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If you fit any of the job roles below then contact us now! Our clients are desperate to speak with the following:

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- Bridge Design Engineers
- Bridge Design Technicians
- Civil Geotechnical Engineers
- Seismic Structural Engineers
- Stormwater Engineers
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- Renting property on your arrival
- Banking
- Tax & Trusts laws (UK to NZ)
- Child care and schooling
- Moving money to NZ
- Moving Pets to NZ
- Relocating your belongings
- Buying and Driving a car in NZ
- Kiwisaver (NZ pension scheme)
- Tax advice on keeping a UK rental property

We do not receive any benefit from these referrals, only the knowledge that your move will be less stressful!

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The lengthy demolition process of the leaning Hotel Grand Chancellor (the tallest building in Christchurch) gets underway, due to take approximately 14 weeks.

New Zealand market update

Welcome to the November edition of the Catalyst Newsletter and a post election New Zealand. We had a shortened election campaign this year that started after the Rugby World Cup and concluded on Saturday night (26th November). Members of the construction industry throughout the country will be smiling at the minute as the incumbent National government won the vote of the people and remains in power. This government still sees the development of national infrastructure as a priority and so a few smiles are understandable. The election campaign reminded us that the parliamentary system here differs to the UK and other parts of the world so we've added an article this month just to give all you potential Kiwis a run down on how it works!

Andy, Phil and Mireille did their final trip of the year to Christchurch 2 weeks ago and took the opportunity to catch up with clients and get a feel for what the New Year holds. The general mood is incredibly positive, almost daunted by the future work load. With aftershocks decreasing in number and size the long standing issue with insurance may come to an end as we enter January and February. Construction and civil contractors are both making plans for significant growth over the first 6 months of 2012. One civil client with a small team of 6 people currently expects to have up to 50 people working by June but can't do anything until work is awarded. This position is not unique and so it is very likely that once into February things will start getting very busy in recruiting those teams for a June/July start. With so many companies thinking the same way the likelihood is that the majority of those candidates will come from overseas.

A similar story is repeated in the consultant field with most companies looking to increase their numbers by 30 to 40% in the New Year. As ever those with the following skills and experience, civil qualified geotechnical, seismic structural, bridge design, storm water engineering, water & wastewater engineers, are in most demand but as we head into the New Year the range of opportunity will grow significantly. The consultants are actively hiring people now so do get in touch if you're interested in a New Year position.

It's always great to meet up with clients but the most enjoyable part of the trip was the evening with our placed candidates. We rarely meet any of you until you arrive in New Zealand so it was great to finally put faces to people we'd been speaking with for months (and in one case years!) and also to meet other family members as well. Many had stories of lost luggage or shocking jet lag but all were delighted with the move to New Zealand and are enjoying being part of something as significant as the rebuild of Christchurch. By the end of the night it was clear that some new friendships were being forged which can only make the New Zealand experience more successful than ever.

2012 looks to be a very busy year with many more of you realising your dream and securing a move to New Zealand. As ever keep us posted on your movements and interest level and if February is your target let us know sooner than later. You can keep up to date through [Linked-In](#) and via our [weekly blog](#) and we're always keen to hear from you.

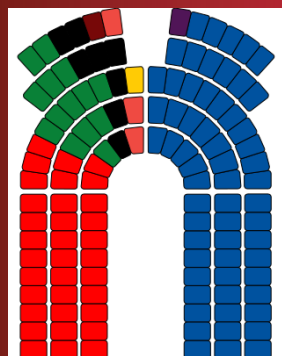
New Zealand Election Results 2011

Six weeks of electioneering came to a conclusion on Saturday when the nation went to the polls in the 2011 general election.

Virtually all polls leading up to the election predicted a convincing win by the incumbent National Party (NZ equivalent of the Conservatives) and the result reflected those polls accurately. A 74% turnout of those eligible to cast a ballot was an all time low but National took 48% of the vote and in coalition with the Act and United Future Parties are able to govern the country for another 3 years. Although early days it is likely that the Maori Party will also join the coalition meaning that the parties in power will be the same as the previous 3 years with a total of 65 seats.

Nationals nearest rival, the Labour Party, lost seats in the election and now hold only 34 seats in parliament. The Green Party grew in strength taking 11% of the party vote and securing 14 seats but the biggest surprise was the resurrection on the New Zealand First Party and its charismatic leader, Winston Peters. After 3 years in the political wilderness after defeat in 2008 Winston has returned with 6.6% of the party vote and a subsequent 8 seats in Parliament.

