



The Role of the Government: Analysing Results from the 2016 Social Attitudes Survey

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Introduction

The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) is an annual survey of economic and social policy issues, involving some of the world's leading academic institutions in 45 countries. Each year, every ISSP member country carries out a short survey using the same questionnaire, from which data is made freely available to all members in a central archive based in Cologne, Germany. The Centre for Methods and Policy Application in the Social Sciences (COMPASS) at The University of Auckland has administered the survey since 2013. The annual surveys allow researchers to compare findings across different countries, cultures, and over time. A new topic is chosen each year, each of which rotates roughly each decade.

In 2016, a Social Attitudes Survey was run as part of the ISSP module on Role of the Government. Topics that were covered in the survey included: opinions on how citizens should follow laws and what kinds of protests should be allowed; opinions on potential actions of the government, where government money would best be spent, and the responsibilities, successes, and right of the government; which factors have influence on government decisions; and insights on tax rates, tax evasion and corruption. The survey also included several additional country-specific questions, such as opinions on recent welfare reforms, and various demographic questions. The survey was sent out to over four thousand New Zealanders, and returned over thirteen-hundred responses.

A report analysing the statistical data returned from the survey was produced as part of a University of Auckland Faculty of Arts summer scholarship project during 2016-17. Analysing the data was used to help understand whether different types of New Zealanders (based on variables such as age, ethnicity and gender) have differing views on the role of the government, and in particular the role of the welfare state.

Please note this report only includes aggregate data. Those interested in more detailed analyses can contact COMPASS if they wish to have access to the data:

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Methods

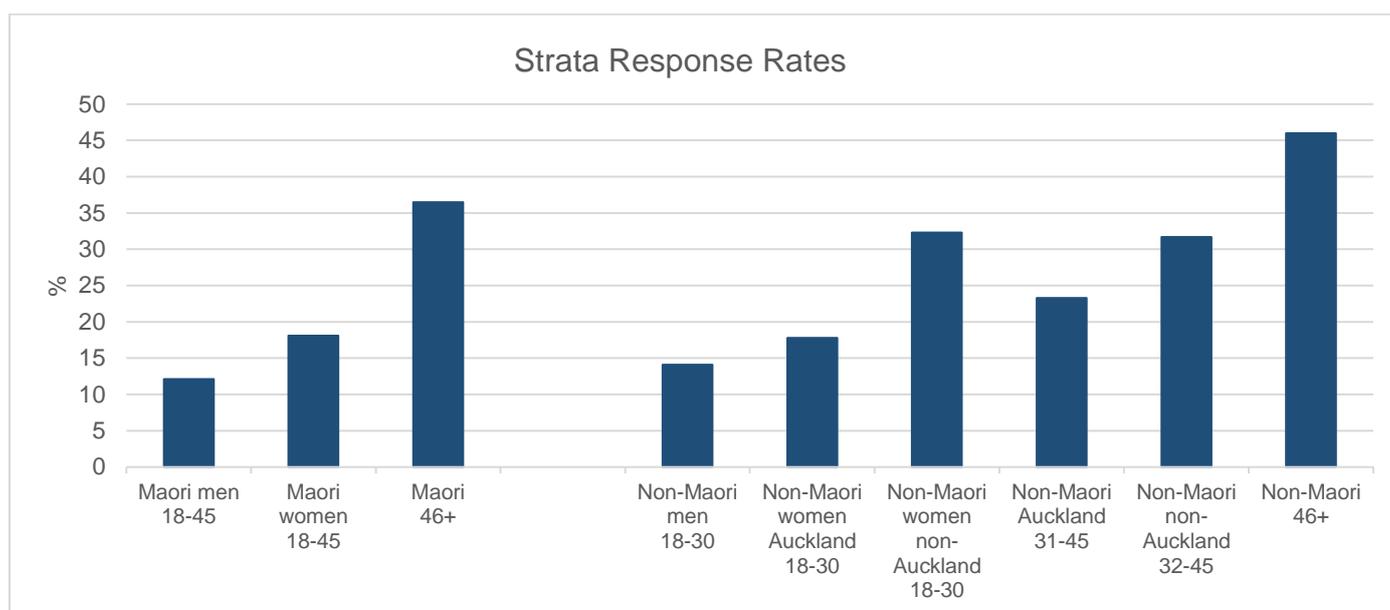
This section on the methods used in our Social Attitudes Survey 2016 analysis was prepared by Dr Barry Milne, Associate Director of the COMPASS Research Centre, and Irene Wu, Summer Scholar at the University of Auckland.

The aim of the ISSP 2016 sampling was to achieve a final sample of n=1200 (in line with requirements of the ISSP Secretariat), and for the final sample to be representative across key variables – age, gender, Māori descent, region, deprivation, occupation and urbanicity. To this end, groups of individuals hypothesised to respond at lower rates were oversampled and groups of individuals hypothesised to respond at higher rates were under-sampled.

The procedure was as follows. Names and addresses were obtained for all those on the electoral roll (aged 18 years and older). n=15000 were randomly selected from this list in order to (i) define strata which differ on likely response rates; and to (ii) assess the representativeness of the final set of respondents. n=15000 was chosen to ensure (i) there were enough numbers in each strata to achieve a representative number of respondents from each strata, given low response rates in some strata – note that n=15000 allows for response rates as low as 8% in strata (i.e., 1200/15000); and (ii) the numbers were not so great that the task of coding factors to test representativeness was not too onerous (two factors needed to be coded: deprivation, coded from electoral roll address; and occupational categories, coded from electoral roll occupation free-text).

Strata were based on the response rate patterns of the 2015 ISSP survey, where mailed participants were grouped by combinations of four factors – age, Māori descent, gender, and Auckland residence – so that groups show distinct patterns of response rates. Note that urbanicity was not used to define strata as it was not found to be an important factor predicting response. Also, the coded factors – deprivation and occupation – were not used to define strata so that the time taken to code these factors did not delay mail-out. Nine strata were chosen, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Response rates for ISSP 2015 across nine different strata.



Each of the n=15000 was then categorised into one of the nine strata, and a random sample from each strata was selected to be mailed a survey. The number selected to be mailed from each strata was inversely proportional to the predicted response rates for each strata (taken from Figure 1). That is, groups suspected to have low response rates were mailed in greater numbers and groups suspected to have high response rates were mailed in lower numbers.

The total number mailed was n=4075, comprising the following distribution across strata:

Māori men, 18-45	353
Māori women, 18-45	319
Māori, 46+	201
Non-Māori men, 18-30	645
Non-Māori women, Auckland, 18-30	200
Non-Māori women, non-Auckland, 18-30	173
Non-Māori, Auckland, 31-45	417
Non-Māori, non-Auckland, 31-45	468

The n=4075 selected individuals were sent the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) questionnaire, cover sheet and a pen. The cover sheet invited participants to take part, and also: (i) described the survey and explained that participation was optional, confidentiality of participants was guaranteed, and that the survey was approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (reference number 017445); (ii) explained that all respondents go into a draw to win one of two \$100 gift cards ('Prezzy' Cards); (iii) explained how the participants were selected and how their names and addresses were obtained; (iv) explained that the survey was being managed at the University of Auckland by the Centre of Methods and Policy Application in the Social Sciences (COMPASS), with collaborators from the University of Auckland Department of Sociology; (v) explained that funding was received from the University of Auckland; and (vi) explained that after the data have been analysed, an anonymised data set will be permanently stored in both New Zealand and international data archives, as a historical record of the 2016 ISSP.

The mail out took place on 11 July 2016. Participants were able to complete the survey either on the questionnaire provided or online via SurveyMonkey. For those yet to complete the survey, a reminder postcard was sent on 4 August 2016, and a second questionnaire was sent on 30 August 2016.

A total of n=1350 participants returned surveys between 11 July 2016 and 19 December 2016, giving a raw response rate of 33.1% (i.e., 1350/4075), and a standardised response rate of 38.7% (i.e., the response rate that would have been achieved had each stratum been mailed surveys proportional to their share of the population).

Characteristics of respondents differed slightly from those of the electoral roll. To account for these differences, the sample was weighted from a logistic regression model. For details, refer to Wu and Milne (2017). After weighting, a basic aggregate analysis was conducted for this report.

Respondent characteristics

Age

	Frequency	Percentage
18-30	260	19.3
31-45	326	24.2
46-60	379	28.1
61-75	269	19.9
76+	113	8.4
Total	1347	

Ethnicity*

	Frequency	Percentage
Māori	200	14.8
European	1076	81.0
Pacific	41	3.1
Asian	111	8.4
Total	1330	

* The data for this variable may not match the overall total, or 100%, due to possible double selection of ethnicity.

Gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Female	707	52.5
Male	640	47.5
Total	1347	

Education

	Frequency	Percentage
No Formal Qualification	209	15.8
School Certificate	325	24.5
Trade or Diploma Certificate	386	29.2
Higher Education	404	30.5
Total	1324	

Household income quartiles

	Frequency	Percentage
\$0 - \$20000	93	8.3
\$20,001 - \$40,000	153	13.6
\$40,001 - \$70,000	247	22.0
\$70,000 - \$150,000+	628	56.0
Total	1121	

Employment

	Frequency	Percentage
Employed	874	66.5
Unemployed	104	7.9
Student/Retired	336	25.6
Total	1314	

Urban/rural index

	Frequency	Percentage
Major Urban	960	71.4
Minor Urban	190	14.2
Rural	194	14.4
Total	1345	

Region of origin

	Frequency	Percentage
New Zealand	1033	76.5
Australia	20	1.5
Europe	79	5.9
Other	218	16.1
Total	1347	

Region of residence

	Frequency	Percentage
Northland	49	3.7
Auckland	451	33.5
Waikato	112	8.3
Bay Of Plenty	90	6.7
Hawkes Bay / Gisborne	60	4.4
Taranaki / Wanganui	99	7.3
Wellington	149	11.0
Tasman / Nelson / Marlborough	67	5.0
Canterbury	173	12.9
Otago/Southland	96	7.2
Total	1347	

NZ Deprivation Index

	Frequency	Percentage
Q1 - Least deprived	303	22.7
Q2	285	21.3
Q3	264	19.8
Q4	241	18.0
Q5 - Most deprived	244	18.2
Total	1336	

Political leaning

	Frequency	Percentage
Left	224	16.6
Centre	595	44.1
Right	272	20.1
Can't Choose	259	19.2
Total	1350	

