

Economic issues are the most important problems facing New Zealand as the country heads towards a September election

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Less than four months before New Zealand heads to a national election, economic issues are clearly the most important problems facing New Zealand and the World today according to the latest Roy Morgan Research conducted in May 2014.

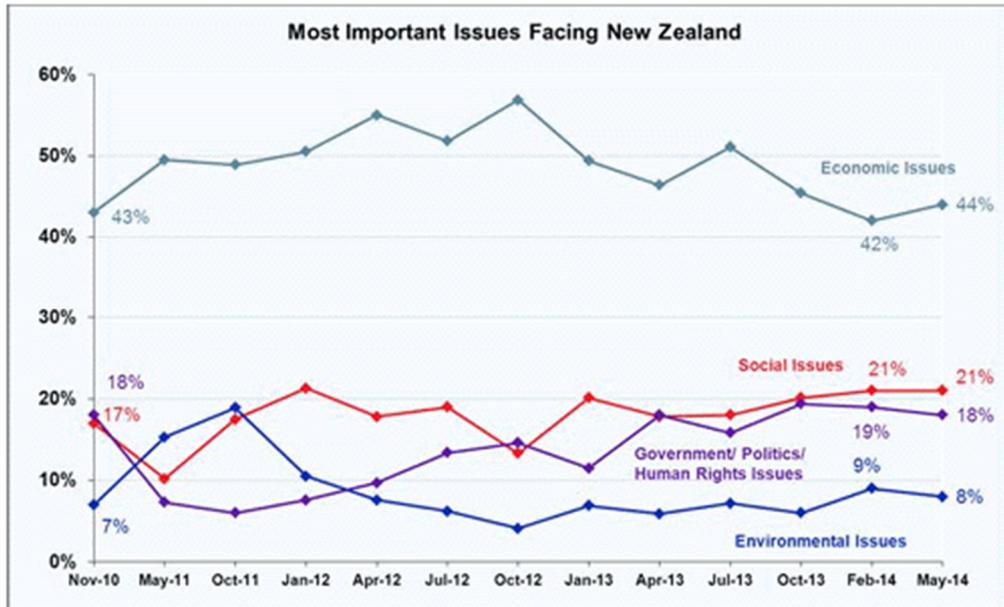
New Zealand views on Problems facing New Zealand

When asked about the most important problem facing New Zealand, 44% of New Zealanders mention some kind of Economic issue.

This is up 2% since February 2014 and still well ahead of Social issues (21%, unchanged), Government/ Public policy/ Human rights issues (18%, down 1%) and Environmental issues (8%, down 1%).

The most important Economic issues facing New Zealand include Poverty / The gap between the rich and the poor (18%, up 2%), Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession/ Inflation/ Exchange rate/ High dollar (8%, down 2%), Unemployment/ Job security (8%, up 1%) and the Cost of living/ Increasing prices/ Financial hardship/ Household debt (5%, unchanged).

Other important issues mentioned by New Zealanders are the Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government spending (6%, down 2%), Drugs/ Alcohol Issues/ Drink Driving (5%, up 1%), Housing shortage/ Affordability (5%, up 2%), Social apathy/ Lack of values/ Lack of empathy towards others/ Intolerance (4%, down 1%) and Education (3%, unchanged).



