



LOCAL ELECTIONS CHECK-IN

RESEARCH AND INSIGHTS

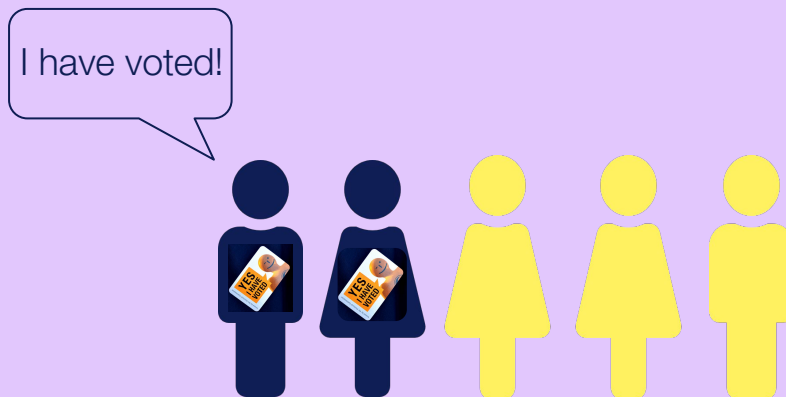


Background

NZers could have their say on who represents their community by voting in the 2022 local elections (16 September to 8 October).

However, just 40%* of eligible NZers cast their vote in the elections.

Stuff set out to uncover why people voted but more importantly, why they didn't.



*Source <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/local-body-elections-local-govt-nz-execs-echo-ardern-in-seeking-review-of-voting-process-after-disappointing-turnout/>
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Key Findings

1

Local elections will need a complete overhaul to convince Kiwis in the future to vote.

There need to be better candidates, have an easier system in place to vote and show NZers why they need to care about voting.

2

Candidates need to up their game.

Candidates need to present NZers with better policies, ideas and plans and be more present in communities if they want to earn future votes.

3

Voting seems to happen out of a sense of civic duty and moral obligation.

Support for a specific candidate drives more votes than party loyalty, which reaffirms the need for inspiring candidates to encourage overall participation.

4

NZers need more in-depth information about candidates

Lack of information about candidates was a key reason why a quarter of voters found it difficult to choose who to vote for. Parties need candidate information is easily available beyond the voting booklet.

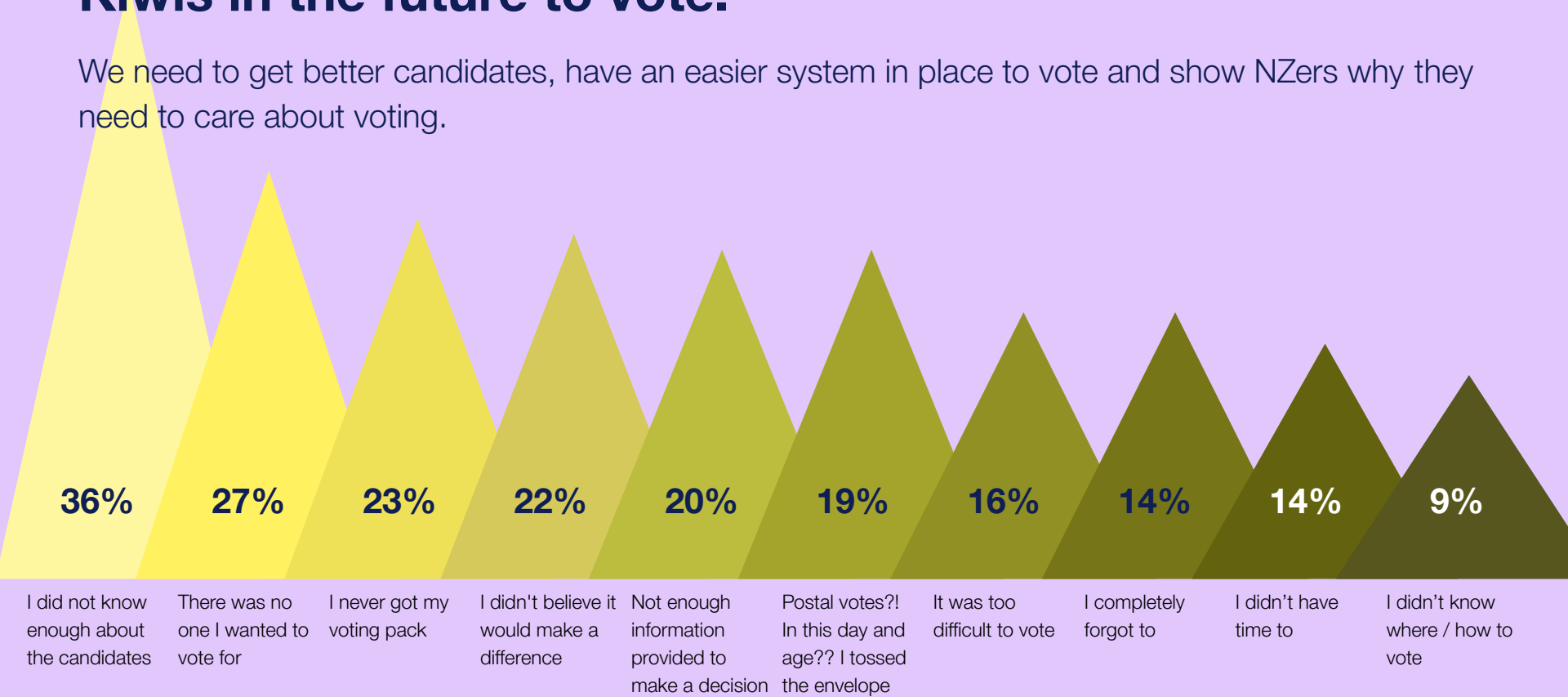
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The ability to vote online might mobilise those who are least likely to vote