Results

Obeying the law

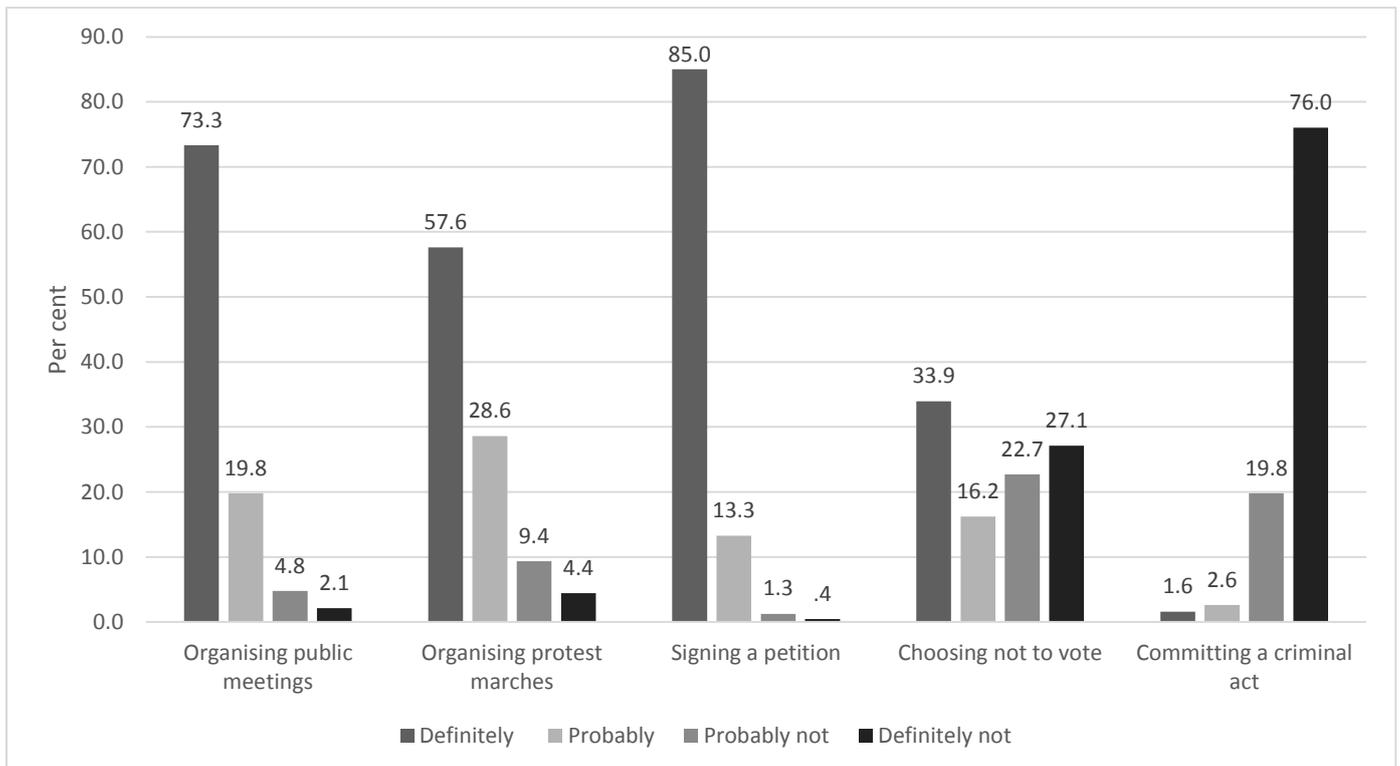
A1. Should people always obey the law, or are there exceptions?

	%	n
Obey the law without exception	33.5	427
Follow conscience on occasion	66.5	847

Around one third of respondents thought that people should obey the law without question, while just over two thirds of respondents thought that people should instead follow conscience on occasion. Around twice as many respondents thought there were special occasions on which people should follow their conscience.

Protesting against the government

A2: There are many ways people can protest against a government action they oppose. Which should be allowed?*



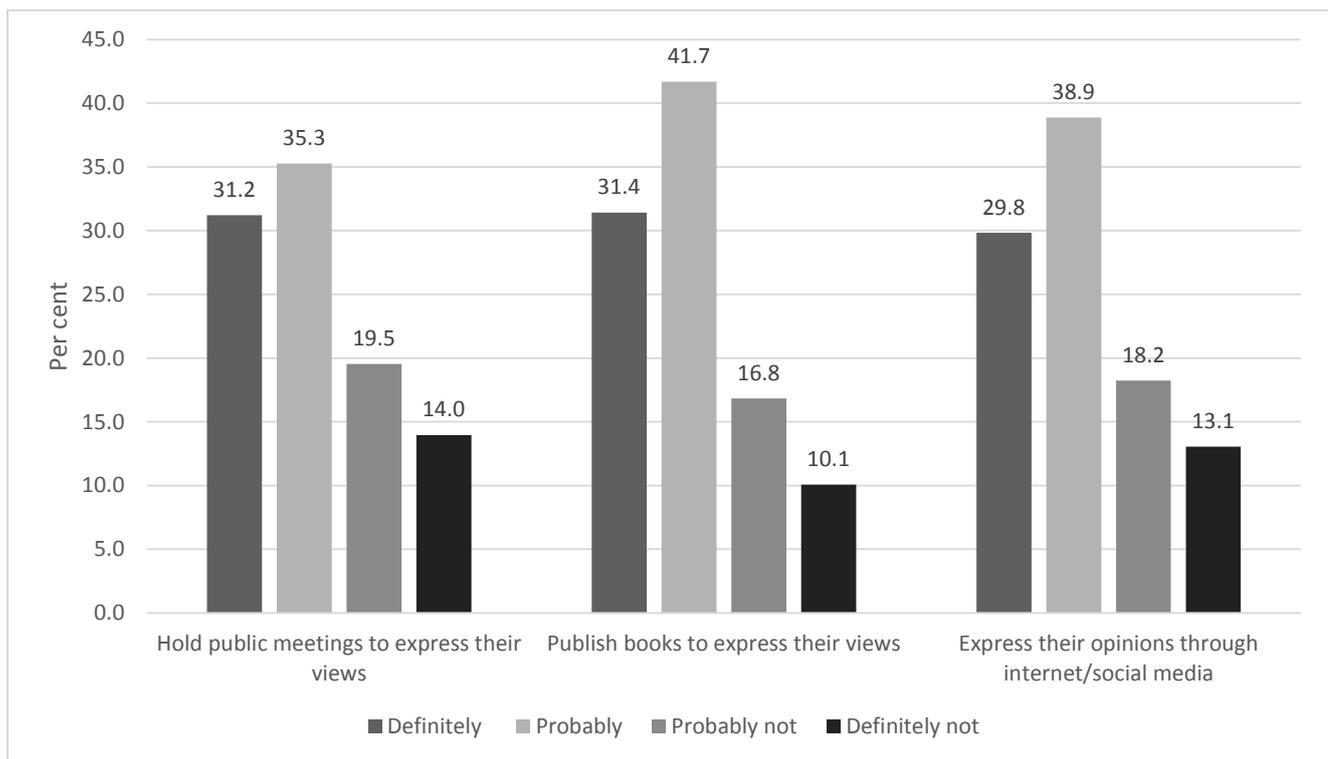
*'Can't choose' data omitted from figure.

Overall, the majority of respondents agreed that organising public meetings, organising protest marches, and signing petitions, should definitely be allowed when protesting against the government. Only small groups of respondents thought these activities should not be allowed.

Respondents were more divided on whether the government should allow choosing not to vote. Around a third thought that choosing not to vote should ‘definitely’ be allowed, and just under thirty percent thought that choosing not to vote should ‘definitely not’ be allowed. Overall, just over fifty percent thought this should be allowed and just under fifty percent thought it should not be.

Committing a criminal act was the least favourable action to protest against the government – around three quarters of respondents thought that committing a crime to protest against the government should ‘definitely not’ be allowed.

A3: Consider people who want to overthrow the government by revolution. Which should be allowed?*



*‘Can’t choose’ data omitted from figure.

The most respondents answered that people who want to overthrow the government by revolution should ‘probably’ be allowed to publish books expressing their views (forty-two percent), express their opinions online (thirty-nine percent), and hold public meetings (thirty-five percent).

Around thirty percent of respondents thought that people who want to overthrow the government by revolution should 'definitely' be allowed to hold public meetings to express their views, publish books to express their views, and express their opinions through the internet. Slightly more respondents thought people should not be able to hold public meetings to express their views.

Mistakes in systems of justice

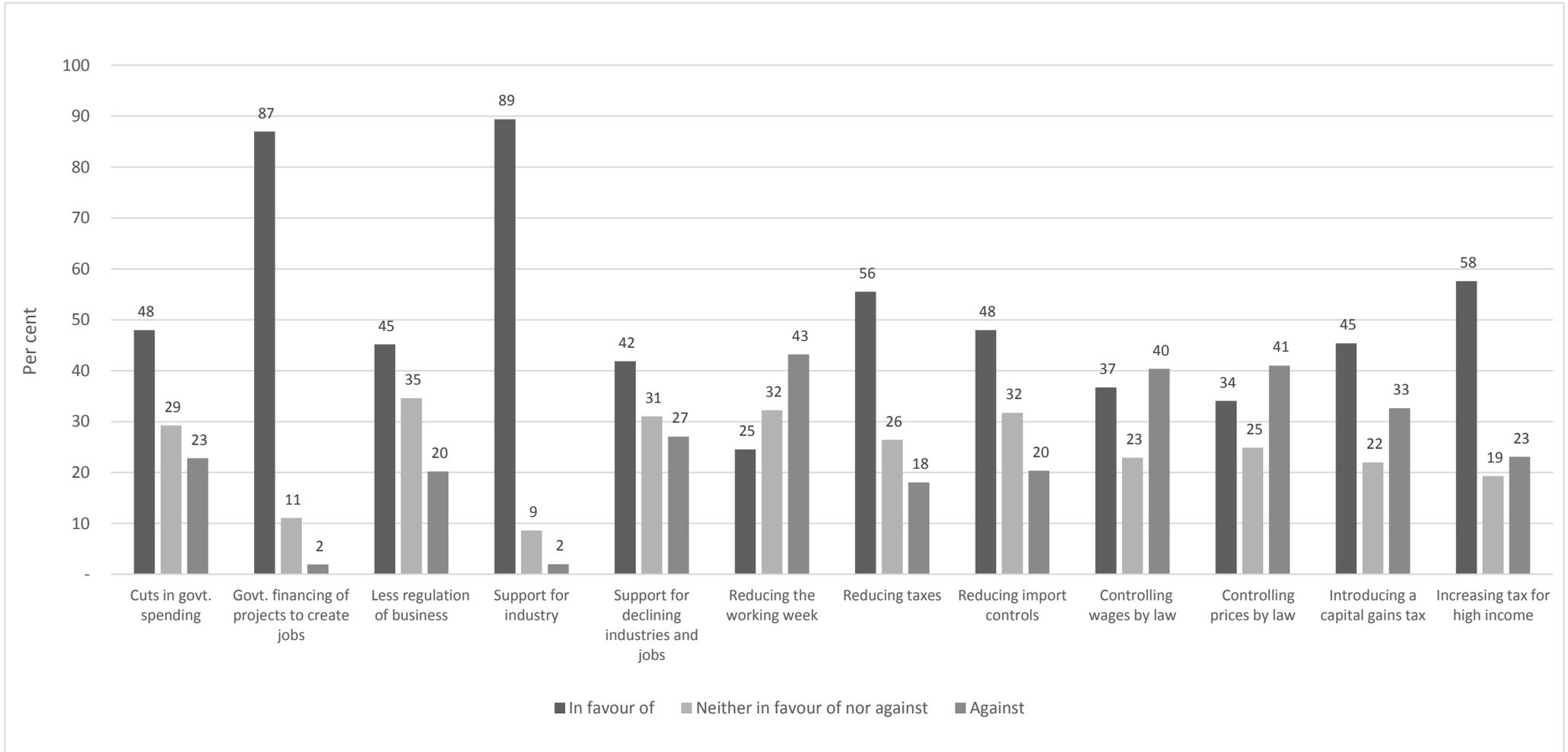
A4. All systems of justice make mistakes, but which do you think is worse?

	%	n
To convict an innocent person	71.8	785
To let a guilty person go free	28.2	309

Over twice as many respondents thought that accidentally convicting an innocent person was worse than accidentally letting a guilty person go free.

Opinions on actions the government might make

A5: 'Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Which actions are you in favour of?'



