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Faith Howard

Northern Kentucky University, Howardf2@nku.edu

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## Examination of New Zealand's Use of Mixed-Member Proportional System

Faith Howard, Northern Kentucky University (Howardf2@nku.edu)

### Abstract

This paper examines New Zealand's most recent general election to determine the composition of the 52nd Parliament, which occurred on September 23rd, 2017. By examining this election, one can see how New Zealanders are able to achieve more accurate and diverse representation through their electoral system. This diversity in representation is achieved through the two votes that voters cast when they elected their representatives locally through the candidate vote and by their political party preference vote under the mixed-member proportional electoral system. New Zealand's practice of mixed-member proportional, gives their voters an advantage in the election process that voters under other electoral systems do not benefit from widely when it comes to achieving a more accurate minority representation. The primary advantage that voters achieve under the mixed-member system is that it is a hybrid system allowing voters to have majoritarian representation and proportional representation. Majoritarian representation is achieved through the candidate vote, which voters cast as they would under the electoral system First Past the Post, which awards a seat in the legislature to the candidate who receives the most votes. However, the added benefit of the mixed-member proportional system is it also provides voters with proportional representation through their party vote. Also, with the addition of the party vote, voters feel more inclined to vote for their actual preference because they know as long as their party meets the required threshold, they will receive a seat. The benefits that New Zealand voters receive under the mixed-member proportional system are presented in the outcome of their election with New Zealand's two most dominant parties, the National Party and the Labour Party receiving most of the seats with representation for minority parties. This paper demonstrates the value of mixed-member proportional for achieving desired representation.