Having the ability to vote online is the most influential factor (from 5 we tested) to get 18-44 and Aucklanders to vote - 2 groups with the lowest voter turnout.

It's going to need a complete overhaul to convince Kiwis in the future to vote.

We need to get better candidates, have an easier system in place to vote and show NZers why they need to care about voting.

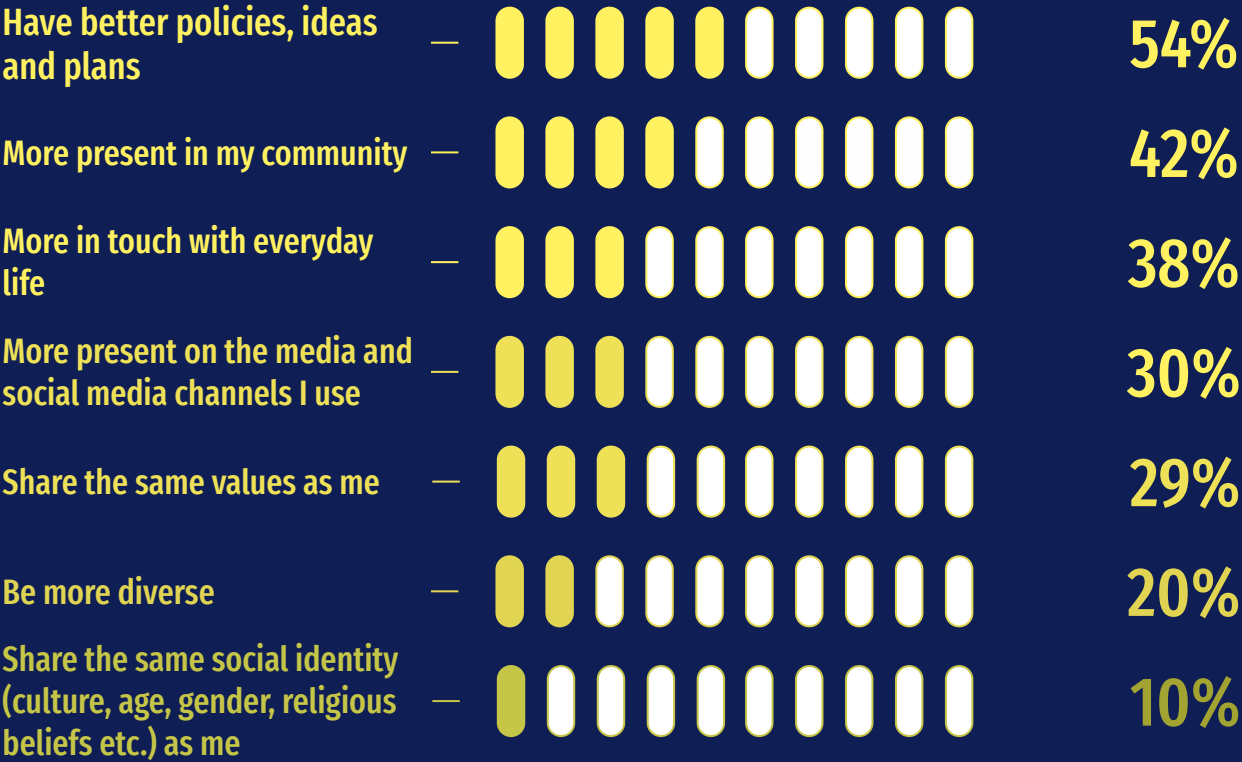


Q. Why did you not vote? Please select all that apply. TOP 8 shown
Base: Those that didn't vote



What about the **candidates** could have been better?