Although the government looks the same the opposition benches make for a very different animal which will certainly mean an entertaining time in politics over the next 3 years!



Party	Seats
National	60
Labour	34
Green	14
NZ First	8
Maori	3
United Future	1
ACT	1
Mana Party	1

Sharon Atkins

Case study of moving to NZ

Current Employer: Tonkin & Taylor, Auckland - Senior Environmental Scientist

Sharon initially contacted Catalyst in September 2010, at which stage she had visited New Zealand on numerous occasions and had just booked another trip with her partner for February 2011. Sharon and her partner had already made the decision to make a move on a permanent basis and wanted to arrange to meet with potential employers during their scheduled holiday. So serious were they about making the move to NZ a reality they had already submitted their expression of interest under the skilled migrant category via Immigration New Zealand. Their Christmas present arrived early that year with the wonderful news that they had been granted permanent residency. Catalyst arranged for an interview to take place with Tonkin & Taylor coinciding with their scheduled stopover in Auckland and at the conclusion of that meeting a verbal offer was made. Even being on the Christchurch Gondola right when the earthquake struck on February 24th (on the last day of their holiday) didn't deter them from making a move to NZ! Sharon and her partner officially immigrated to New Zealand in June 2011 with Sharon commencing her first day at Tonkin & Taylor on June 7th 2011.

Q. What inspired you to consider moving to New Zealand?

A. *We'd been over here a few times and were impressed by the environment, culture and positive attitude to life. We also love the great outdoors and NZ has a stunning countryside. Work wise, I was ready for a new challenge.*

Q. Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

A. *Yes, regarding the above. It has been more expensive than anticipated. The cost of living has risen from previous visits and the exchange rate for transferring funds from the UK has not been great.*

Q. How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

A. *Much less commuting -I take a 10 minute ferry ride into Auckland CBD. It's also easier for us to get into the hills for a long walk; we'd normally have had to go away for the weekend to get the equivalent. My partner is enjoying doing conservation work on a long term project on an island that is now pest free, so they are able to reintroduce rare species of birds and replant native trees. Very rewarding.*

Q. What one thing would you have done differently?

A. *Maybe not ship as much of our belongings. You end up buying lots of things while you're waiting for the shipment to arrive.*

Q. What one thing do you wish you had known about before moving?

A. *Older houses are poorly insulated and there's no double glazing. A very important point to consider when the winter arrives!*

Q. What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

A. *Do as much research as possible, especially using local knowledge, such as friends' resident here or recruitment agencies like Catalyst. Visit with an eye to settling, not holiday mode.*

Q. Looking back with hindsight, do think you have made the right move?

A. *We hope so. We've currently been resident about 4 months, so it still feels like we're settling in.*

Useful Facts:

1st Contact - 8th September 2010
 1st Interview* - 4th February 2011
 [Verbal] Job Offer - 4th February 2011
 Start - 7th June 2011
 1st Contact to start - 9 Months

*Face to Face having arrived in Auckland from the UK that morning!

From FPP to MMP



I'd rather live in a
democracy with
120 MPs

Than a dictatorship
with 99

This is our one chance to change it.
Vote for better government



A pro-MMP poster from 1993

What is FPP? (First-Past-the-Post)

From 1853 until 1993 (apart from 1908-13) New Zealand elections were held under the first-past-the-post (FPP) or plurality system.

Until 1881, and again from 1889 to 1903, Members of Parliament were elected in a mixture of single-member and two- or three-member electorates. After 1903 all electorates returned only one member. Each voter had one vote and the candidate who received the most votes in each electorate was the winner. Successful candidates did not need to win an absolute majority (that is, more than 50%) of the votes cast.

Under FPP, the most popular political party usually won a share of the seats in Parliament that was larger than its share of the overall votes. This encouraged the formation of strong, single-party governments. Minor parties were often excluded altogether.

In 1908 the Liberal government introduced the second-ballot system. This provided that if no candidate won more than 50% of the votes in an electorate, a run-off would be held (usually a week later) between the two top candidates. This experiment did not prove a success, however, and in 1913 the Reform government restored the FPP system.

Over the weekend New Zealand held a general election and alongside held a referendum asking if we should change our voting system and if so what to? 1996 the current system of **MMP** (Mixed Member Proportional Representation) was introduced and the purpose of the current referendum was to see if the voting population are happy with the system. Although not finalised the figures from Saturday (26.11.2011) would suggest MMP is here to stay and the article below explains how it came about and how it works.

In 1993 New Zealanders voted in a referendum to change their voting system from the traditional "First-Past-the-Post" (FPP) method to "Mixed Member Proportional" (MMP) representation. How, and why, did this dramatic change come about?

