



## A team of five million? : the 2020 'COVID-19' New Zealand general election /

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editor.

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New Zealand was one of a handful of countries that held a national election in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Its policy response stood out as remarkably successful. Indeed, several years on from the onset of the crisis, in 2023 New Zealand still retained a record of no excess deaths. While New Zealanders were voting on October 17, 2020, their country had only recorded 25 confirmed deaths out of a population of five million. Then, support for the government's crisis management was at its height. Labour, the leading party in the incumbent coalition government, secured a historic election victory. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern had taken up the metaphor of the New Zealand people as 'a team of five million' facing the COVID-19 threat together. This book seeks to explain the success of the government's strategy through an analysis of the election campaign and outcome. The authors also address the limits of this approach and the extent to which some voters felt alienated rather than connected with the 'team'. The election outcome was a big short-term swing of the electoral pendulum. It did not generate a reset of the party system. Three years on, as the 2023 election loomed into sight, the party system looked much as it did prior to the pandemic and Labour's success in 2020 was about to be dramatically reversed

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