

EMBARGOED UNTIL 6.00AM 17 SEPTEMBER 2026

WHAKAATA MĀORI - CURIA POLL OF MĀORI VOTERS

The first Whakaata Māori-Curia poll of Māori enrolled on the general and Māori rolls has Labour leading party-vote support on 31%. Te Pāti Māori and the Green Party were separated by one percentage point, on 18% and 17% respectively. NZ First recorded 8% followed by National on 6%, Opportunity on 4%, and Te Tai Tokerau Party and ACT on 2% each. A further 6% were unsure.

Among respondents on the Māori roll, the positions were reversed, with Te Pāti Māori leading on 29%, followed by Labour on 27% and the Green Party on 16%. Excluding undecided respondents, Te Pāti Māori recorded 31%, broadly consistent with its 30% result in the 2023 election. Labour recorded 28%, compared with 44% in 2023, while Green Party support was 17%, compared with 9%.

Chris Hipkins led the preferred prime minister results with 16% support, followed by first-term MP Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke on 13%. Among respondents on the Māori roll, Maipi-Clarke led on 19%.

Jacinda Ardern was named by 9% of respondents, followed by Winston Peters on 8%. Rawiri Waititi and Chlöe Swarbrick were both on 5%. Prime Minister Christopher Luxon was on 4% and Debbie Ngarewa-Packer on 2%. 20% of respondents were unsure or declined to name a preferred prime minister.

Te Pāti Māori was named as the political party that best understands the aspirations of Māori by 47% of respondents, rising to 60% among rangatahi aged 18-30.

Thirty-one percent of respondents said the internal divisions within Te Pāti Māori had made them less likely to vote for the party. However, 38% said it made no difference, while 17% said they would be more likely to vote for Te Pāti Māori. The effect was more positive among

younger Māori. Among respondents aged 18–30, 32% said the divisions made them more likely to vote for Te Pāti Māori, while 14% said they were less likely.

Rawiri Waititi recorded the highest net trust rating at +24 percentage points, followed by Marama Davidson at +20, Mariameno Kapa-Kingi at +19, Debbie Ngarewa-Packer at +16, and Chlöe Swarbrick at +10.

Seventy-two per cent of respondents said the Government was doing a poor job of running the country, while 17% said it was doing a good job and 12% were unsure. The Government was rated more positively among Māori living in Tāmaki Makaurau, where 33% said it was doing a good job, compared with 4% among rural Māori.

Seventy-two per cent of respondents believed the Government had weakened the Treaty partnership, while 12% believed it had strengthened the partnership and 16% were unsure. Māori living in Tāmaki Makaurau were more likely to believe the Government had strengthened the Treaty partnership, at 30%, compared with 6% of rural Māori.

Sixty-five per cent supported developing a written constitution with a role for Te Tiriti. This comprised 40% who said Te Tiriti should have a central role and 25% who said its role should be clearly defined and agreed by all New Zealanders. Seventeen per cent were unsure, 13% believed the current constitutional arrangements worked well, and 5% said Te Tiriti should not have a distinct constitutional role. Support was highest among respondents aged 18–30, at 72%.

Other findings from the poll included:

- The cost of living was the single biggest issue facing Māori (42%) followed by Māori-Crown relationships on 15%. Housing and Health were equal third on 7% each. The cost of living was selected by 49% of respondents aged 18–30, while Māori-Crown relationships were a greater concern among older Māori.
- Sixty-four per cent of respondents were very or somewhat confident that Labour would prioritise Māori-specific policy issues.
- Forty-seven per cent of respondents were broadly positive about the Green Party's election promises.

Analysis and commentary on the poll will feature on *He Aha Te Whakatau?*, – a seven-part podcast from Te Ao Māori News. A new episode will stream live on 17 September at 8.00PM on the Te Ao Māori News App, Facebook and YouTube channel and also on MĀORI+.

The Whakaata Māori-Curia poll surveyed 1,000 Māori voters on the Māori and general rolls between 29 August and 10 September 2026. Five hundred respondents participated by phone and 500 through an online panel. The results were weighted by gender, age, area and electoral roll. The maximum margin of error for the overall sample is ± 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Subgroup results have higher margins of error.

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About Whakaata Māori: Whakaata Māori is the national Indigenous media organisation of Aotearoa New Zealand, dedicated to revitalising and advancing te reo Māori, culture, and identity through storytelling.

Guided by the vision, *kia mauriora te reo* - a future where te reo Māori is spoken everywhere, every day - Whakaata Māori creates an environment where te reo Māori and the cultural heritage it carries can thrive.

Established in 2004, Whakaata Māori connects audiences with stories that celebrate and uplift te reo Māori and Māori culture. *Whakaata* means 'to mirror', 'to reflect' or 'to display.'

<https://whakaatamaori.co.nz>

About Te Ao Māori News: Te Ao Māori News is the news and current affairs service of Whakaata Māori, delivering independent journalism through a te ao Māori lens. It elevates Māori voices and provides trusted reporting, analysis and context on the issues that matter most to Māori communities across Aotearoa and around the world.

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