Candidates need to present NZers with better policies, ideas and plans and be more present in communities if they want to earn future votes.



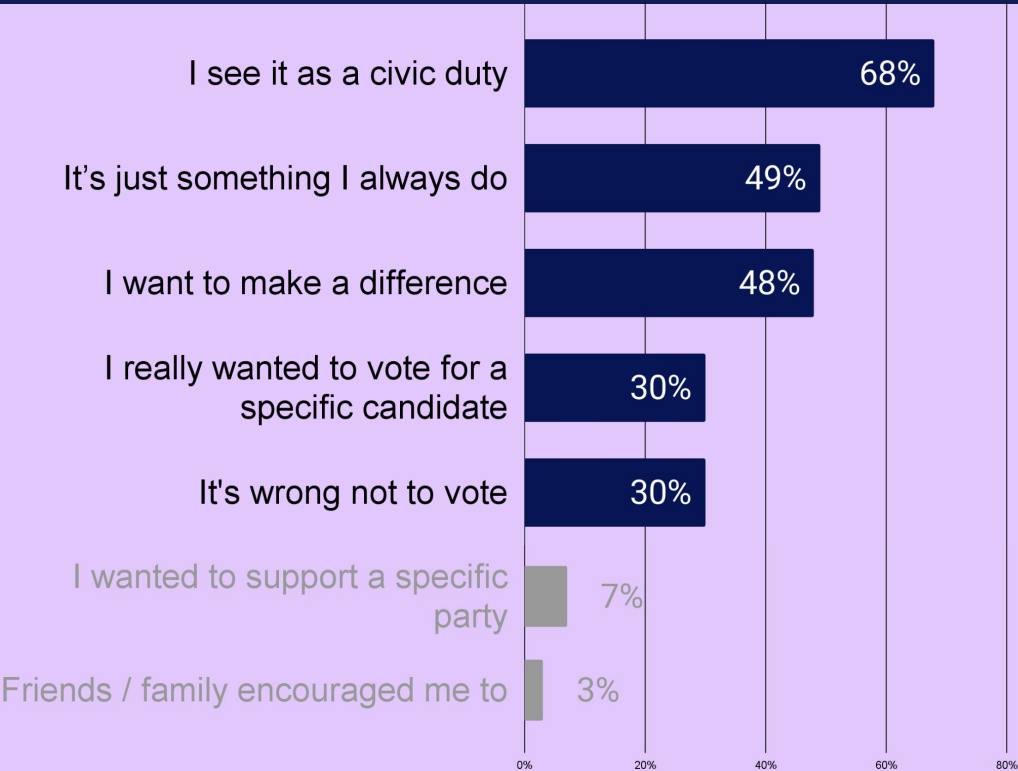
Q. What about the candidates could have been better? Please select all that apply
Base: Those that didn't vote because of the candidates



Voting seems to happen out of a sense of civic duty and moral obligation.

For the most that voted, it was a *civic duty*, whereas about half of NZers saw it as an opportunity to make a difference in their region.

Support for a specific candidate drives more votes than party loyalty, which reaffirms the need for inspiring candidates to encourage overall participation.



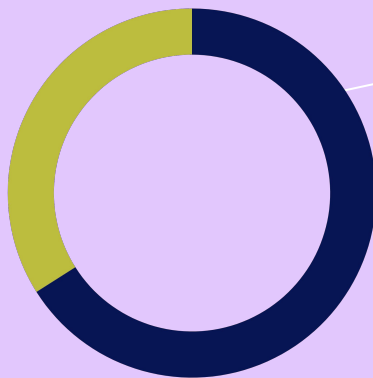
Q. Why did you choose to vote? Please select all that apply
Base: Those that voted



Most who vote find it easy to choose who to vote for.

Two thirds found it easy to choose who to vote for, and even more so older (65+ YO) males, Māori and Cantabrians.

