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Poll brings post-Budget blow

The Post/Freshwater Strategy's latest poll shows the National Party stranded below 30%



Prime Minister Christopher Luxon saw a three-point lift in the preferred prime minister stakes since February, to 37%, still below Chris Hipkins on 44%. WAIKATO TIMES

POLITICS

Andrea Vance
National Affairs Editor

National has failed to secure a post-Budget lift in support, with a new poll revealing Prime Minister Christopher Luxon's party remains locked below 30%.

In the latest *The Post*/Freshwater Strategy poll with Infrastructure New Zealand, National has ticked down slightly from the 30% it recorded in February, landing at 29%.

Meanwhile, Labour saw its strong February high-water mark of 37% soften by two points, dropping to 35%.

An election-year Budget is traditionally a government's best opportunity to reset the political narrative and claw back public favour.

But Nicola Willis' tight, no-frills fiscal package delivered few voter giveaways.

A comparison with our February poll shows that voter sentiment has largely hardened, with support shifting toward minor coalition partners rather than the major parties. National has slumped nine points since the October 2023 election.

The winners of this mood are NZ First and ACT.

Winston Peters' party has continued its upward trajectory, climbing slightly from 11% in February to 12% among likely voters in the current poll. His party is up six points from the election.

David Seymour's ACT Party also gained two points to 8%. (That represents a one-point drop since the election).

The Green Party has managed to hold ground at 10%, locking in its base despite the slight softening seen by Labour. Overall, the Greens are down two points on the October 2023 result.

At the tail end of the poll, Te Pāti Māori remains steady at 2%.

The May Budget did little to improve broadly pessimistic sentiment about the direction of the country.

Nearly half of respondents (57%) said New Zealand is heading in the wrong direction, up two points from February. That compared with 27% (down from 28%) who believe it is on the right track. A further 16% were unsure.

Hipkins remains the preferred choice for

prime minister on 44%, although his rating has softened by two points, mirroring Labour's slight dip in support.

Luxon trails by seven points but has gained ground since February, rising three points to 37%. The lift may reflect his successful effort to shore up his leadership after calling a rare confidence vote in April.

According to the Electoral Commission's seat calculator, these numbers translate to a Parliament with National on 43 seats, NZ First 15 and 10 for ACT. That gives the coalition 68 seats to 62 for Labour (44), the Greens (12) and TPM (6).

National would have no list spots returning, meaning heavyweights like Finance Minister Nicola Willis, Justice Minister Paul Goldsmith and Speaker Gerry Brownlee would be dumped from Parliament. Infrastructure Minister Chris Bishop will have to hold his bellwether Hutt South electorate to remain in Parliament.

There are key caveats. This calculation assumes all incumbent seats are held on election night.

But swings away from National suggest it could lose key electorates, reducing its seat tally.

Te Pāti Māori is also unlikely to retain six Māori seats, reducing 2023's overhang and the overall size of Parliament.

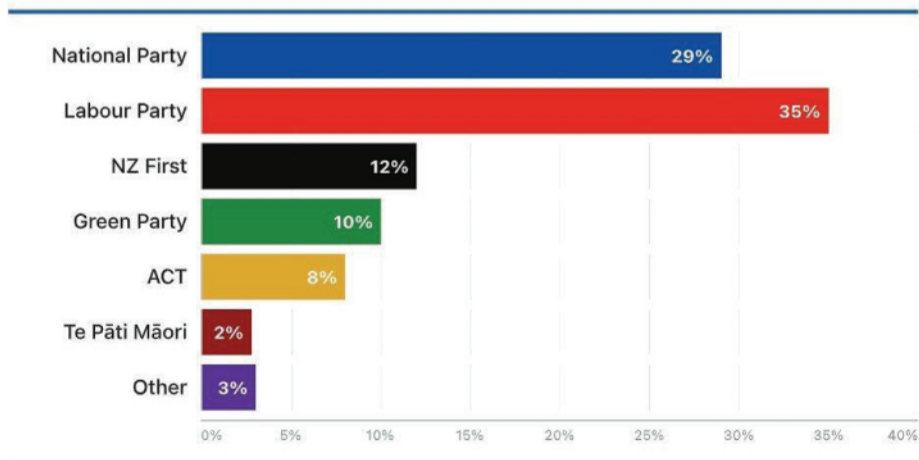
So, assuming every party wins seats roughly in line with its share of the party vote and secures at least one electorate seat, excluding NZ First, the projection narrows but the coalition remains in government (61 seats to 59 for the left bloc).

Freshwater Strategy interviewed 1038 eligible voters in New Zealand, aged 18+ online, between June 5-11. Margin of Error +/- 3%. Data are weighted to be representative of New Zealand voters.

The Post/Freshwater Strategy poll is funded by Infrastructure NZ to encourage debate about issues that are important to the future of New Zealand.

Read more
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National remains behind Labour while NZ First and ACT are gaining support



Source: Freshwater Strategy for The Post, June 2026.





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