WHAKAATA MĀORI

PĀNUI PĀPĀHO

5 o OKETOPA / October 2026

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7.00AM 06 OCTOBER 2026

WHAKAATA MĀORI - CURIA POLL: HAURAKI-WAIKATO

Hauraki-Waikato poll: Maipi-Clarke leads as voters back formal Kiingitanga role

The Whakaata Māori-Curia poll of voters enrolled in the Hauraki-Waikato electorate found Te Pāti Māori and Labour separated by one percentage point in party-vote support, on 22% and 21% respectively. The Green Party followed on 16%.

Excluding undecided respondents, Te Pāti Māori recorded 26%, compared with 33% at the 2023 election. Labour recorded 24%, compared with 45%, while Green Party support increased from 7% to 19%.

In the electorate vote, Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke of Te Pāti Māori recorded 45% support, followed by Labour's Kingi Kiriona on 26%. Other responses accounted for 13%, while 17% of respondents were unsure.

Excluding undecided respondents, Maipi-Clarke recorded 54% support and Kiriona 31%, with other responses accounting for 15%.

Sixty one per cent of respondents said that incumbent Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke had done a good job over the past three years. Twenty four per cent said she had done an average job, while 6% said she had done a poor job. Nine per cent were unsure.

Sixty-four per cent of respondents said the Kiingitanga should have a formal role in New Zealand's political and constitutional system. Twenty-four per cent disagreed and 12% were unsure. Support was higher among respondents aged 18–39, at 73%, compared with 49% among those aged 60 and over.

Cost of living was the most important local issue that could affect respondents' votes, selected by 35%. Te Tiriti o Waitangi followed on 13%, with hauora / healthcare and housing each on 10%. Infrastructure and local council and regional development were each selected

by 5%. Education, mahi / jobs and the environment each recorded 4%, followed by roading and transport isolation on 2% and law and order on 1%. Other issues accounted for 3%, while 5% were unsure.

Asked what the next Government's highest priority should be to improve outcomes for Māori, 26% selected honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi, followed by reducing poverty and homelessness on 24%. Improving health and education outcomes was selected by 20%, support for mental health and drug addiction by 13%, and addressing the Māori unemployment rate by 12%. Other responses accounted for 6%.

Eighty-four per cent of Hauraki-Waikato respondents said it was somewhat or very important that their electorate MP was willing to stand up to their own party on issues that matter to Māori. Forty-one per cent said it was very important and 43% somewhat important.

Other findings from the poll included:

- Forty seven per cent believed the Crown wasn't upholding its Waikato-Tainui Treaty settlement commitments to restore and protect the Waikato River. Twenty-six per cent believed the Crown was upholding its commitments and 27% were unsure.
- Asked what the Government's focus should be to improve Māori health, 44% selected improving the single health system for all New Zealanders. Granting funding and resources to Māori health providers was selected by 28%, while 22% selected re-establishing Te Aka Whai Ora, the independent Māori Health Authority. Five per cent were unsure.
- "Gets the mahi done" was the most common first-ranked quality when respondents were asked what mattered when choosing an electorate MP, selected first by 39%. "Working effectively with other parties" was the most common fourth-ranked quality, at 33%.

These poll results will be put to candidates in the Hauraki-Waikato electorate debate hosted by Whakaata Māori, moderated by Maiki Sherman and Julian Wilcox and broadcast live on Whakaata Māori and MĀORI+ at 7.00pm on 6 October. It will also be streamed live on the Te Ao Māori News app, Facebook and YouTube channels.

The Whakaata Māori-Curia poll was conducted between 21 September and 1 October 2026 among 500 Māori adults aged 18 and over who reported being enrolled on the Māori roll in

Hauraki-Waikato. Of these, 420 participated by phone and 80 through an online panel. Results were weighted by gender and age, using census-based gender targets and age targets based on turnout in Hauraki-Waikato at the 2023 election. The maximum margin of error for the overall sample is ±4.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Subgroup results have higher margins of error. Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

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.
https://www.teaonews.co.nz/
https://www.facebook.com/TeAoMaoriNews

ENDS