

Acknowledgements

No study of New Zealand's 2020 general election could avoid the fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic. An effective response to the crisis presented a challenge both to the government and to civil society. The legal and administrative capacity of the New Zealand state was stretched to its limits. Of equal importance was the public response: the extent to which New Zealand civil society would accept the policies established to contain the virus—namely, lockdowns and border controls. The majority of New Zealanders accepted these restrictions—in most cases, willingly. That acceptance was greatly facilitated by the political communication skills of then prime minister Jacinda Ardern, their effectiveness summed up best by the concept of the 'Team of Five Million'. Not all were impressed and, arguably, some were left out. But the result of the election confirmed an overwhelmingly positive response. In this book, we examine the why and how of Labour's return as a majority government. We do this using data about public opinion and political behaviour that we collected immediately after the 2020 election.

This is the ninth in a series of books on New Zealand elections with sample survey data from the New Zealand Election Study (NZES), and marks 30 years since the first NZES survey, in 1990. The 2020 election study was led by Jack Vowles (Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington), Lara Greaves (Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington), and Jennifer Curtin (University of Auckland–Waipapa Taumata Rau)—the editors of this book—and was supported by a team of scholars from around New Zealand. It was funded by grants from several sources, including the New Zealand Electoral Commission, Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington, the University of Auckland–Waipapa Taumata Rau, and the University of Otago. The survey was administered by the University of Auckland's Public Policy Institute. Lara Greaves and Luke Oldfield organised and coordinated the survey administration, under very difficult conditions due to Covid-19 restrictions. For most of 2021,

they and their assistants, Frank Gore, Amanda Sesio, and Justin Wong, had no access to offices and equipment when collecting and capturing data. We also wish to acknowledge the efforts of Kiri Picard, who was supported by a Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga internship.

In 2020 the online survey was translated into te reo Māori and Chinese and for this we are grateful to Hēmi Kelly and Jie Huang, respectively. Additionally, several research assistants at the University of Auckland–Waipapa Taumata Rau helped with the envelope ‘stuffing’, including Jeevan Karki, Chrystal Thompson, Anthonia Uzoigwe, and Sinchana Appachoo. Kaylee Brink provided invaluable editorial assistance in preparing the final version of this manuscript. At Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington, Matthew Gibbons matched the panellists and Ben Stubbing did the occupational coding. As always, our research and analysis would not be possible without our 3,730 participants, who generously shared with us their perspectives and preferences on politics, policy issues, Covid-19, and our electoral system. We appreciate being able to publish our findings with ANU Press because their open access download option enables our participants to read our analyses. For those who want to explore our data in more depth, you can visit our new website: www.nzes.net.

Finally, to our families and friends, who continue to support our endeavours during and after each election, know this volume would not have happened without you.

Jennifer, Lara, and Jack

This text is taken from *A Team of Five Million?: The 2020 'Covid-19' New Zealand General Election*, edited by Jennifer Curtin, Lara Greaves and Jack Vowles, published 2024 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.