*'Can't choose' data omitted from figure. 'Strongly in favour of' and 'In favour of' responses from the original survey have been collapsed into 'In favour of', and 'Strongly against' and 'Against' responses have been collapsed into 'Against'.

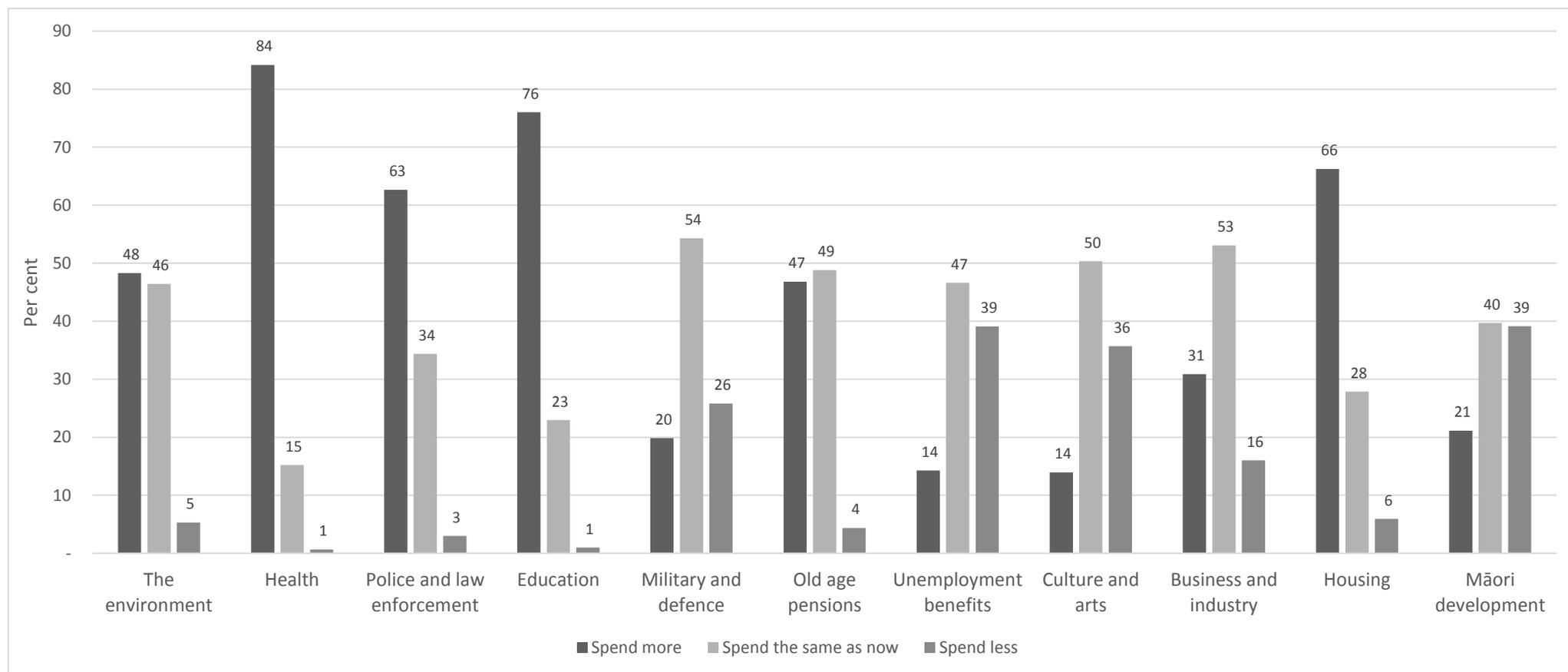
The actions that the respondents most favoured were the financing of projects to create jobs, and support for industry (both around ninety percent in favour). Following this, increasing tax for high income earners (fifty-eight percent) and reducing taxes in general (fifty-six percent) were quite strongly supported.

Just under half of the respondents were in favour of cuts in government spending (despite support for reducing taxes in general) and reducing import controls. Support for declining industries to support jobs, introducing a capital gains tax, and less regulation of business were less popular potential actions (around forty-five percent in favour).

The categories that were least favoured were reducing the working week to create jobs, and controlling wages and prices by law. A quarter of respondents were in favour of reducing the working week, and over forty percent were against the action. Likewise, around forty percent of respondents were against controlling wages and prices by law.

Opinions on areas of government spending

A6: 'Listed are various areas of government spending. Show whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area.'*



*'Can't choose' data omitted from figure. 'Spend much more' and 'Spend more' responses from the original survey have been collapsed into 'Spend more', and 'Spend much less' and 'Spend less' responses have been collapsed into 'Spend less'.

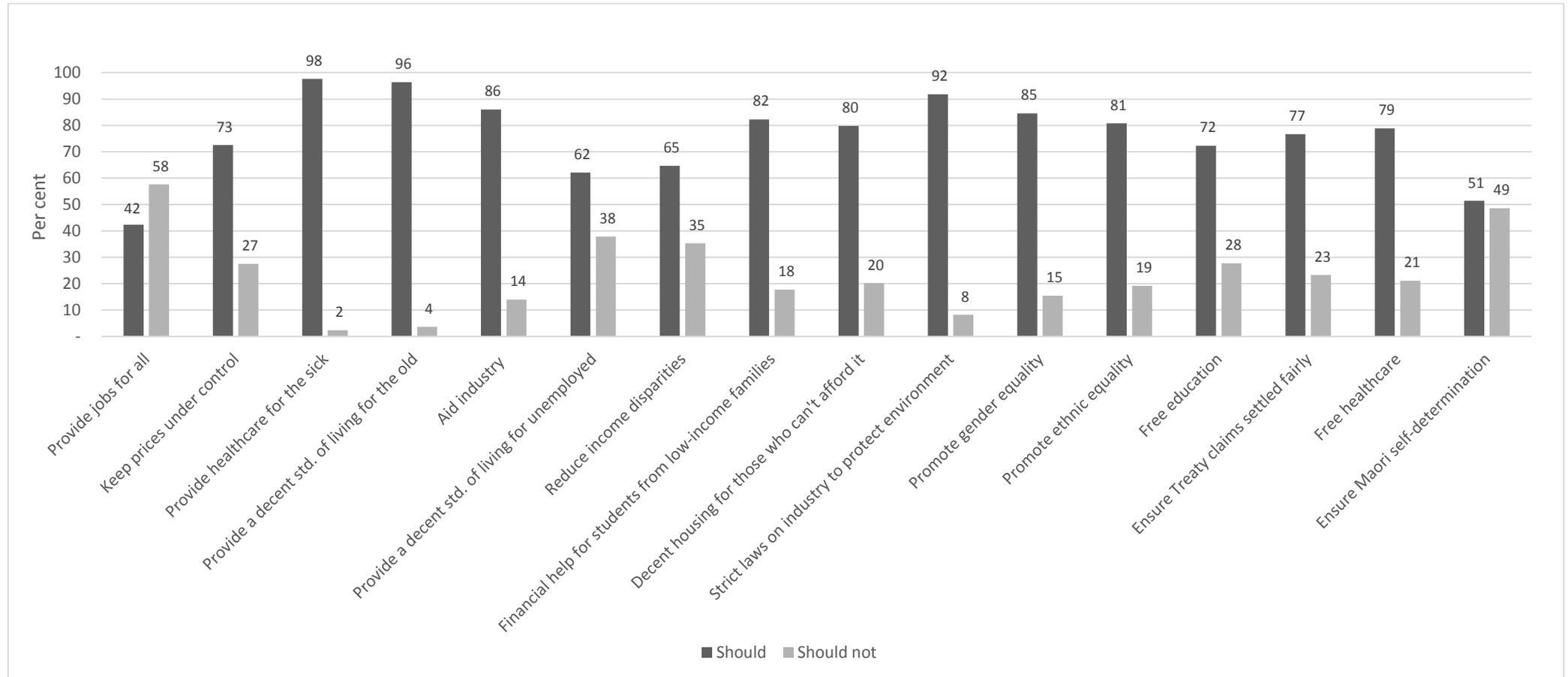
Regarding health, law enforcement, education and housing, a large majority of the respondents were in favour of spending more. Eighty-four percent of respondents thought more should be spent on health, around seventy-five percent thought the government should spend more on education, and over sixty percent of the respondents answered that the government should spend more on the law enforcement and housing.

Most of the respondents were in favour of spending the same amount as is being spent currently on military and defence, old age pensions, unemployment benefits, culture and arts, and business and industry. Within these groups, more respondents thought the government should increase spending on old age pensions and business and industry, rather than military and defence, unemployment benefits, and culture and the arts.

The responses for spending on Māori development and the environment were not so clearly defined by a majority. Forty-eight percent of the respondents were in favour of the government spending more on the environment, and forty-six percent thought the same should be spent as now. Similarly, forty percent thought the same should be spend on Māori development, and thirty-nine percent thought less should be spent.

Opinions on the responsibilities of the government

A7: Should it or should it not be the government's responsibility to:*



*'Can't choose' data omitted from figure. 'Definitely should' and 'Probably should' responses from the original survey have been collapsed into 'Should', and 'Definitely should not' and 'Probably should not' responses have been collapsed into 'Should not'.

Of all the categories, the most respondents agreed that the government had a responsibility to provide health care for the sick (ninety-eight percent), provide a decent standard of living for the old (ninety-six percent), and impose strict laws on industry to protect the environment (ninety-two percent). This is likely associated with the fact that the majority of respondents thought the government could be spending more on the environment, health and housing (seen in A6). Around eighty-five percent also thought the government should be providing industry with the help it needs to grow, and promoting gender equality.

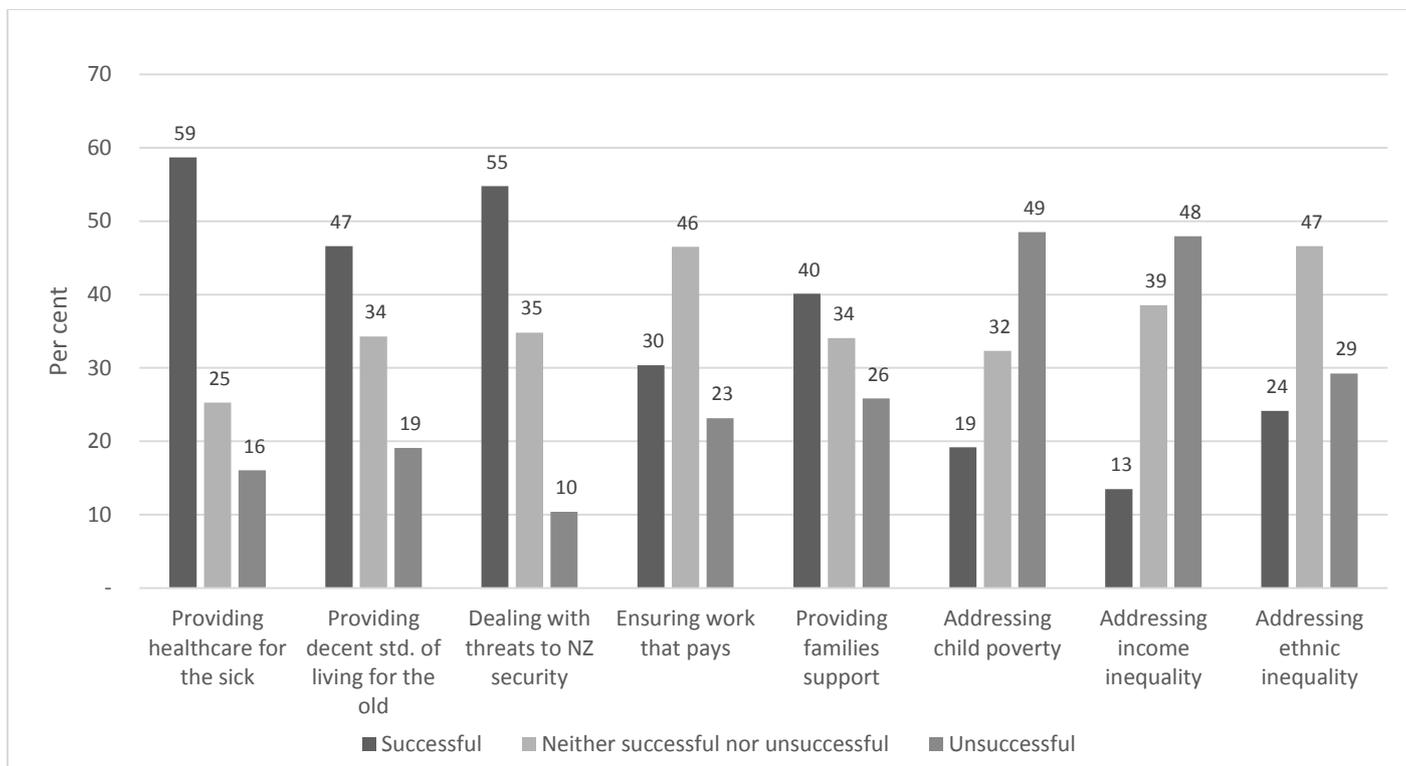
Around eighty percent of respondents thought the government should be providing financial help to university students from low income families, providing decent housing for those who cannot afford it, providing free healthcare, and promoting ethnic equality.