New Zealand views on Problems facing the World

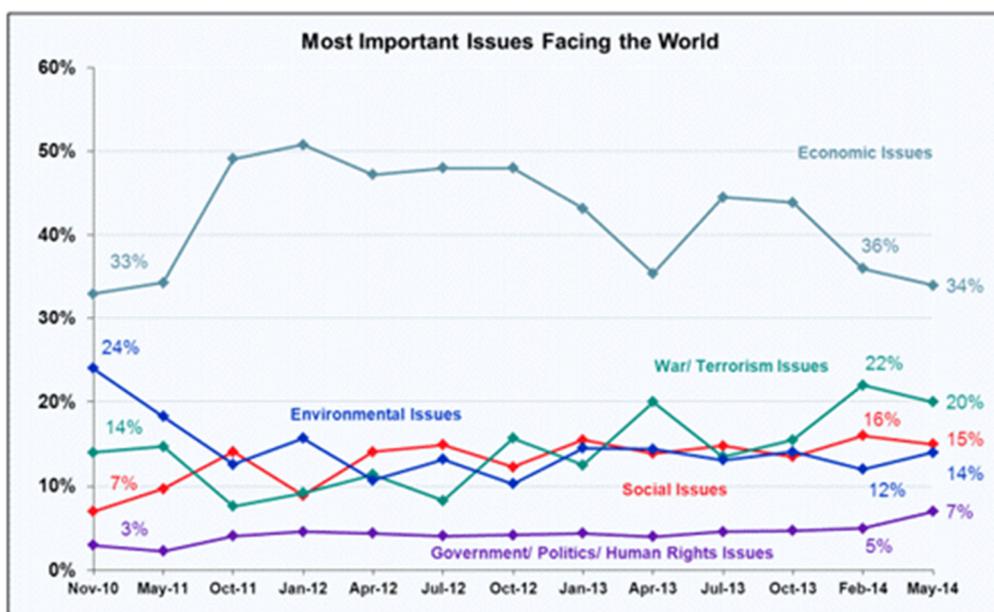
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The biggest World problems are again Economic issues (mentioned by 34% of New Zealanders, down 2% since February 2014), in front of Terrorism/ Wars/ Security (20%, down 2%), Social Issues (15%, down 1%) and Environmental issues (14%, up 2%).

Among the Economic issues facing the World mentioned by New Zealanders the most important are Poverty/ The gap between the rich and the poor/ Imbalance of wealth (16%, down 2%), the Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession (7%, down 1%), Cost of living/ Increasing prices/ Financial hardship/ Household debt (4%, up 1%), Food Shortages/ feeding the People (3%, up 1%) and Over population (3%, down 1%).

Other important issues facing the World mentioned by New Zealanders include Wars and Conflicts/ Unrest (12%, up 1%), Social apathy/ Lack of values/ Lack of empathy towards others/ Intolerance (7%, down 2%), Climate change/ Global warming (6%, up 1%), Religion/ Religious conflict (4%, down 3%), and Government/ Politicians/ Political unrest/ Instability/ Greedy and corrupt governments (4%, unchanged).



Michele Levine says, CEO Roy Morgan says:

“Less than four months before New Zealanders vote in this year’s Election Economic issues are clearly the most important set of problems for candidates to be focusing on to connect with their electorate. Nearly half of New Zealanders (44%, up 2% since February 2014) mention Economic issues as the most important problems facing New Zealand.

“The most important Economic issues facing New Zealand include Poverty/ The gap between the rich and the poor/ Imbalance of wealth (18%, up 2%), Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession/ Inflation/ Exchange rate/ High dollar (8%, down 2%) and Unemployment/ Job security (8%, up 1%).

“Other important problems mentioned by New Zealanders include Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government spending (6%, down 2%), Housing shortage/ Housing affordability (5%, up 2%), Drugs/ Alcohol issues/ Drink driving (5%, up 1%) and Social Apathy/ Lack of Values/ Lack of Empathy towards others/ Intolerance (4%, down 1%).

“The worries about Economic issues are directly reflected by the [ANZ-Roy Morgan New Zealand Consumer Confidence result for May](#) which shows NZ Consumer Confidence dipping to 127.6 (down 5.9pts) – now at its lowest since October 2013 (122.3). Last week’s [New Zealand Roy Morgan Poll](#) shows the National-led Government of John Key (45.5%) with a narrow lead over a potential Labour/ Greens alliance (44%) leaving Winston Peter’s New Zealand First (6%) with a potentially decisive role in determining who will govern after the Election.

“In a broader context, Economic issues are also regarded as the most important set of problems facing the World(34%, down 2%) – led by Poverty/ The gap between the rich and poor/ Imbalance of wealth (16%, down 2%) and Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession (7%, down 1%). Other important problems include Wars & Conflicts/ Unrest (12%, up 1%), Social Apathy/ Lack of values/ Lack of empathy toward others/ Intolerance (7%, down 2%), Climate change/ Global warming/ Ozone Layer/ Greenhouse effect (6%, up 1%) and Religion/ Religious conflict (4%, down 3%).”

