors correlate with a particular outcome (in this case non-voting), and distinguishes between primary variables and those that are subsidiary. This produces a 'tree' of factors, where the further one goes along the 'branch' the more the combination of the factors on the branch is associated with the specific outcome. Variables appearing towards the base of the branch are deemed to have more impact on the outcome than those appearing towards the ends.

The demographic variables used in this analysis were:

- Gender (nominal variable)¹
- Age group (ordinal variable)
- Personal income (ordinal variable)
- Household income (ordinal variable)
- Māori/ non-Māori (nominal variable).

Looking specifically at the Māori in our combined sample, 15% declared that they had not voted at the 2002 election.

- As anticipated earlier in this report, age was the factor most strongly correlated with non-voting, with 28% of under 30 year old Māori not voting compared with 7% of those aged over 45 years.
- Amongst under 30 year olds, the next most important factor was gender, with 34% of under 30 year old males saying that they had not voted in 2002.
- Amongst 30-44 year olds, however, the next most important factor was household income. 17% of 30-44 year olds earning less than \$50,000 did not vote in 2002, compared with 9% of 30-44 year olds earning more than \$50,000.

¹ The nominal variables have two valid values. The ordinal variables have more than two valid values, but are based on categories rather than absolute values (e.g. someone aged 23 is coded into the '20-24 years' category)

Did not vote in the July 2002 General Election – Maori



NOTE: Dollar values represent household income

When similar analysis is carried out on the entire sample, rather than just on the Māori respondents, the pattern is quite similar. It is worth noting, however, that **ethnicity did not emerge as one of the most important predictors of voting once other factors had been allowed for**. Other electoral surveys have reached a different conclusion, which means that this finding needs to be considered carefully. Factors to be considered include:

- The sample for this analysis is n=20,868, larger than any previous survey
- The analysis uses five demographic values only, rather than all the factors in this report
- The UMR omnibus is not specifically a political survey, a factor which may make those not interested in politics more likely to participate
- Declared voting at the 2002 election (87%) is higher than actual turnout. 76% of respondents in the NZES 2002 survey claimed to have voted
- Our sample is limited to those aged over 20, in order to ensure that respondents were age eligible to vote in 2002, and we know that non-voting is considerably higher amongst those aged 18 and 19.
- The NZES included only registered voters. We understand that the results were checked against the master roll and that half the people who said that they voted actually did not.

The analysis does not suggest that being Māori has no impact on propensity to vote, just that it is less important than age, household income or gender. In terms of the data collected in the survey, being Māori does not have a statistically significant impact on propensity to vote once these other factors have been allowed for. An example of this is the fact that 29% of all 20-30 year old respondents did not vote at the 2002 election, compared with 28% of Māori 20-30 year olds.

As with the analysis of Māori only, age was the strongest predictor of whether or not people had voted in 2002. This divided the sample into four groups:

- 20-30 years
- 30-44 years
- 45-59 years
- 60 Plus and 'missing' data (e.g. respondents who refuse to give their age; grouped with 60 plus automatically by the software).

Within these age bands:

- **20-30 year olds:** Household income was the best predictor for whether they had voted, and the 20-30 year olds were split into additional subgroups based on household income. For those 20-30 years of age and with household incomes of \$50,000 or less 33% did not vote. 21% of respondents aged 20-30 years with household incomes of \$50,000 or less were Māori.

For those 20-30 years of age and with household incomes over \$50,000, 23% did not vote. 15% of 20-30 year olds with household incomes over \$50,000 were Māori.

- **30-44 year olds:** For the 30-44 year old age group, household income was also the best predictor for whether they had voted and this group was split into three additional subgroups based on household income. In turn for the three household income groups, sex was the best predictor for whether they had voted.

26% of males aged 30-44 yrs with a household income of \$30,000 or less did not vote. Looking at females, 21% of those aged 30-44 yrs with a household income of \$30,000 or less did not

vote. 15% of 30-44 year old males with household incomes of \$30,000 or less were Māori, as were 21% of females in these age and income brackets.