Around three quarters of the respondents thought the government should be keeping prices under control, providing free education from pre-school through to tertiary and university levels, and ensuring that Treaty of Waitangi claims are settled fairly. However, fewer respondents thought the government should be providing a decent standard of living for the unemployed (sixty-two percent), and reducing income differences between the rich and the poor (sixty-five percent). Fewer respondents thought the government should be providing a decent standard of living for the unemployed than for the old.

The only category where the majority of respondents thought the government should *not* be responsible was providing a job for everyone who wants one - around sixty percent thought the government should *not* have responsibility for this. Governmental responsibility for ensuring Māori have opportunities to achieve greater levels of self-determination over all things Māori was contentious; fifty-one percent thought the government should be responsible for this, and forty-nine percent thought they should not.

Perceptions on how successful the government is

A8: How successful is the government in the following areas?*



*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure. 'Very successful' and 'Quite successful' responses from the original survey have been collapsed into 'Successful', and 'Very unsuccessful' and 'Quite unsuccessful' responses have been collapsed into 'Unsuccessful'.

Perceived areas of success for the government included providing healthcare for the sick (around sixty percent) and dealing with threats to New Zealand's security (fifty-five percent). Fewer respondents (forty-seven percent) thought the government was successful at providing a decent standard of living for the old. Even fewer (forty percent) thought the government was successful at providing families with the support they need.

Just under half of the respondents thought the government was neither successful nor unsuccessful in ensuring work that pays, and addressing ethnic inequality. Slightly *more* respondents thought the government was successful at ensuring work that pays, and slightly *fewer* thought the government was successful at addressing ethnic inequality.

The government was perceived to be the most *unsuccessful* at addressing income equality and child poverty. Almost half of the respondents thought the government was unsuccessful at addressing child poverty, and just under a fifth of respondents thought they were successful at this. Even fewer respondents thought the government was successful at addressing income inequality (less than fifteen percent).

A9: Who should be providing services in New Zealand?*

	Healthcare for the sick (n=1290)		Care for older people (n=1250)		School education for children (n=1306)		Prison services (n=1274)	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Government	92.9	1198	71.1	889	92.6	1210	81.3	1035
Private companies/for profit organisations	2.5	32	8.3	104	1.8	24	14.6	185
Non-profit organisations/charities	2.7	35	9.0	112	1.6	20	3.5	44
Religious organisations	.2	2	.1	1	.3	4	.7	9
Family, friends, relatives	1.7	22	11.5	144	3.7	49	0	0

*Can't choose data omitted from this table.

Overall, respondents thought the government should provide all these services. Over ninety percent of respondents thought that the government should be responsible for providing health care for the sick, and providing school education for children. Very small numbers of respondents (around two percent) thought private companies, non-profit organisations or family and relatives should be responsible for providing these.

Just over eighty percent of respondents thought the government should primarily be providing prison services, and just under fifteen percent thought private companies should be providing this.

Around seventy percent of the respondents thought that the government should primarily provide care for older people. Just over ten percent thought this responsibility should lie with family, relatives and friends; just under ten percent thought that non-profit organisations or charities should provide this; and just under ten percent again thought private companies should be responsible for this. Less than one percent of the respondents thought that religious organisations should be responsible for providing services, in all of the categories.

Privatisation measures

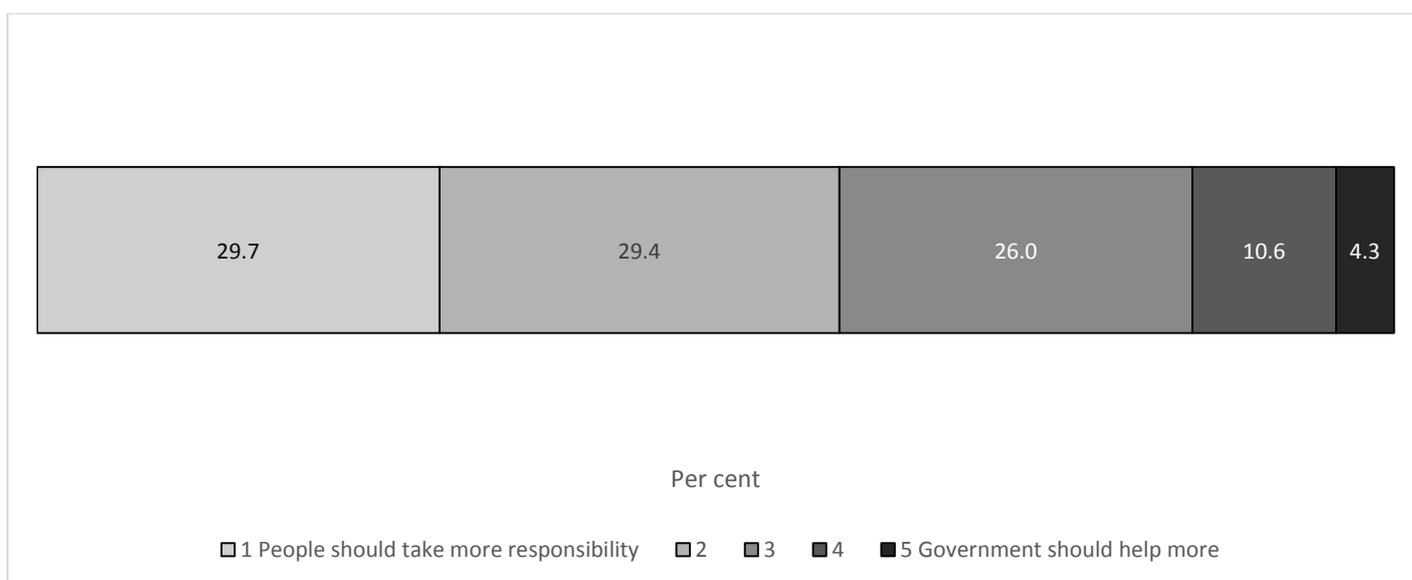
A10 and A11: Which of these are appropriate for New Zealand?*

	A10: Social impact bonds to fund services (n=1207)		A11: Transfer of state housing stock to NGOs to manage social housing (n=1273)	
	%	n	%	n
Yes	10.1	122	13.2	168
Maybe	59.4	717	46.3	590
No	30.5	368	40.5	515

*'Don't know' data omitted from table.

The majority of the respondents (around sixty percent) thought that the use of social impact bonds may be appropriate in some circumstances and depended on the services that were funded. Just under fifty percent of respondents also thought the transfer of state housing stock to non-government agencies was 'maybe appropriate - it depends on which agencies are used and / or which state housing is transferred'. Around ten percent of respondents in each group thought the actions were appropriate. Almost ten percent more respondents thought transferring state housing stock was not appropriate, compared to trialling social impact bonds.

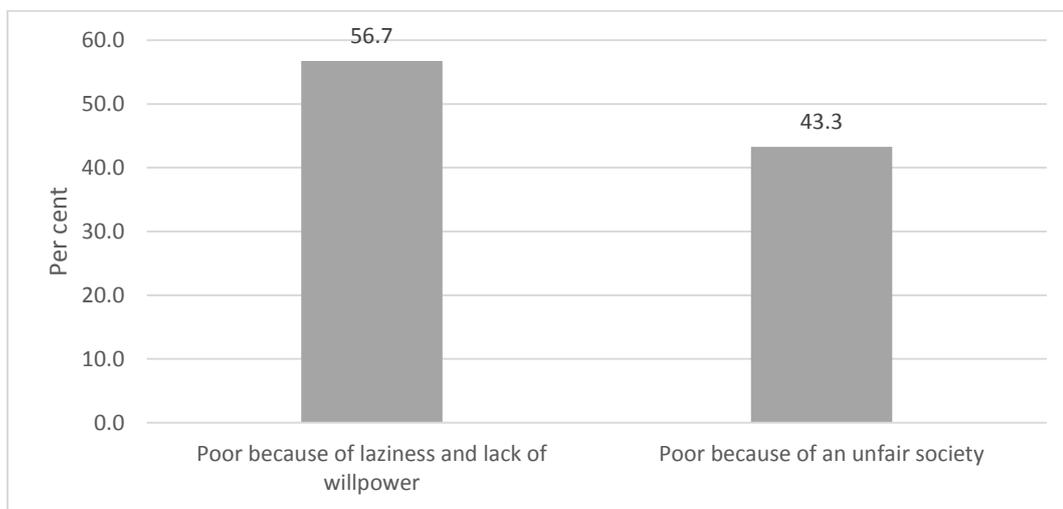
A12: 'People should take more responsibility for themselves' or 'The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for', 5-point scale, percentage*



*'Can't decide' data omitted from figure. Converted from 10-pt scale.

More respondents thought that people should take responsibility for themselves, as opposed to the government taking more responsibility to ensure everyone is cared for. Around sixty percent placed themselves on the left of the scale, indicating they thought people should take more responsibility for themselves (groups '1' and '2'), and only around fifteen percent thought the government should take more responsibility (groups '4' and '5'). Many of the respondents also placed themselves in the middle of the scale, with around a quarter of the respondents grouped into '3'.

A13: Why are there people in New Zealand who live in need?*



*Neither of these / don't know' data omitted from figure.

Almost sixty percent of respondents thought that those in New Zealand who live in need are poor because of laziness and lack of willpower. Just over forty percent thought people in New Zealand were poor because of an unfair society.

