The New Zealand Election Study (1990-2014)

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More detail, including publications, can be found at the NZES website, http://www.nzes.org

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Before the NZES

- 1963: multiple electorate study, not national sample but sought to be representative urban-rural, social structure, demographics
- 1975: first national study, Victoria University of Wellington
- 1981: Replication of 1963 sampling frame
- 1987: Near-national telephone study, precursor to NZES
- Also numerous pre-election surveys, electorate-based or national
The NZES Model

- Postal survey, national sample from electoral rolls, post-election, electronic sampling from 1996
- 1993 onwards: panels to previous election(s)
- Oversamples of Maori electorates 1996, 2002-
- Face-to-face Maori Election Study 1999
- Oversamples of young voters, 2008-
- 1996, 1999, 2002: rolling cross-section campaign studies (telephone) with postal post-election follow-up: span the most volatile elections in recent NZ political history
- Online response option from 2005 onwards
## Response Rates

New roll-based samples, weighted by oversamples (excludes panels, campaign samples). Maori oversamples are usually 400-500, approximately 7-8% of target sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Postal only</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2102</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>2086</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1416</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Panel Re-Contacts (2011 Example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Previous Respondents Re-Contacted</th>
<th>2005 and 2008</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Responde 2011</th>
<th>Respons e Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maori</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>253</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>586</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td>1695</td>
<td>1044</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recent NZES

• 2011 and 2014: Administered by Centre for Advanced Methods and Policy Applications in the Social Sciences (COMPASS) at University of Auckland
• Funders: Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand Electoral Commission, University of Auckland
• Most datasets publicly available for download
• 2014 data release for independent analysis early 2016
Previous Funding

• Externally-funded from 1990 to 2002, plus internal university research funds
• 1990-2002, $1.17 million NZ – but much of this was overheads and salary buyout
• 2005 onward – internal funds plus Electoral Commission
• Total Budget for 2014 NZES $65,000
• Excludes Vote Validation, usually $6-7k.
Some Substantive Outcomes


• Evaluation of the change of electoral system in terms of public attitudes and behaviour

• Longitudinal analysis by pooling the datasets
  – Changes in attitudes towards the welfare state (Humpage, 2015)
The NZES and Beyond

• Voting data is validated from inspection of marked rolls for both respondents and non-respondents
• This data centrally compiled from 2014 onwards that should ensure greater accuracy
• Increasingly mutually supportive relationship with NZ Electoral Commission in context of declining turnout
• Roll information: age group, gender, Maori/non-Maori, occupation, census
Longitudinal Study: NZLES

An additional roll sample of 30,000, voting data collected
Future

- More use of roll data to correct for non-response biases
- Census data modeled down to the meshblock level
- Polling place data to model vote shifts
- Increasing use of survey response online option may reduce costs further
- More efforts needed to improve survey response rate
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