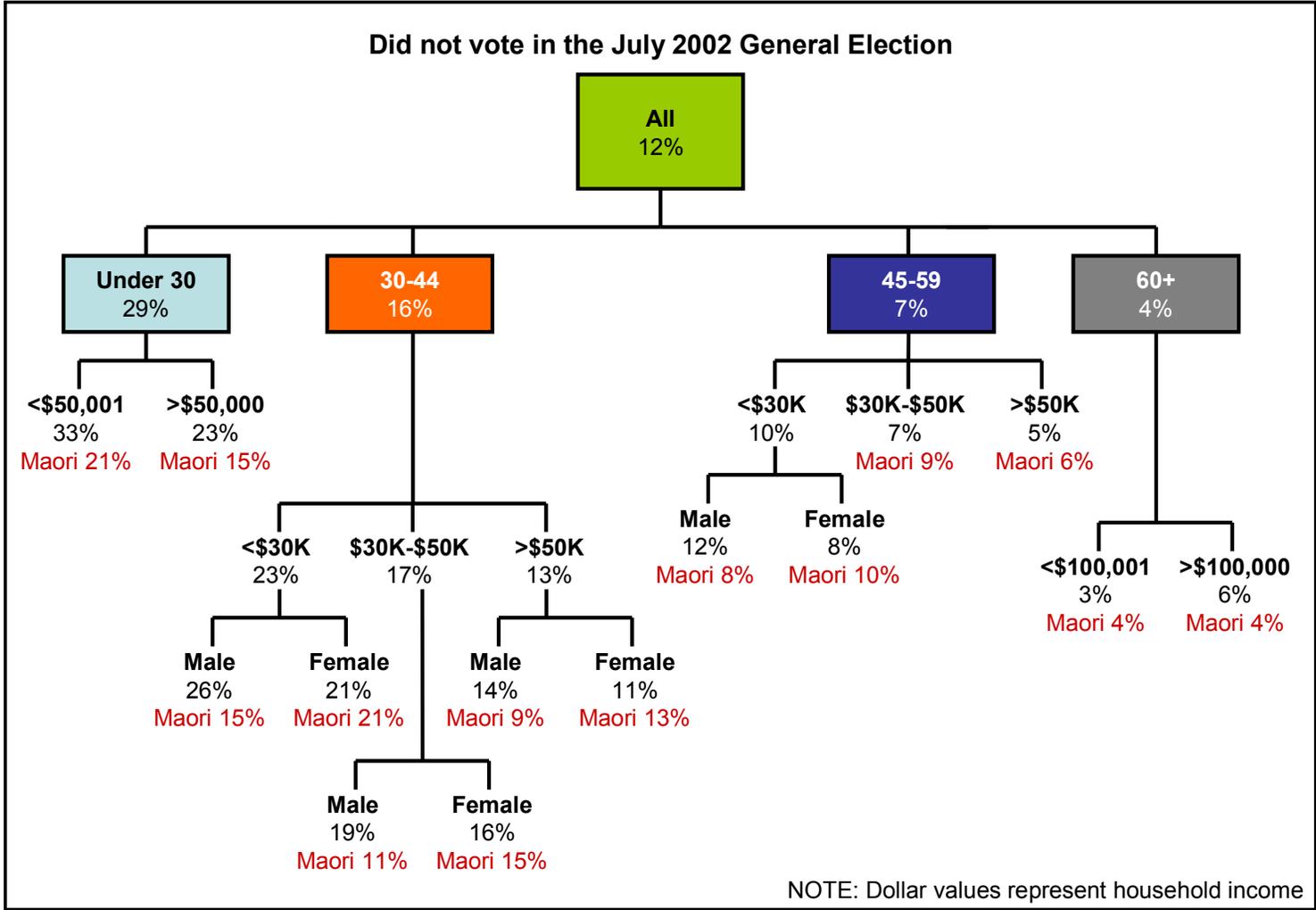
For 30-44 year old males in the \$30,001-\$50,000 household income bracket 19% did not vote, for females the equivalent number was 16%. 11% of 30-44 year old males with household incomes of \$30,001-\$50,000 were Māori, as were 15% of 30-44 year old females with household incomes at that level.

For the higher income bracket of more than \$50,000, 14% of males and 11% of females did not vote. Of 30-44 year old males with household incomes over \$50,000 9% were Māori, while amongst females of the same age and income 13% were Māori.