A14 and A15: Is it appropriate to...*

	A14: Require work-related obligations for working age beneficiaries with financial penalties (n=1268)		A15: Require social obligations and financial penalties for those on the benefit with children (n=1302)	
	%	n	%	n
Yes	44.9	569	56.0	729
Maybe	47.5	602	34.9	455
No	7.6	97	9.1	118

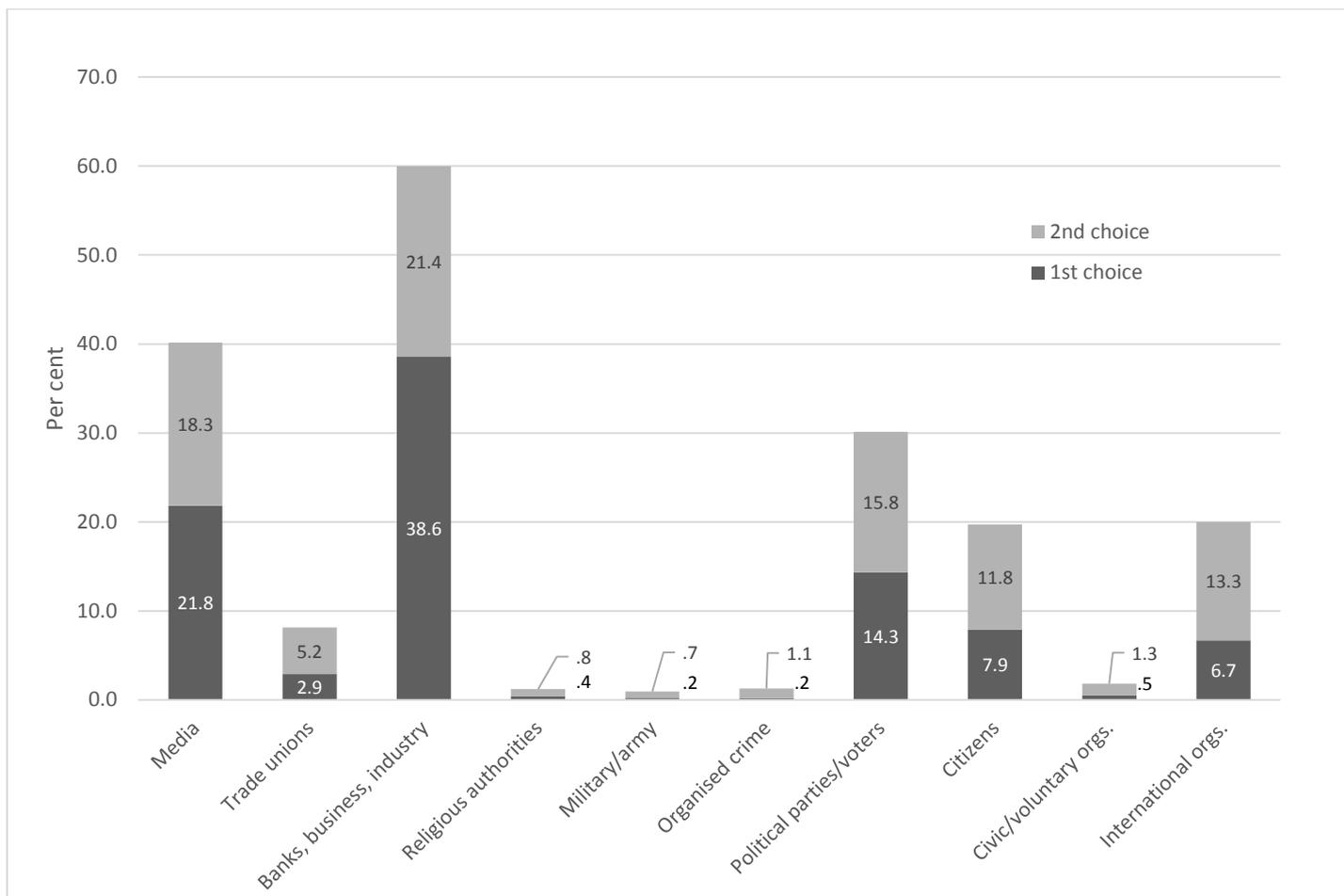
*'Don't know' data omitted from table.

Almost half of the respondents were unsure about the government requiring working age benefit recipients to meet *work-related* obligations with financial penalties for non-compliance (the response of 'maybe - depends on the circumstances'). However, a similar number of respondents thought this action was appropriate (forty-five percent). Under ten percent answered that they thought this was inappropriate for the government to require.

Over half of the respondents thought that it was appropriate for the government to require benefit recipients with children to meet *social* obligations with financial penalties for non-compliance. Fewer respondents were unsure about this question compared to the previous question – only around a third of the respondents answered 'maybe – it depends on the circumstances'. Again, under ten percent thought that it was inappropriate for the government to require this.

Factors with perceived influence on the actions of the government

A16: Which people and organisations have the most influence on the actions of the New Zealand government? First and second choice:*



*Data does not add up to 100% as 'Can't choose' data was omitted from this figure.

The majority of respondents chose banks, businesses and industry as their first and second choice of institutions that they felt have the most influence on the actions of the New Zealand government. Respondents also felt the media had some influence over the actions of the government.

Respondents also thought the parties in government, and the people who vote for them, had influence over government decisions. Very few respondents (less than one percent) chose religious authorities, military and army, civic and voluntary organisations, and organised crime as either their first or second choice.

A17: Here are two opinions about what affects policies in New Zealand. Which of them comes closest to your view?* (n=1150)

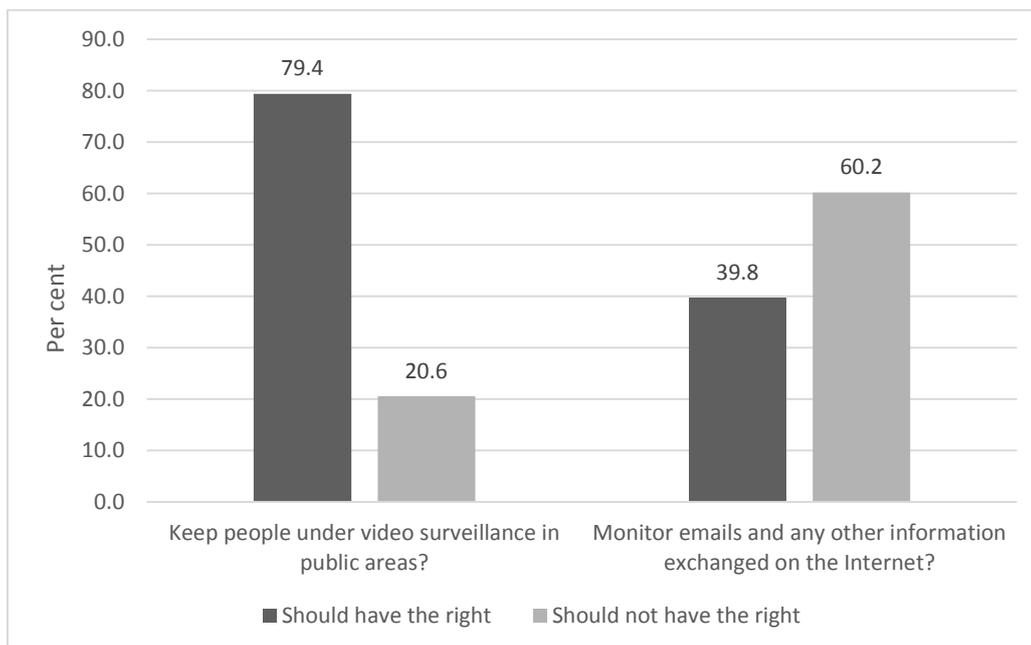
	%	n
Policies in New Zealand depend more on what is happening in the world economy	33.4	385
Policies in New Zealand depend more on who is in government	66.6	766

*'Can't choose' data omitted from this table.

Two thirds of the respondents thought policies in New Zealand depend more on who is in government, rather than what is happening in the world economy.

Rights of the government

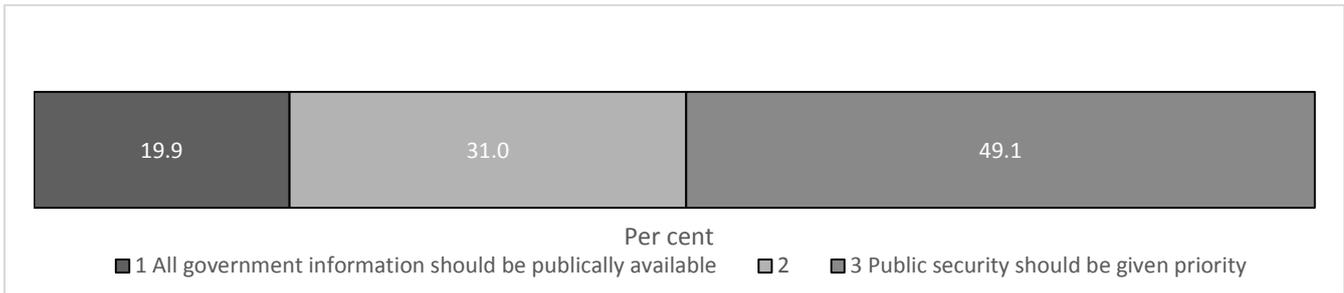
A18: Do you think the government should/should not have the right to do the following:*



*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure.

Eighty percent of the respondents thought the government should have the right to keep people under video surveillance in public areas. However, most of the respondents (sixty percent) also thought the government should not have the right to monitor emails and other information exchanged on the internet.

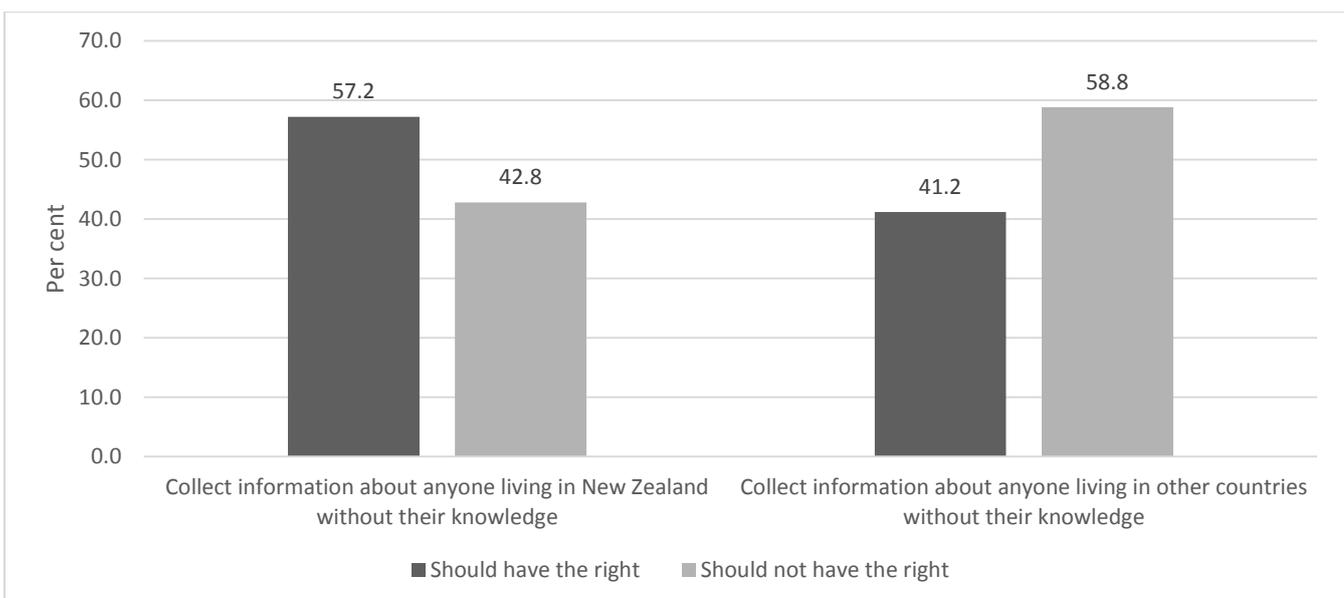
A19: 'All government information should be publicly available, even if this meant a risk to public security' to 'Public security should be given priority, even if this meant limiting access to government information', 3-point scale, percentage*



*Can't decide' data omitted from figure. Converted from 11-pt scale, 1 representing 0 - 3, 2 representing 4 - 6, 3 representing 7 - 10.

