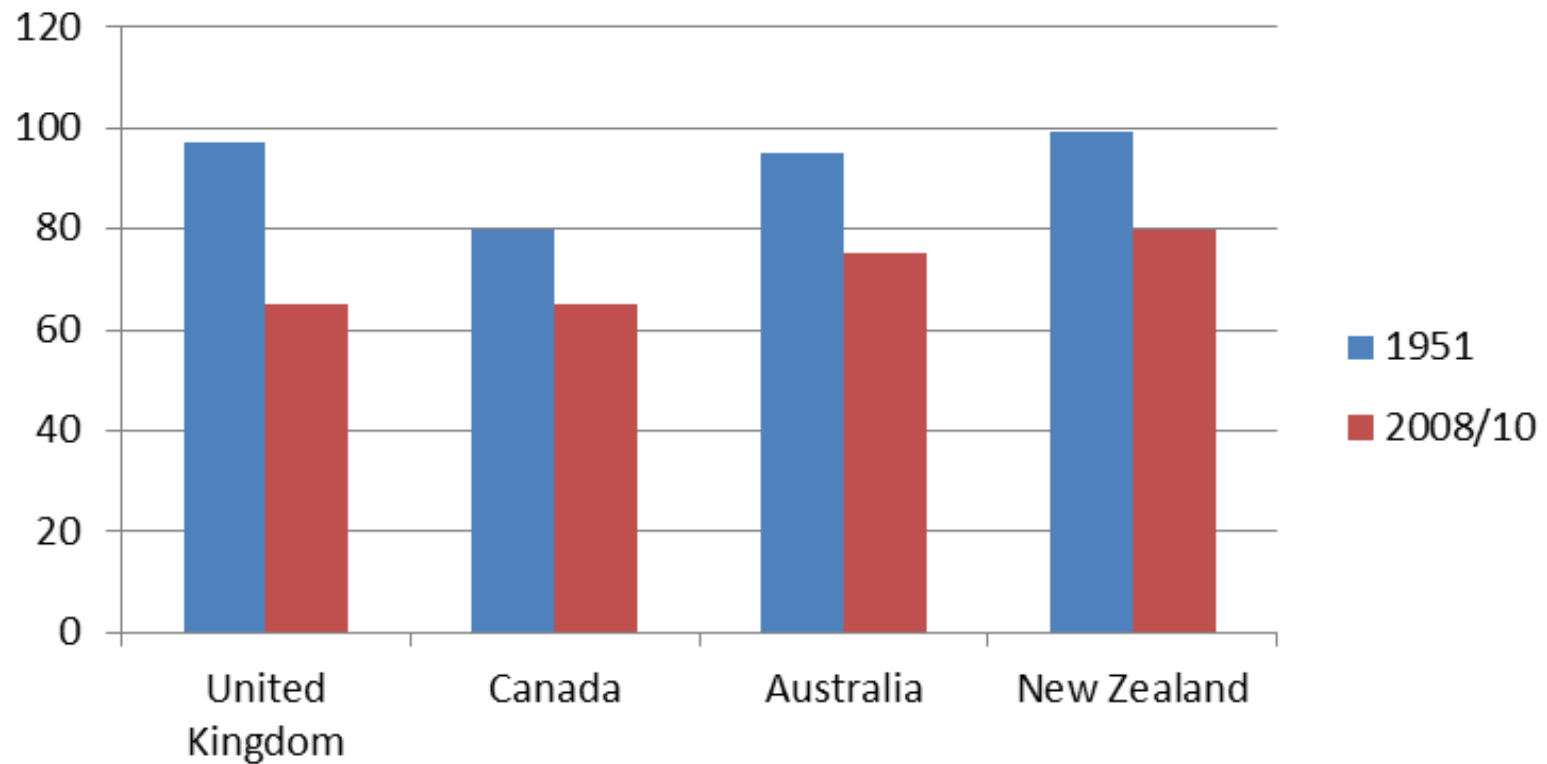


Minor Parties and Employment Relations Policy Change: The New Zealand Experience

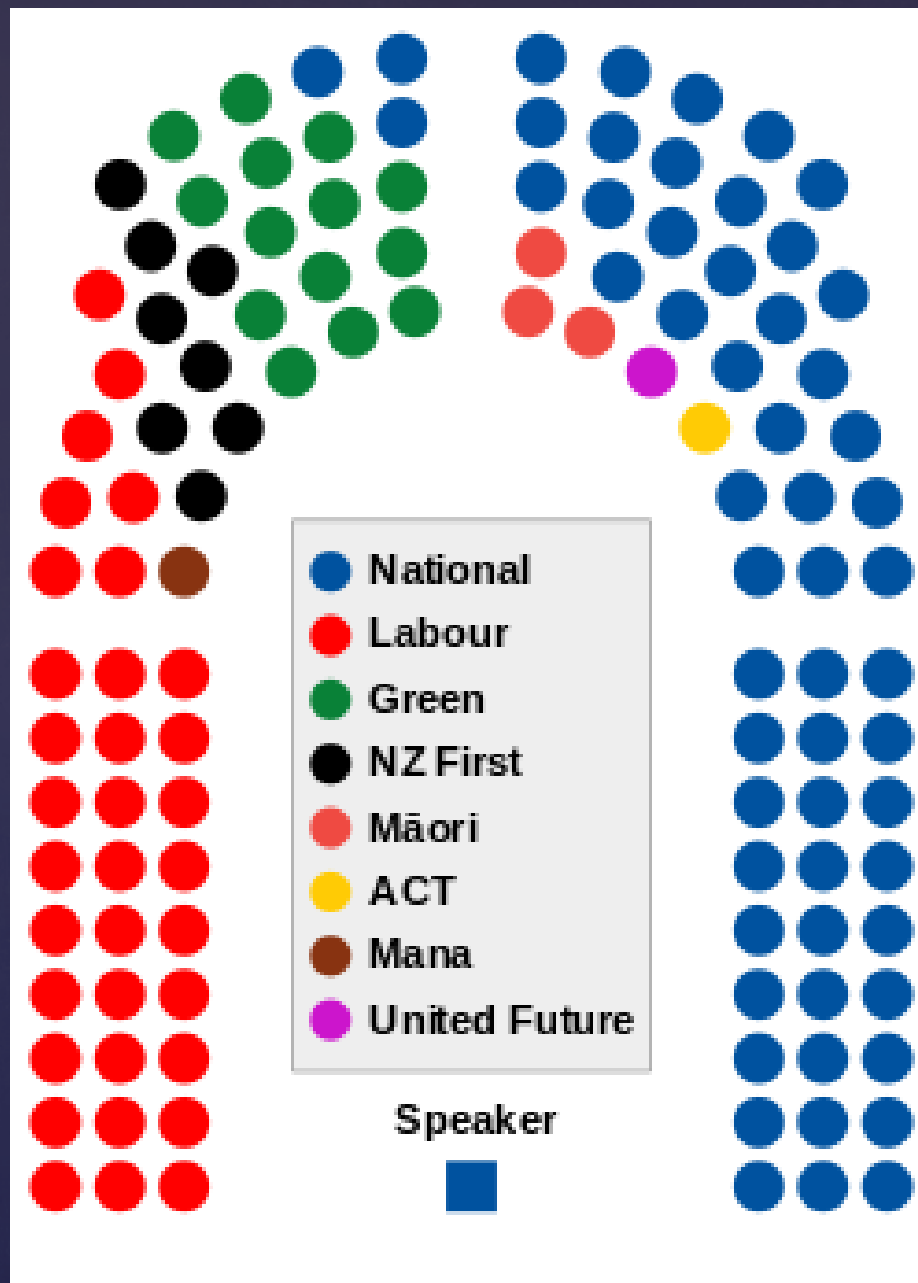
{ Julienne Molineaux and Peter Skilling
{ AUT University

Why Study Minor Parties?

Figure 1: Support for Major Parties



Source: Brenton (2013)



1. The **Nature of the Electoral System**: what avenues exist for minor parties to gain votes and achieve office?
2. The **Bargaining Power** of Minor Parties: how reliant will the major party be on the minor party to advance its agenda?
3. The **Policy Priorities** of Minor Parties: how important is it to the third party to influence ER policy? How central is ER policy to the party's branding and voters and activists?

Three Key Variables

	2008 election	2011 election
Votes needed to pass legislation	61	61
National	58	59
Act	5	1
Māori	5 (4)*	3
United Future	1	1

“Surplus Majority” Governing
Arrangements since 2008

Table One: Summary of ER Positions of the Minor Parties, 2008-2011

	ER policy closest to:	Number of MPs	ERA Bill (No. 2)	Holidays Amendment Bill	ERA (Film Production Work) Bill	Minimum Wage	Youth Minimum Wage
ACT Party	National	5	Support	Support	Support	Opposed to increases to minimum wage and sceptical of the very concept	Support
Green Party	Labour	9	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Increase “to 66% of the average wage, with an immediate increase to \$15 an hour”	Oppose