NEW ZEALANDERS WHO VOTED



66%
FIND IT EASY TO CHOOSE WHO TO VOTE FOR

- ↑ 65+ YO (71%)
- ↑ Men (69%)
- ↑ Māori (74%)
- ↑ Canterbury (73%)

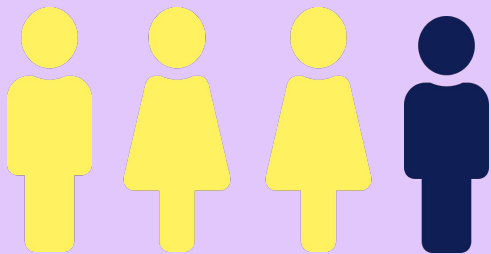
Q. How easy was it to choose someone to vote for?
Base: Those that voted

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower compared to Total (95% confidence level)



NZers need more in-depth information about candidates

Lack of information about candidates was a key reason why a quarter of voters found it difficult to choose who to vote for.



26%
**FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CHOOSE
WHO TO VOTE FOR**

Q. How easy was it to choose someone to vote for?

Base: Those that voted

*Neutral responses = 8%

I didn't know all the candidates, and the blurb they write doesn't always tell you much about the person.

Candidate policies were very brief in the election booklets

Lack of availability of information on some candidates.

You had to really dig into the bios and try to find as much info as possible as there were a lot of crazy candidates this year.

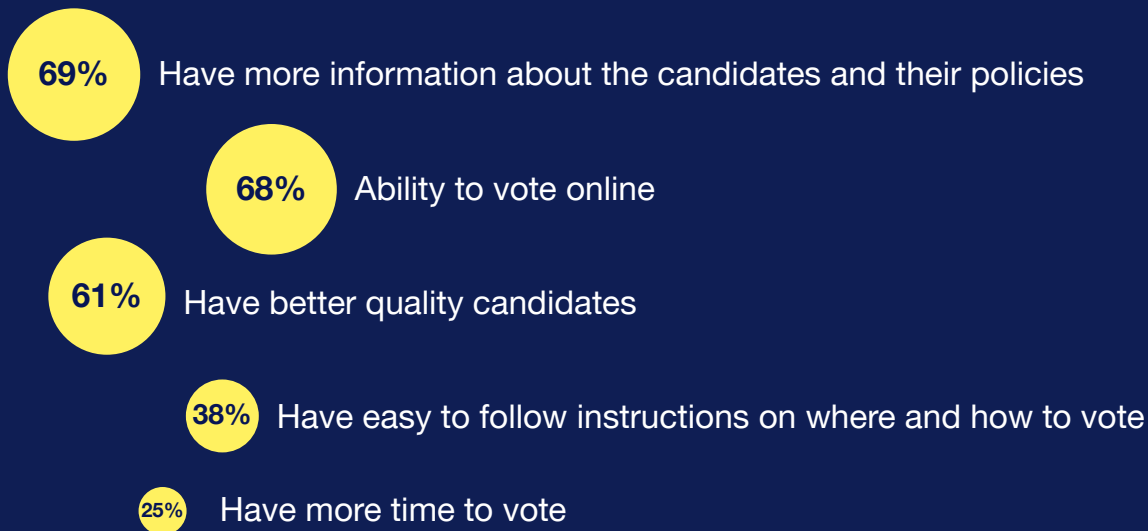
Pages and pages of candidate bio's that really tell you nothing helpful. Spent half the time guessing what the candidates stand for, who they represent and their real past experiences.



So what would make NZers **more likely to vote** in future elections?

Parties need to ensure NZers can easily get more information about candidates but also to get the best people from our team of 5 million - NZers were obviously let down by the selection this year.

Finally, NZ seriously needs to consider online voting.



The ability to **vote online** might mobilise those who are least likely to vote

We asked New Zealanders to score 5 factors on how much they would influence them to vote and the ability to vote online came out as the most influential factor 18-44 year olds and Aucklanders - 2 groups with the lowest voter turnout.

68%
**MORE LIKELY TO VOTE IF
THEY HAD THE ABILITY TO
VOTE ONLINE**

- ↑ 18-44 YO (83%)
- ↑ Women (72%)
- ↑ Māori (79%)
- ↑ Asian (83%)
- ↑ Auckland (77%)



What did we do?



We designed a **3 min online survey** that was sent out to those that opted-in to Stuff's Research Community



The survey was live **12th – 15th of October.**



We spoke to more than **4,500** eligible voting New Zealanders and weighted the data to reflect **nationally representative** samples for gender, age and region



Nga Mihi

Research and Insights

Stuff