Almost fifty percent of the respondents were in favour of public security being given priority, even if this meant limiting access to government information. Around thirty percent were in the middle, half way between the opinion that all government information should be publicly available, and the opinion that public security should be given priority. Around twenty percent placed themselves to the left of the scale, indicating their preference for all government information being publicly available.

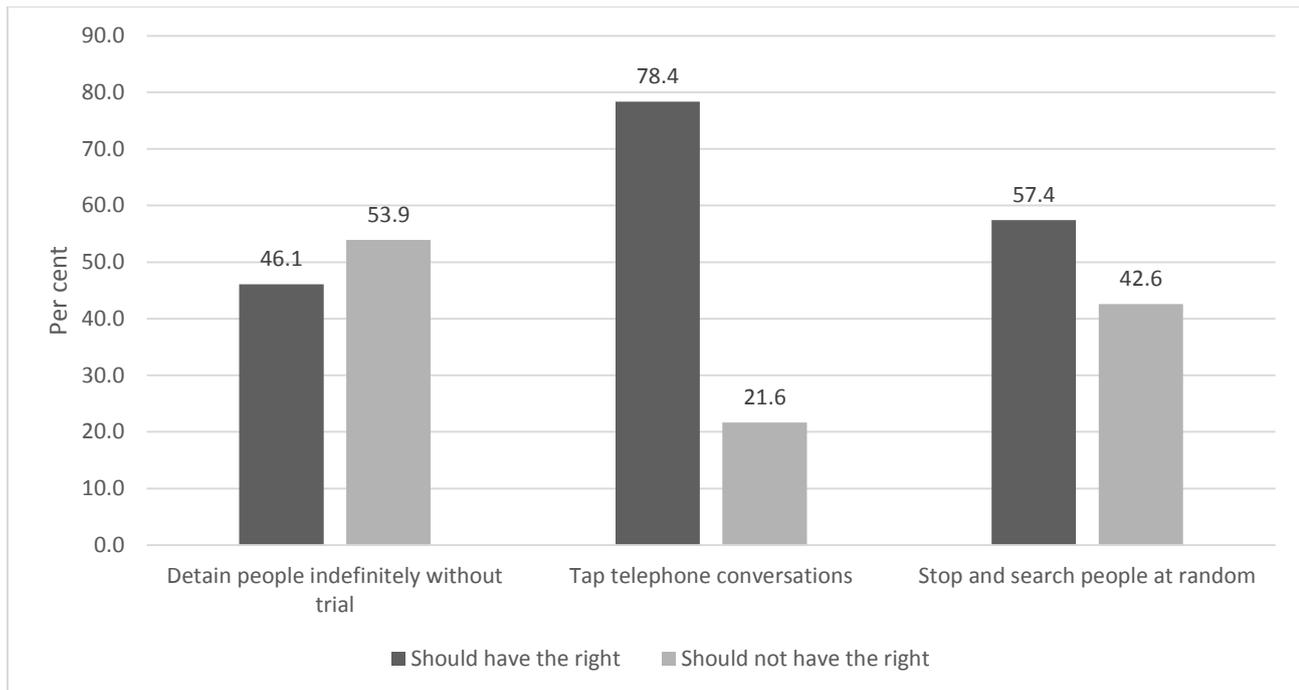
A20: Do you think the government should/should not have the right to do the following in the name of national security:*



*Can't choose' data omitted from this figure. 'Definitely should have the right' and 'Probably should have the right' collapsed into 'Should have the right', 'Probably should not have the right' and 'Definitely should not have the right' collapsed into 'Should not have the right'.

Almost sixty percent of the respondents thought the government should have the right to collect information on New Zealanders. Conversely, almost sixty percent of respondents also thought the government *not* have the right to collect information about anyone living in other countries without their knowledge.

A21: If the government suspected a terrorist attack, should the authorities have the right to:*

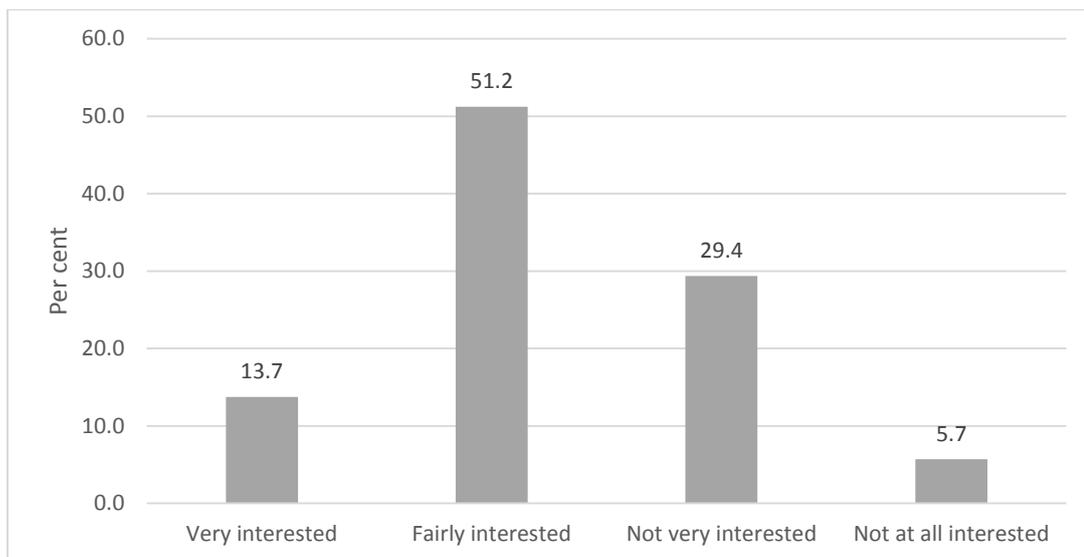


*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure. 'Definitely should have the right' and 'Probably should have the right' collapsed into 'Should have the right', 'Probably should not have the right' and 'Definitely should not have the right' collapsed into 'Should not have the right'.

Almost eighty percent of respondents thought the government should have the right to tap people's telephone conversations should they suspect a terrorist attack, and almost sixty percent thought the government should have the right to stop and people in the street at random if they suspected a terrorist attack. Just over half of the respondents thought the government should *not* have a right to detain people for as long as they want without putting them on trial should they suspect a terrorist attack.

Political efficacy

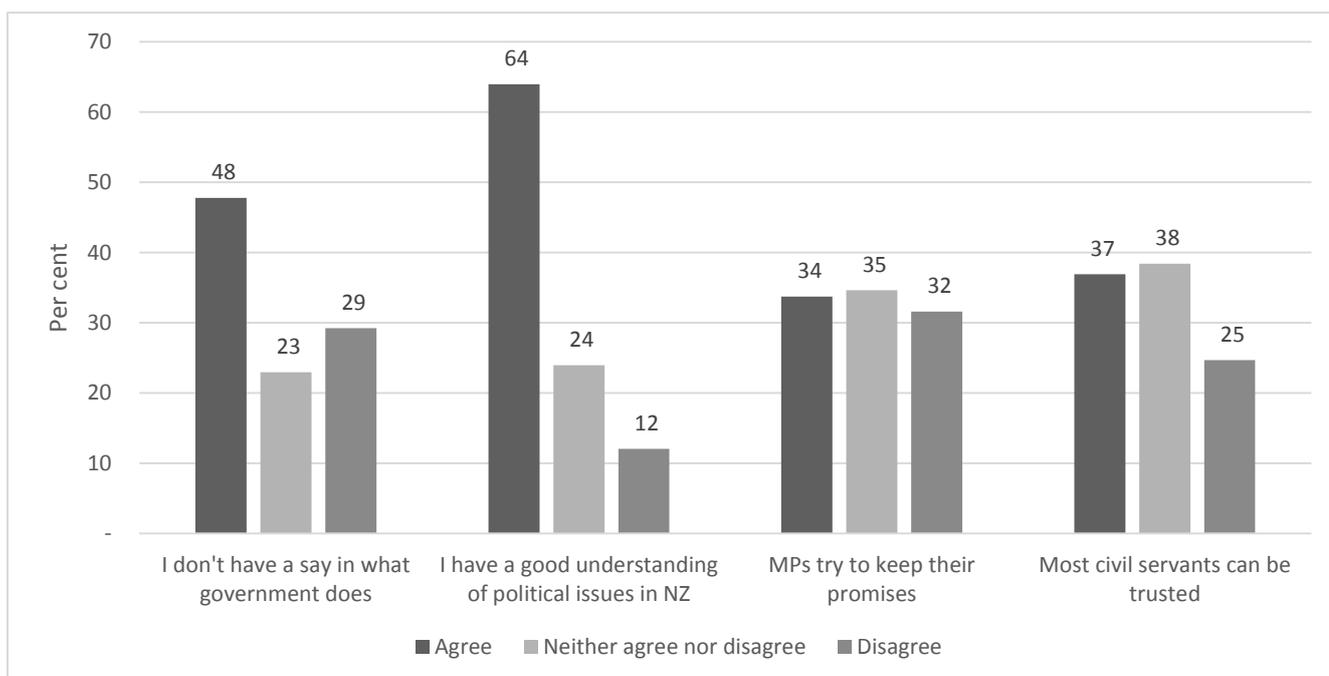
A22. How interested are you personally in politics?*



*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure.

Just over half of the respondents reported they were 'fairly interested' in politics. Around thirty percent were 'not very interested', and only around fourteen percent reported being very interested in politics.

A23: 'How much do you agree/disagree with these statements?'