- **45-59 year olds:** As for the 30-44 year old age group, household income was also the best predictor for whether they had voted and this group were split into three additional subgroups based on household income. In turn for the three household income groups, sex was the best predictor for whether they had voted for the lower income bracket (or those who did not declare their household income) only.
- **60 years plus and 'missing':** This group was split into two groups, those with household incomes of \$100,000 or less and those households earning more than \$100,000. Both groups had very low Māori populations (4%).

Just 3% of those with household incomes of \$100,000 or less failed to vote, as did 6% of those with household incomes above \$100,000.

The groups associated with lower turnout therefore consistently have higher proportions of Māori than those associated with high turnout. Being Māori, however, is a less effective predictor of 2002 voting for this data than age, household income or gender.



XI. Regional Variations

In this section we compare the results of the 2004 local body elections with those of the 2005 General Election. The idea here is to see whether the lower turnout in general elections associated with areas of high Māori population is also recorded in local body elections.

This relates to the hypothesis that Māori are less likely to vote because they are instead involved in Māori politics. Iwi election results are not available to us, but we have previously established in this report that non-voting Māori are less likely to be enrolled on the Māori roll, which we know from other UMR research means that they are less likely to speak Māori. If Māori non-voters are less likely to speak Māori, this implies that they may be less involved in Māori society, and therefore less likely to participate in iwi elections.

As iwi election results are not available to us, a possible alternative is local body elections. The logic here is that, like iwi elections, local body elections are closer to the 'grass roots' than general elections, and therefore participation in iwi and local elections should have some similarities.

The 2002 Local Electoral Act allowed for the establishment of Māori wards or constituencies. Only one area, Environment Bay of Plenty, had introduced Māori constituencies by the 2004 election. These Māori constituencies, being closer to the 'grass roots' and therefore presumably to iwi politics, in theory should have higher turnout than other constituencies in the same area.

In fact, as the report of the Justice and Electoral Committee's 'Inquiry into the 2004 Local Authority Elections' records, turnout was actually lower in these three constituencies than in the other Bay of Plenty wards. This is of particular interest because the three Māori constituencies were considerably smaller than the other three contested constituencies, and elections with fewer eligible voters are traditionally associated with higher turnout (e.g. small countries are known to have on average higher turnout than larger ones, once other factors are taken into consideration).

ENVIRONMENT BAY OF PLENTY ELECTIONS 2004		
Constituency	Number of Electors	Turnout
Kohi Māori	8,860	30%
Mauao Māori	7,279	28%
Okurei Māori	8,940	36%
Rotorua	31,998	52%
Tauranga	61,172	48%
Western Bay of Plenty	29,611	42%
Eastern Bay of Plenty	22,527	Not contested

Boundary variations mean that local body election results cannot be directly compared with general election results. General electorates often cover several different local body areas, and local authority regions may include several general electorates. This is even more the case for Māori electorates, which all include several different local authority regions.

The compromise solution to this is to divide the country into regions whereby local authority areas and general electorate results can be grouped together. For the local authorities, we have used district and city councils rather than regional councils in order to give us additional flexibility. The Māori Electorate results are fortunately available grouped according to the general electorate in which they were cast, and can therefore be sorted into roughly corresponding regions. This is still not perfect, as Māori voters may not necessarily live in the general electorate where they cast their vote (although it is more likely that they do), and the boundaries between the combined local authority and combined general electorate regions do not match exactly.