These findings come from a special New Zealand Roy Morgan survey conducted with New Zealanders aged 14+ asked what are the most important issues facing New Zealand and the World today.

In New Zealand, a cross-section of 990 men and women aged 14 or over were interviewed by telephone in May 2014.

Respondents were asked: “Firstly, what do you think is the most important problem facing the World today?” and “What do you think is the most important problem facing New Zealand today?”

The research conducted was both qualitative (in that people were asked to use their own words) and quantitative (in that the ‘open-ended’ responses were analysed and ‘coded’ so that the results could be counted and reported as percentages).

Most Important Problem Facing New Zealand	New Zealand					
	Jan	May	July	Oct	Feb	May
	2013	2013	2013	2013	2014	2014
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Poverty/ The Gap Between Rich & Poor/ Imbalance of Wealth	11	9	15	13	16	18
Economy/ Financial Crisis/ Recession/ Inflation/ Exchange Rate/ High Dollar	18	13	13	11	10	8
Unemployment/ Job Security	13	15	13	11	7	8
Cost of Living/ Increasing Prices/ Financial Hardship/ Household Debt	3	4	7	6	5	5
Low Wages	1	2	1	1	2	2
Need to Increase Exports	1	*	1	1	*	2
[^] Christchurch Recovery & Rebuilding	1	*	1	1	*	1
Foreign Ownership/ Selling our Assets	2	3	1	3	2	1
TOTAL ECONOMIC ISSUES	49	46	51	45	42	44
Drugs/ Alcohol Issues/ Drink Driving	2	2	2	2	4	5
Social Apathy/ Lack of Values/ Lack of Empathy Toward Others/ Intolerance	4	3	4	4	5	4
Breakdown of Family Unit/ Family Violence	1	1	1	2	2	2
Child Abuse/ Lack of Care of Children/ Bringing up Children Wrongly	3	2	2	2	2	2
Crime/ Law & Order	4	3	1	3	2	2
Racism/ Racial Tension	1	2	3	2	2	2
Greed/ Materialism	2	1	1	1	1	1
Social Welfare System	1	2	2	2	1	1
Violence/ Gangs	2	1	1	2	1	1
Youth Issues such as Behaviour/ Pregnancies/ Crime/ Drinking/ Drugs/ Lack of Discipline	2	1	2	1	1	1
TOTAL SOCIAL ISSUES	20	18	18	20	21	21
Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government Spending	5	9	7	8	8	6
Housing shortage/ Housing affordability	1	2	3	6	3	5
Education	2	1	1	2	3	3
Immigration/ Refugees	1	1	2	1	2	2
Benefits Given to the Maori/ Inequality Between Maori and Other Ethnic Groups	*	2	1	1	1	1
Health Issues/ Disease/ Obesity/ Poor Health	1	1	1	1	1	1
Health System/ Shortage of Doctors/ Health Services	*	1	1	*	1	1
Not enough people/ People leaving New Zealand	1	1	*	1	1	1
TOTAL GOVERNMENT/ PUBLIC POLICY/ HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES	10	17	15	19	19	18
[^] Christchurch Recovery & Rebuilding	1	*	1	1	*	1
Christchurch Earthquake & Damage	*	*	*	-	*	*
TOTAL CHRISTCHURCH ISSUES	1	1	1	1	1	2
Environmental Issues/ Degradation	2	2	1	3	4	2
Climate Change/ Global Warming	1	2	1	1	2	1
(Other) Natural Disasters/ Earthquakes/ Tsunamis/ Floods/ Volcanic Eruptions	1	1	3	1	2	1
Environmental Pollution/ Water Pollution	1	1	*	1	1	2
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (INCLUDING CHRISTCHURCH)	7	6	7	6	9	8
Other	3	2	1	*	*	*
Can't say	11	10	8	10	8	10
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Less than 1%. [^] (Christchurch Recovery & Rebuilding included in both Economic & Environmental Issues).