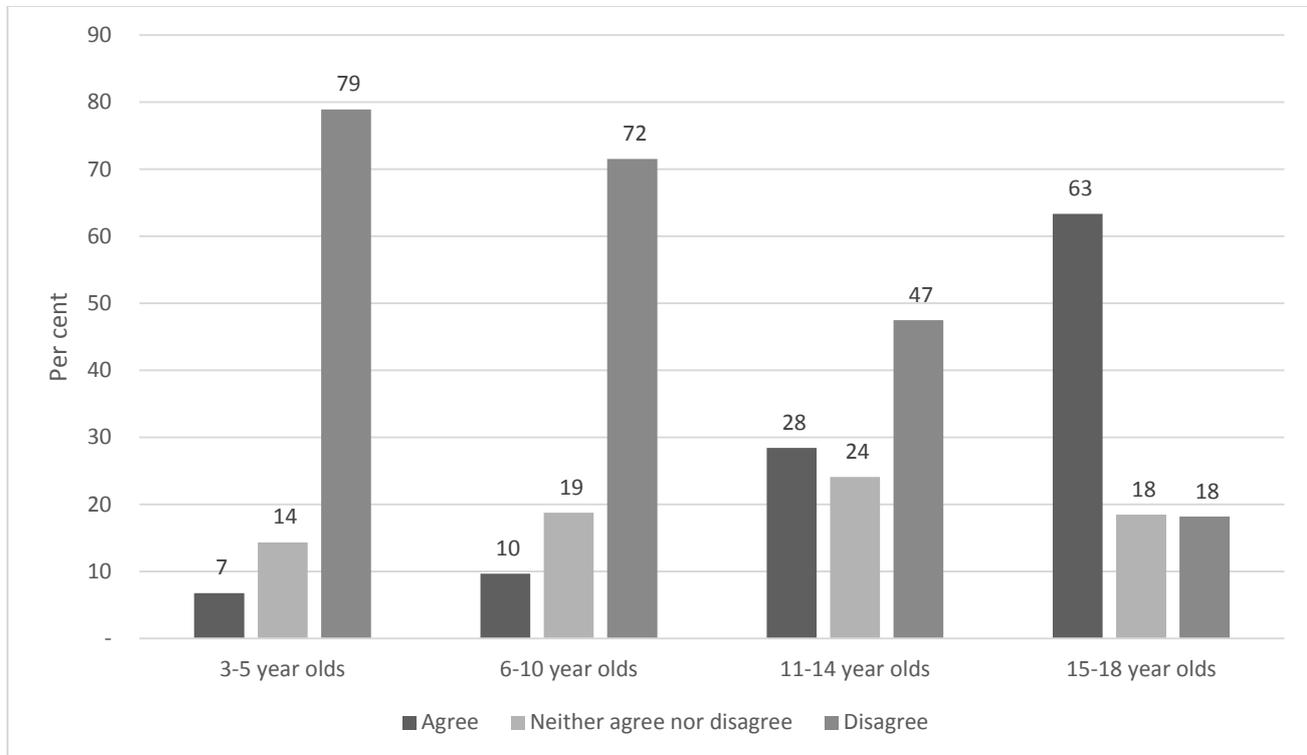
*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure. 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree' responses from the original survey have been collapsed into 'Agree', and 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree' responses have been collapsed into 'Disagree'.

Over sixty percent of respondents agreed that they felt they had a good understanding of the important political issues facing New Zealand, but almost half of the respondents also agreed that 'people like them don't have any say about what the government does'.

Roughly equal numbers of respondents agreed, neither disagreed nor agreed, and disagreed that people they elect as MPs try to keep the promises they have made during the election. Almost forty percent of the respondents agreed, and neither disagreed nor agreed that most civil servants can be trusted to do what is best for the country. A quarter of the respondents disagreed that most civil servants can be trusted to do what is best for the country.

The role of children in influencing government decisions

A24: 'How much do you agree/disagree with children and youth having opportunities to influence government decisions?'



*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure. 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree' responses from the original survey have been collapsed into 'Agree', and 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree' responses have been collapsed into 'Disagree'.

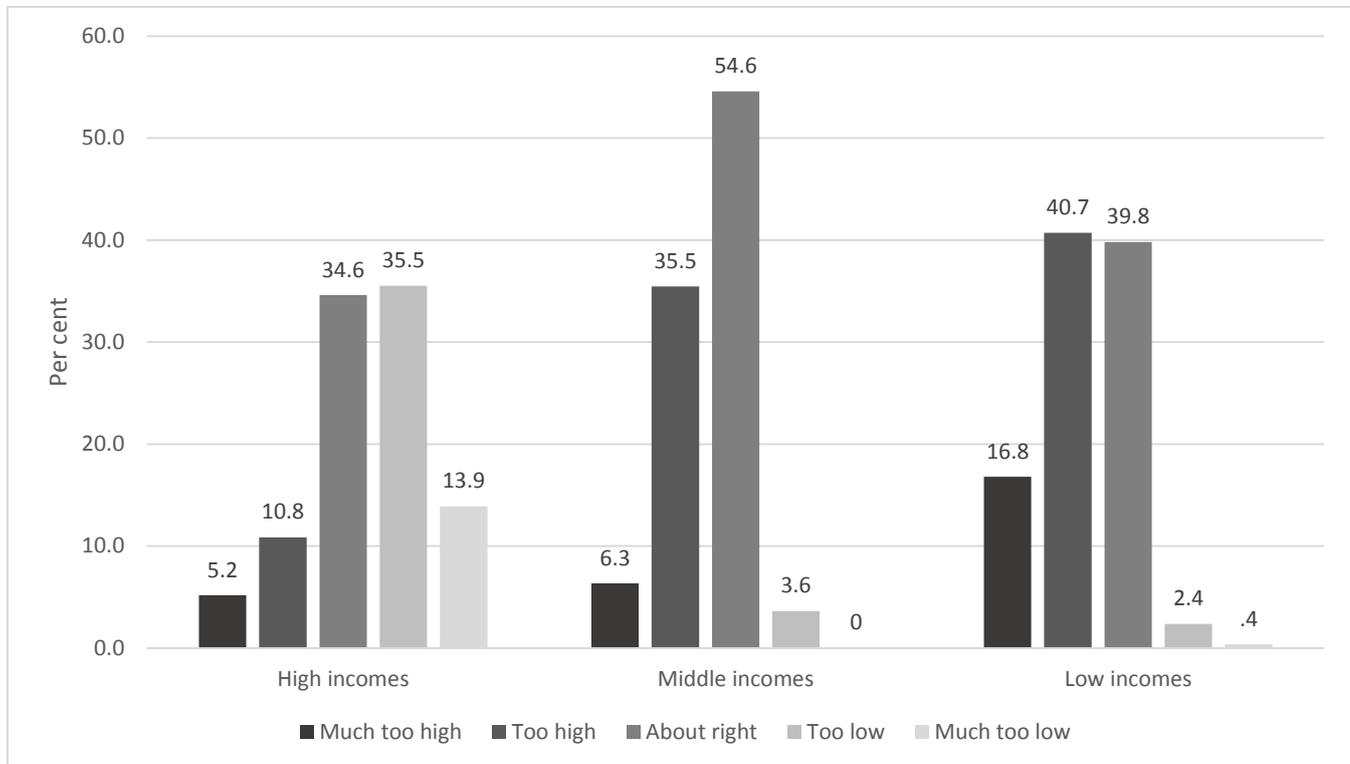
Generally, more respondents agreed that older children should have opportunities to influence government decisions. Almost eighty percent of the respondents disagreed that three to five year olds should have opportunities to influence government decisions, and around seventy percent also disagreed that six to ten year olds should have opportunities to influence government decisions.

Just under fifty percent disagreed with eleven to fourteen year olds having opportunities to influence government decisions. Slightly more people agreed with this (twenty-nine percent) than those who neither agreed nor disagreed (twenty-four percent).

Finally, over sixty percent of the respondents *agreed* that fifteen to eighteen year olds should have opportunities to influence government decisions. Almost twenty percent disagreed with this.

Taxes in New Zealand

A25: Generally, how would you describe taxes in New Zealand today for high incomes, middle incomes and low incomes?*

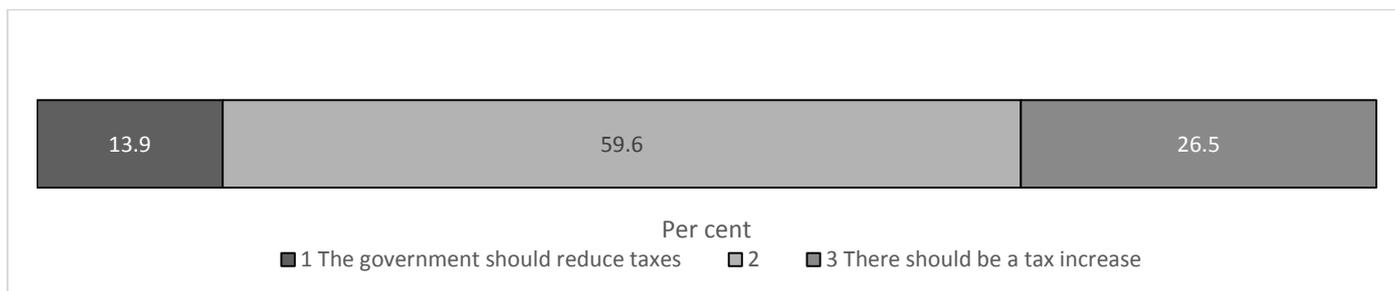


* 'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure.

Over a third of the respondents thought that for those with high incomes, taxes were too low, and almost fifteen percent thought they were much too low (around fifty percent total). Around thirty-five percent of respondents thought they were about right and only around fifteen percent thought they were too high. This aligns with data from A5, where almost sixty percent of respondents thought those with high incomes should pay more tax.

For those with middle incomes, over half of the respondents answered that tax rates were about right, and a total of around forty percent thought they were too high. For those with low incomes, over fifty percent thought that tax rates were too high, however another forty percent thought they were about right. Almost none of the respondents answered that the tax rates were much too low for those with middle or low incomes.

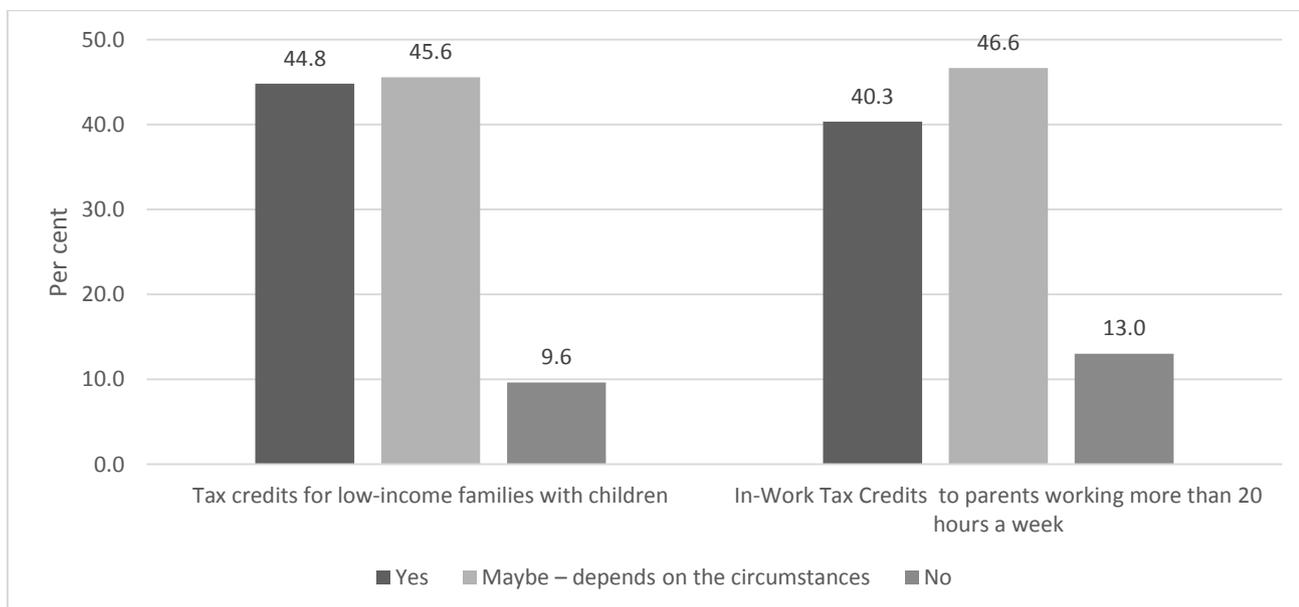
A26: 'The government should reduce taxes and people should pay more for their own health and education', to 'There should be a tax increase so the government can spend more money', 7-point scale, percentage*



*'Can't decide' data omitted from figure. Converted from 7-pt scale, 1 representing 1 - 3, 2 representing 4 - 5, 3 representing 6 - 7.

