

Referenda

As at date of publication
Archive

A referendum is a vote by all enrolled electors on a question. In New Zealand a referendum can be called as a result of a successful petition under the Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993 or on the initiative of Government.

Referenda are either binding or indicative (non-binding).

A binding referendum requires the result to be acted upon or implemented.

An indicative referendum does not require the result to be acted upon or implemented. Citizens initiated referenda are indicative or non-binding.

Citizens initiated and Government initiated referenda can be conducted by postal vote under the Referenda (Postal Voting) Act 2000. Citizens initiated referenda can be held together with a general election or at a stand alone poll. Special legislation is required to enable Government initiated referenda to be held other than by postal vote.

What is a Citizens Initiated Referendum (CIR)?

A citizens initiated referendum is a referendum promoted under the Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993. A referendum question must have only two possible answers.

A referendum is required if 10% of enrolled electors sign a petition calling for a referendum. The form of the petition must be approved by the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the signatures must be

collected within 12 months of the Clerk's approval.

There is a \$50,000 spending limit on advertising promoting or opposing a petition.

There is a \$50,000 spending limit on advertising promoting or opposing either of the answers in a referendum.

Advertising relating to a petition or referendum must include an authorisation statement setting out the name and address of the person at whose direction it is published.

For more details see the Ministry of Justice publication, Citizens Initiated Referenda, the Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993, and the Referenda (Postal Voting) Act 2000.

What is a Government initiated referendum?

A Government initiated referendum is a referendum promoted by the Government. It can be binding or indicative (non-binding) and pose more than one question or questions with more than two possible answers. Legislation is required to enable a Government initiated referendum to be held unless it is conducted by postal vote under the Referenda (Postal Voting) Act 2000.

Date of referendum * held on day of general election	Turnout (total votes cast as % of enrolled electors)	Question	Result (% of valid votes)

2 Dec 1995	27.0	'Should the number of professional firefighters employed full time in the New Zealand Fire Service be reduced below the number employed on 1 January 1995?'	Yes 12.2 No 87.8
27 Nov 1999*	84.8	'Should the size of the House of Representatives be reduced from 120 members to 99 members?'	Yes 81.5 No 18.5
27 Nov 1999*	84.8	'Should there be a reform of our justice system placing greater emphasis on the needs of victims, providing restitution and compensation for them and imposing minimum sentences and hard labour for all serious violent offences?'	Yes 91.8 No 8.2

Other (non-liquor licensing) Referenda, 1949-2004

Date of referendum * held on day of general election # held by postal ballot	Turnout (total votes cast as % of enrolled electors)	Topic and authorising Act	Result (% of valid votes)
9 Mar 1949	54.3	<p><i>Off-course betting</i> (Gaming Poll Act 1948)</p> <p>Proposal that provision be made for off-course betting on horse-races, through the Totalizator, by means to be provided by the New Zealand Racing Conference and the New Zealand Trotting Conference.</p> <p>I vote for the proposal.</p> <p>I vote against the proposal.</p>	<p>In favour 68.0</p> <p>Against 32.0</p>
3 Aug 1949	63.5	<p><i>Compulsory military training</i> (Military Training Poll Act 1949)</p>	<p>In favour 77.9</p>

		<p>I vote for compulsory military training.</p> <p>I vote against compulsory military training.</p>	<p>Against 22.1</p>
23 Sep 1967	69.7	<p><i>Term of Parliament</i> (Electoral Poll Act 1967)</p> <p>I vote for a maximum of three years as at present.</p> <p>I vote for a maximum of four years.</p>	<p>3 years 68.1</p> <p>4 years 31.9</p>
27 Oct 1990*	85.2	<p><i>Term of Parliament</i> (Term Poll Act 1990)</p> <p>I vote for 3 years as the term of Parliament as at present.</p> <p>I vote for 4 years as the term of Parliament.</p>	<p>3 years 69.3</p> <p>4 years 30.7</p>
19 Sep 1992	55.2	<p><i>Voting system</i> (Electoral Referendum Act 1991)</p> <p><u>Part A</u></p> <p>I vote to retain the present First</p>	<p><u>Part A</u></p> <p>Retain 15.3</p> <p>Change 84.7</p> <p><u>Part B</u></p>