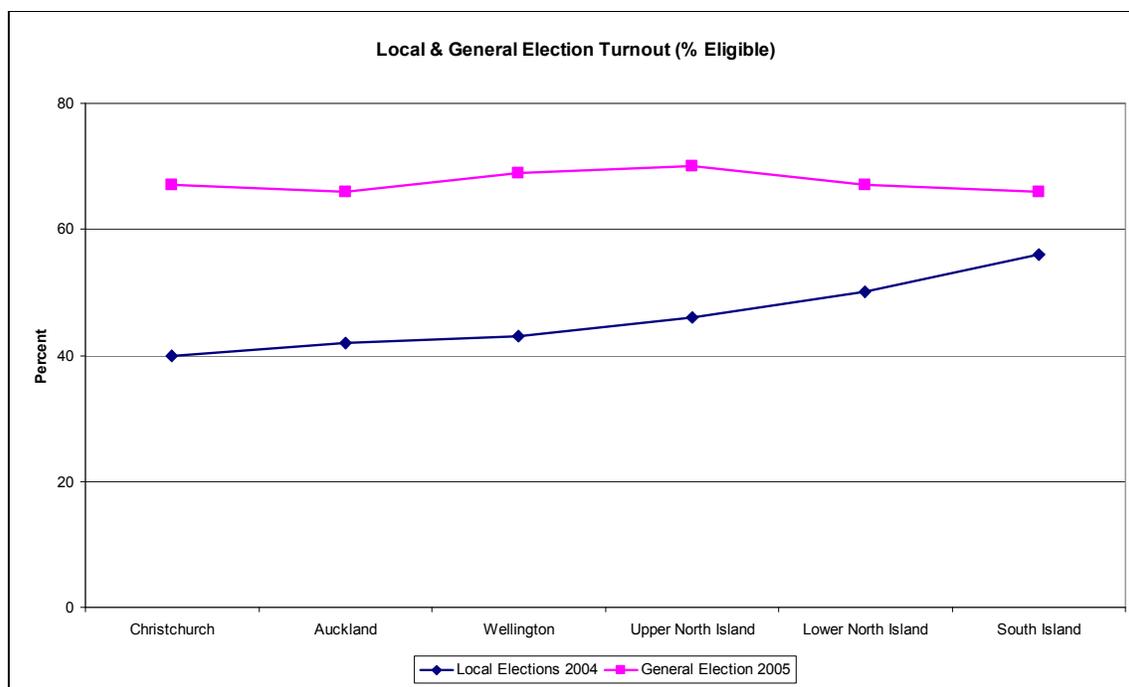
We can then use the total population in each region to determine turnout. The regions used for this analysis are:

Region	Local Authorities	General Electorates
Auckland	Auckland City Franklin Manukau City North Shore City	Papakura Rodney Waitakere City
		Auckland Central Clevedon East Coast Bays Epsom Helensville Mt Roskill Maungakiekie Mangere Manukau East Manurewa
		Mt Albert New Lynn North Shore Northcote Pakuranga Rodney Tamaki Te Atatu Waitakere
Upper North Island	Far North Gisborne Hamilton City Hauraki Kaipara Kawerau Matamata-Piako Opotiki Otorohanga Rotorua South Waikato	Taupo Tauranga City Thames-Coromandel Waikato Waipa Wairoa Waitomo Western Bay of Plenty Whakatane Whangarei
		Northland Whangarei Port Waikato Coromandel Hamilton East Hamilton West
		Piako Tauranga Bay of Plenty Rotorua East Coast Taupo
Wellington	Hutt City Kapiti Coast Porirua City	Upper Hutt City Wellington City
		Mana Hutt South Ohariu-Belmont Otaki
		Rimutaka Rongotai Wellington Central
Lower North Island	Central Hawkes Bay Carterton Hastings Horowhenua Manawatu Masterton Napier City New Plymouth	Palmerston North City Rangitikei Ruapehu South Taranaki South Wairarapa Stratford Tararua Wanganui
		Napier New Plymouth Palmerston North Rangitikei
		Taranaki-King Country Tukituki Wairarapa Whanganui
Christchurch	Ashburton Banks Peninsula Christchurch City	Selwyn Waimakariri
		Banks Peninsula Christchurch Central Christchurch East Ilam
		Rakaia Waimakariri Wigram
South Island	Buller Central Otago Chatham Islands Clutha Dunedin City Gore Grey Hurunui Invercargill City Kaikoura	Mackenzie Marlborough Nelson City Queenstown-Lakes Southland Tasman Timaru Waimate Waitaki Westland
		Aoraki Clutha-Southland Dunedin North Dunedin South Invercargill
		Kaikoura Nelson Otago West Coast-Tasman

TURNOUT AT LOCAL BODY AND GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS BY REGION