Almost sixty percent of respondents were caught between the view that the government should reduce taxes and people should pay more for their own health, and the view there should be a tax increase so the government can spend more money. More respondents placed themselves to the right of the scale than to the left, indicating they thought there should be a tax increase.

A27, A28: Do you think these tax credit systems are appropriate to assist families?*

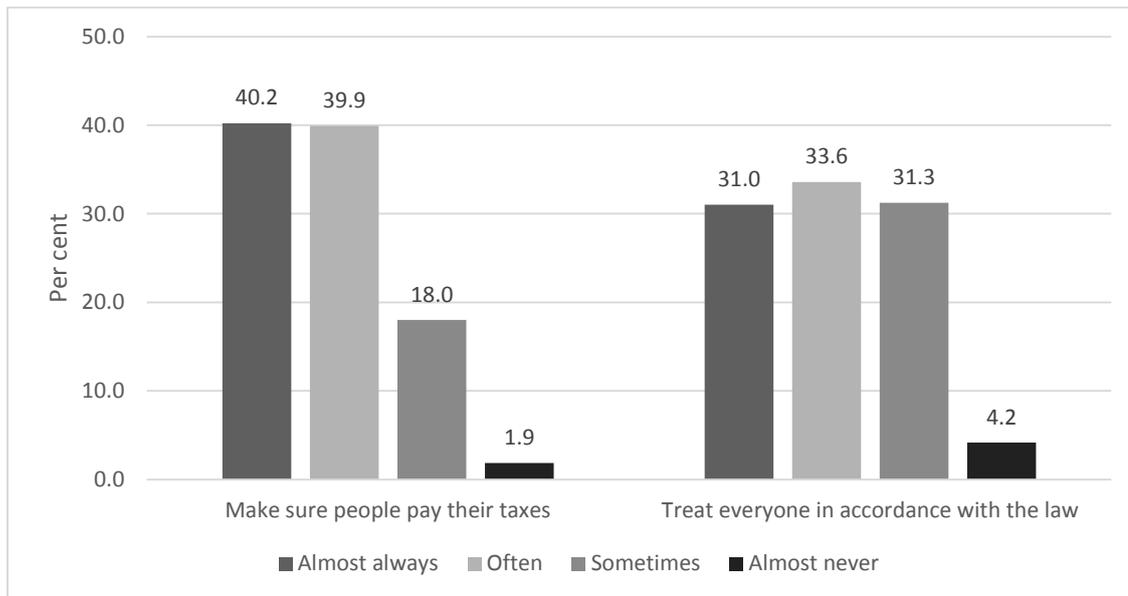


*'Don't know' data omitted from figure.

Around forty-five percent of the respondents thought it was appropriate for the government to provide tax credits to families with children with low-to-middle incomes, and a similar number answered 'maybe – depends on the circumstances'. Only around ten percent thought this was not an appropriate way to assist families.

Similarly, almost half of the respondents were not sure if it was appropriate for the government to pay the in-work tax credit paid to families with children where the parent is working more than twenty hours a week, answering ‘maybe – depends on the circumstances’. Around forty percent thought that this action was appropriate, and thirteen percent thought it was not.

A29: How often do you think the tax authorities do the following:*

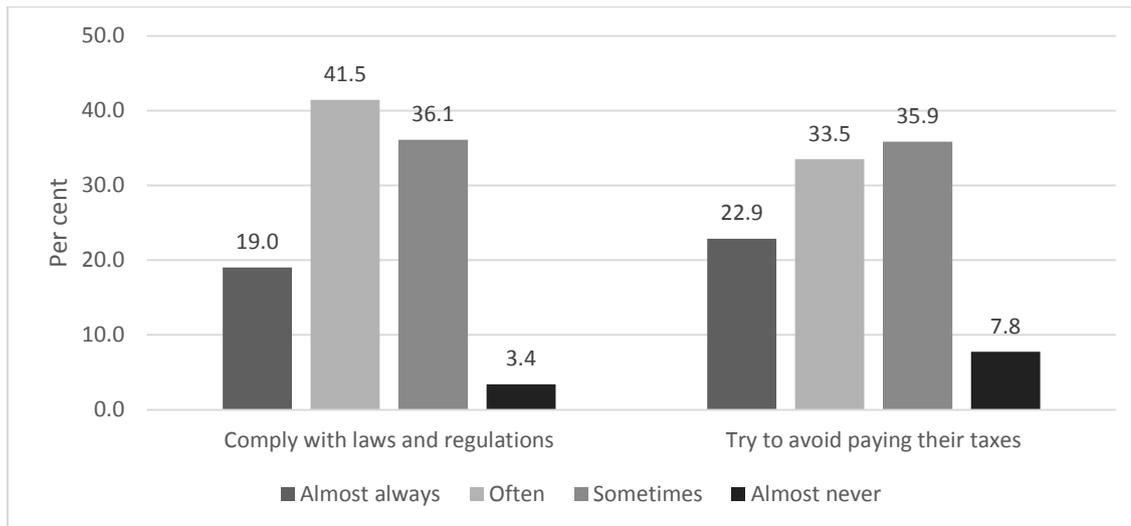


*'Can't choose' data omitted from figure.

Around forty percent of the respondents thought the tax authorities in New Zealand ‘almost always’ made sure people paid their taxes, and another forty percent also thought they only ‘often’ made people pay their taxes. Eighteen percent of the respondents thought the tax authorities ‘sometimes’ made people pay their taxes.

Most of the respondents answered that the tax authorities ‘often’ treat everyone in accordance with the law, regardless of their contacts or position in society, however the responses were very similar across ‘almost always’, ‘often’ and ‘sometimes’ for this question. Less than five percent thought the tax authorities ‘almost never’ treated everyone in accordance with the law.

A30: How often do you think major private companies do the following:*



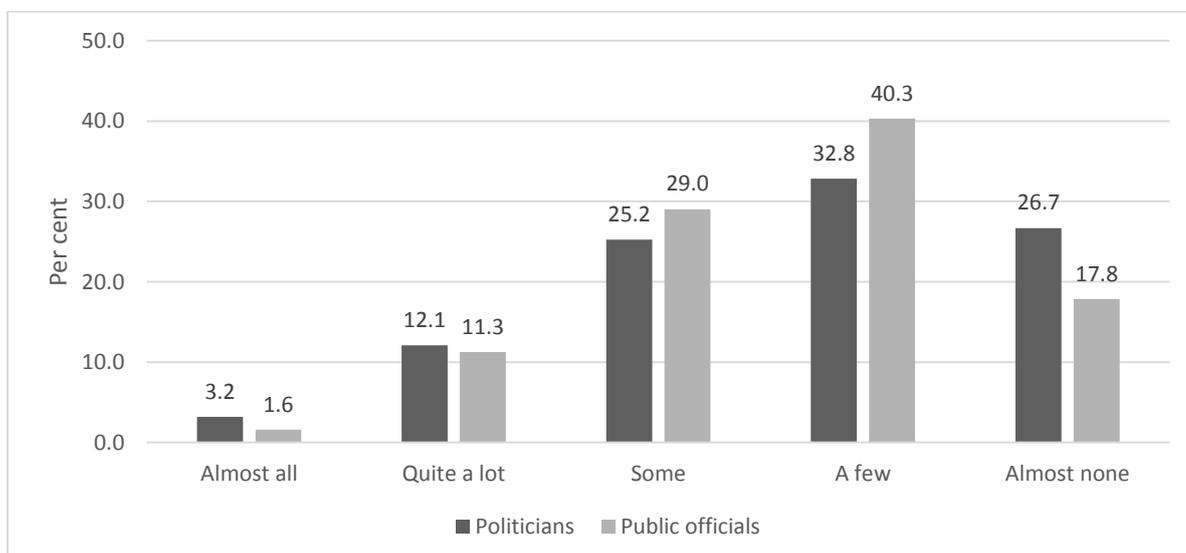
*'Can't choose' data omitted from figure.

Just over forty percent of the respondents thought that major private companies 'often' comply with laws and regulations, and around thirty-five percent responded that major private companies 'sometimes' do this. Only around twenty percent thought major private companies 'almost always' comply with laws.

Around a third of respondents answered that major private companies 'sometimes' try to avoid paying their taxes, and another third of the respondents thought they 'often' tried to avoid paying their taxes. Just over twenty percent thought they 'almost always' tried to avoid paying taxes.

Corruption

A31, A32: How many Politicians and Public Officials in New Zealand are involved in corruption?*

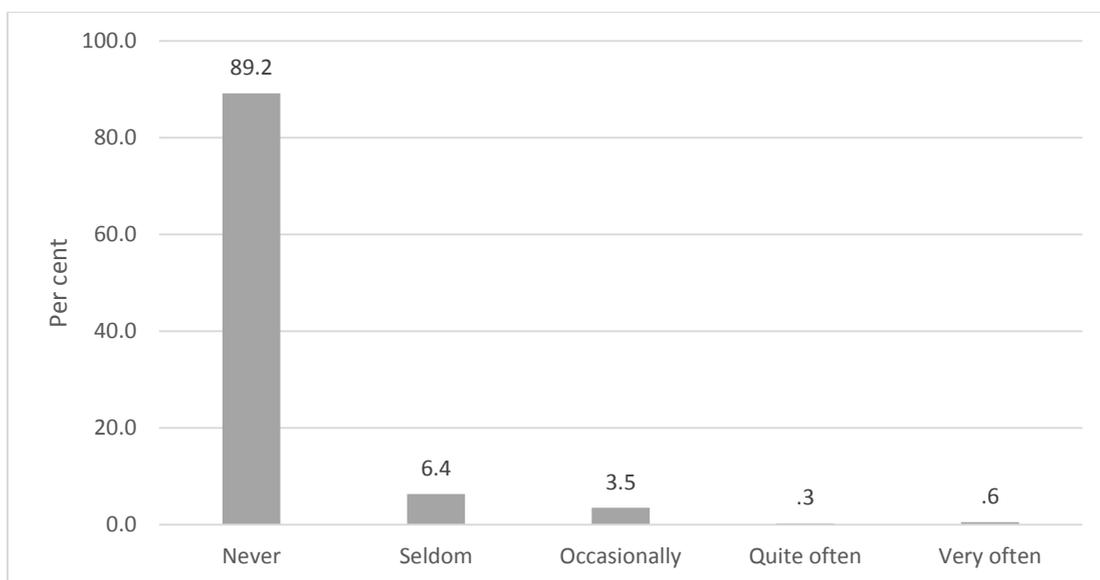


*'Can't choose' data omitted from this figure.

Just over twenty-five percent of respondents thought ‘almost none’ of the politicians in New Zealand were involved in corruption. However, twenty-five percent thought ‘some’ politicians were, and around thirty percent thought ‘a few’ politicians were. Most of the respondents seemed to think at least a few politicians were involved in corruption.

This pattern is similar for public officials³⁵ – however, fewer respondents thought that ‘almost no’ public officials were involved in corruption compared to politicians, and more respondents thought that ‘a few’ were (around forty percent). Marginally fewer people thought ‘almost all’ public officials were involved in corruption compared to politicians.

A33: How often have you, or your family, come across a public official who hinted they wanted a bribe or favour in return for a service?*



*‘Can’t choose’ data omitted from this figure.

Almost ninety percent of respondents reported that they and their immediate family had never come across a public official who hinted they wanted, or asked for, a bribe or favour in return for a service.

References

Wu, I., & Milne, B. (2017). *Methods and Procedures for the 2016 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) for New Zealand*. Unpublished manuscript.