		-Past-The-Post system.	SM 5.6
		I vote for a change to the voting system.	STV 17.4
		<u>Part B</u>	MMP 70.5
		I vote for the Supplementary Member system (SM)	PV 6.6
		I vote for the Single Transferable Vote system (STV)	
		I vote for the Mixed Member Proportional system (MMP)	
		I vote for the Preferential Voting system (PV)	
6 Nov 1993*	85.2	Voting system (Electoral Referendum Act 1993)	FPP 46.1 MMP 53.9
		I vote for the present First-Past-The-Post system as provided in the Electoral Act 1956.	
		I vote for the proposed Mixed Member Proportional	

		system as provided in the Electoral Act 1993	
5-26 Sep 1997#	80.3	<i>Compulsory Retirement Savings Scheme</i> (Compulsory Retirement Savings Scheme Referendum Act 1997) Do you support the proposed Compulsory Retirement Savings Scheme?	Yes 8.2 No 91.8

2009 referendum

A Citizens Initiated Referendum on the question "Should a smack as part of good parental correction be a criminal offence in New Zealand?" ran from Friday 31 July until Friday 21 August.

People enrolled by Thursday 30 July were sent their voting papers in the mail.

Voting papers were sent back in the mail.

The final result was announced on 25 August.

Key Dates

Monday 15 June 2009

Campaign started to ensure people were correctly enrolled to vote in the referendum.

Friday 10 July

Last chance to update enrolment details to get voting papers sent out correctly.

Thursday 30 July

Last chance to enrol to vote.

Friday 31 July

Voting opened.

Noon

Last chance to get replacement voting papers.

Tuesday 18 August

7pm Friday 21 August

Voting closed.

8.00pm

Friday 21 August

Preliminary result announced.
www.electionresults.govt.nz
www.elections.org.nz

Tuesday 25 August
Noon

Last point for voting papers to be received for inclusion in the count (they needed to be postmarked no later than 21 August if from

New Zealand and no later than 20 August if from overseas).

Tuesday 25 August

Official result announced.

www.electionresults.govt.nz

www.elections.org.nz

2011 Referendum on the voting system

For full information about the
Referendum please visit:



Basic information about the Referendum

What's it about?

There's a Referendum taking place at the same time as
the 2011 General Election.

The Referendum gives you the chance to have your say
on the voting system you'd like to use to elect our
Parliaments in the future.

What will you be asked?

You will be asked two questions:

The first question asks whether you want to keep
MMP (which is the **voting system** we use at the
moment) or whether you want to change to
another voting system.

The second question asks which of four other
voting systems you would choose if New Zealand
decides to change from MMP.

What will the voting paper look like?

You will be given two voting papers in the polling place –
one orange and one purple. The orange one is the 2011

General Election voting paper used to elect Members of Parliament. The purple one is the Referendum voting paper. Here's what it will look like.

Referendum on New Zealand's Voting System

[INSERT ELECTORATE NAME AND NUMBER]

Official Mark

Explanation

1. You may vote in both Part A and Part B or you may vote in only Part A or only Part B.
2. Vote by putting a tick in the circle next to the option you choose.

Part A
Should New Zealand keep the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) voting system?

Vote for only one option

I vote to keep the MMP voting system

I vote to change to another voting system

Vote Here

Part B
If New Zealand were to change to another voting system, which voting system would you choose?

Vote for only one option

I would choose the First Past the Post system (FPP)

I would choose the Preferential Voting system (PV)

I would choose the Single Transferable Vote system (STV)

I would choose the Supplementary Member system (SM)

Vote Here

Final Directions

- If you spoil this voting paper, return it to the officer who issued it and apply for a new paper.
- After voting, fold this voting paper so that its contents cannot be seen and place it in the

What will happen as a result?

If at least half the voters opt to keep MMP, there will be an independent review of MMP in 2012 to recommend changes that should be made to the way it works. The Electoral Commission will conduct the review. It must include a number of matters that have been decided by Parliament including the thresholds parties must meet to be eligible for a share of list seats, whether voters should be able to change the order of candidates on a party list and whether candidates can stand in both an electorate and on the party list. The size of Parliament and Maori representation will not be reviewed, but the Commission may consider any other aspects of the MMP voting system.

If more than half the voters opt to change the voting system, Parliament will decide if there will be another Referendum in 2014 to choose between MMP and the alternative voting system that gets the most support in the second question in the 2011 Referendum.