Maori Party	Labour	4	Oppose	Oppose	Support (3 votes only)	Increase to \$15/hour	Oppose
Mana Party	Labour	1	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Increase to \$15/hour, and to 2/3 of the average wage by April 2013	Oppose
NZ First	Labour	-	-	-	-	Increase to \$15/hour	Unclear
United Future	National	1	Support	Support	Support	Unclear	Unclear

Source: Skilling & Molineaux (2011)

	2008 election	2011 election
Votes needed to pass legislation	61	61
National	58	59
Act	5	1
Māori	5 (4)*	3
United Future	1	1

National and the Maori Party: 2008-2014

	ER policy closest to:	Number of MPs	ERA Bill (No. 2)	Holidays Amendment Bill	ERA (Film Production Work) Bill	Minimum Wage	Youth Minimum Wage
ACT Party	National	5	Support	Support	Support	Opposed to increases to minimum wage and sceptical of the very concept	Support
Green Party	Labour	9	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Increase “to 66% of the average wage, with an immediate increase to \$15 an hour”	Oppose
Maori Party	Labour	4	Oppose	Oppose	Support (3 votes only)	Increase to \$15/hour	Oppose
Mana Party	Labour	1	Oppose	Oppose	Oppose	Increase to \$15/hour, and to 2/3 of the average wage by April 2013	Oppose
NZ First	Labour	-	-	-	-	Increase to \$15/hour	Unclear
United Future	National	1	Support	Support	Support	Unclear	Unclear

Labour and the Green Party: 2014 (??!)