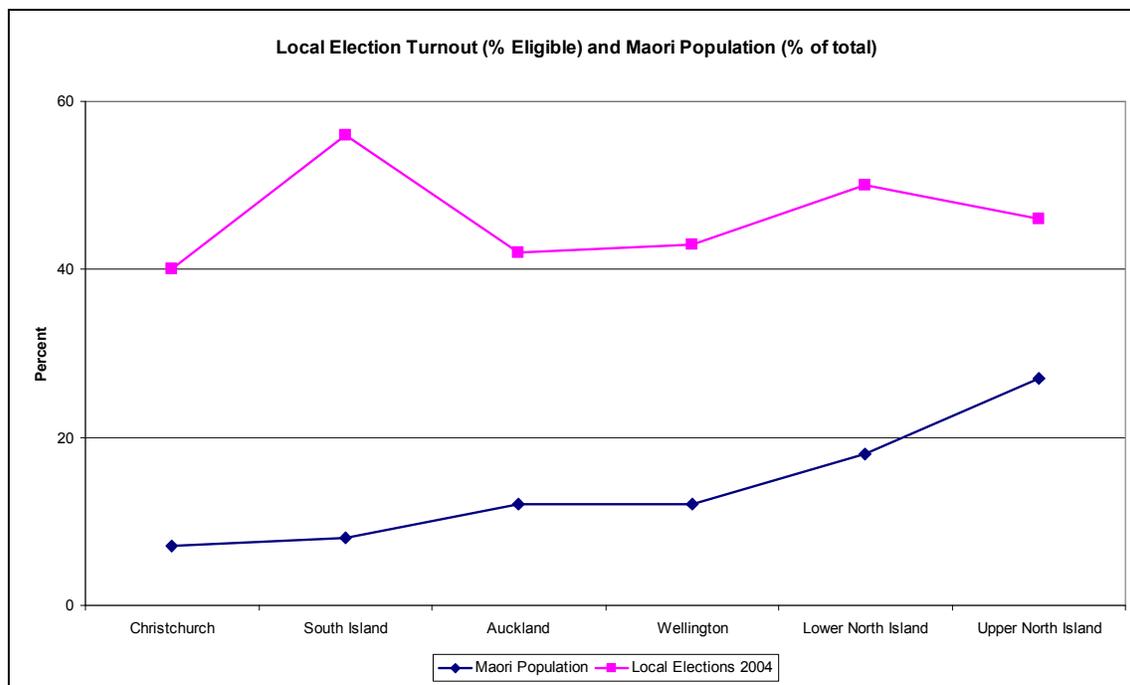
Region	Māori population %	Local Elections turnout 2004 %*	General Election turnout 2005 %*
Upper North Island	27	46	70
Lower North Island	18	50	67
Auckland	12	42	66
Wellington	12	43	69
South Island	8	56	66
Christchurch	7	40	67

*Turnout expressed as percentage of age-eligible voters according to 2001 Census.



As the chart shows, there is little relationship between turnout at local elections and general elections when using this very top-level breakdown. There is also no clear relationship between local body election turnout and the percentage of the population who are Māori. The Upper North Island region, for example, has the highest Māori population and the third highest local authority turnout. The Christchurch region has the lowest Māori population and the lowest local authority turnout, while the rest of the South Island has the second lowest Māori population but the highest local authority turnout.

There is therefore no solid evidence to suggest that Māori who do not vote in general elections are choosing instead to vote in local elections.



One of the hypotheses proposed in the original brief for this project was that turnout was lower amongst Māori because candidates were more important than party to Māori voters. No question has been included consistently enough in our tracking to prove or disprove this hypothesis. If the hypothesis were true, however, then we might expect those on the Māori roll to be more likely to vote for a candidate than for a party. We are of course unable to analyse the number of votes cast by Māori in general electorates, as this information is not collected. The table below presents the total number of party and electorate votes cast in each of the seven Māori seats at the 2005 election.

TOTAL VOTES CAST AT GENERAL ELECTION 2005		
Constituency	Party Votes	Electorate Votes
Ikaroa Rawhiti	18,495	18,158
Tainui	19,059	18,612
Tamaki Makaurau	20,058	19,510
Te Tai Haururu	18,347	17,929
Te Tai Tokerau	20,076	19,566
Te Tai Tonga	20,027	19,731
Waiariki	20,149	19,694

More votes were cast for parties than electorate candidates in all of the seven Māori electorates in 2005. This does not support the hypothesis that candidates are more important to Māori than party.