The origins of electoral reform lay in the gradual breakdown of **public trust and confidence** in politicians, Parliament, and the simple certainties of the old two-party system. This process began in the 1950s and 1960s and gathered momentum in the 1970s and 1980s, decades marked by economic uncertainty and the emergence of new social and political movements.

Criticism of the voting system intensified after the 1978 and 1981 elections. On each occasion the Labour opposition actually secured more votes overall than National, but the latter won more seats in Parliament and remained in government.

Disillusioned with both National and Labour, more and more voters began to look to **alternative parties**. But the FPP system did them no favours. Social Credit, the leading 'third' party since 1954, won 16% of the overall vote in 1978 but only one seat out of the 92 in Parliament. Three years later nearly 21% of electors voted for Social Credit, but the party gained just two seats. In the 1984 election the New Zealand Party won 12% but no seats.

As critics pointed out, the FPP system tended to create Parliaments quite different in composition to those that the voters appeared to want. The answer, some people argued, was a system of **proportional representation** - in which each party's share of the seats in Parliament would be close to its share of the overall vote.

The Royal Commission

During the 1981 and 1984 campaigns Labour promised to set up a Royal Commission to look into a wide range of issues relating to the electoral system. Following Labour's victory in the latter election, a **Royal Commission on the Electoral System** was duly established in early 1985.

It's report, completed in December 1986, was surprisingly radical. It recommended New Zealand adopt the **German-style MMP system**, in which each elector would get two votes, one for an electorate MP and one for a party. The size of Parliament would increase to 120 MPs: half would be elected in single-member constituencies (as before); the other half would be selected from party lists so that in general each party's share of all 120 seats corresponded to its share of the overall vote.

Few of Labour's leaders welcomed the Commission's recommendations, however, and the government tried to sideline the issue. Although National's leadership also disliked the idea of MMP, they saw an opportunity to **embarrass the government** over its failure to respond to the Commission's proposals. As each party tried to outmanoeuvre the other, both entered the 1990 election campaign promising to hold referenda on electoral reforms that they did not really want.

The Labour government was heavily defeated in the 1990 election, but its National successor was soon under fire for breaking election promises. **Confidence and trust in politicians and Parliament plunged to new depths**. Polls showed that politicians ranked alongside used-car salespeople as the least-respected occupational group in the country. Public support for radical electoral reform began to grow.

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'The People Screamed'

The National government agreed to hold an **'indicative' referendum** (that is, one that was not 'binding' on the government) in **September 1992**.

In a complicated two-part poll, voters were asked whether they wanted to change the existing voting system, and then to indicate support for one of **four reform options**: MMP, the Single Transferable Vote (STV), Supplementary Member (SM) or Preferential Vote (PV). If there was majority support for change, the government promised to hold a binding referendum (with a choice between FPP and the most popular reform option) the following year.

Although only 55% of electors took part, **an overwhelming 85% voted to change their electoral system**. In the second part of the poll, 70% favoured MMP. As Labour leader Mike Moore put it: 'The people didn't speak on Saturday. They screamed.'

The second, **binding referendum** - a straight run-off between FPP and MMP - was held at the same time as the 1993 general election. There were now lobby groups on both sides of the debate, and the campaign was fiercely contested. The turnout was much higher - 85% - and the result much closer than in 1992. But MMP was still backed by a comfortable margin, **54% to 46%**. New Zealand was to have a new voting system.

Into the Unknown: 1996 and Beyond

The next three years, before the first MMP election in 1996, was a period of **transition and uncertainty**. The main parties tried to re-position themselves for the new environment and a number of new parties emerged.

Electoral rules and procedures were overhauled and in 1995 the boundaries of the 60 general and five Maori electorates were finalised. Electoral officials (especially the newly established Electoral Commission) also initiated a massive **publicity campaign** to inform voters about the new system.

The 1996 election produced a close and indecisive result. After two months of negotiations a **coalition government** was formed (to the surprise of many) between the previously hostile National and New Zealand First parties. Subsequent events - in particular a spate of defections (or **'party-hopping'**) by MPs and the messy collapse of the coalition - sapped public confidence in the new voting system, but support for MMP has rallied in more recent years.

As the Royal Commission and pro-MMP campaigners had predicted, Parliament has become much more **diverse and representative** of modern New Zealand society - in 2006 39 women, 21 Maori, four Pacific Islanders, and two Asian MPs are among the 121 MPs.

Did you know?

The date on which the first electoral reform referendum was held - **19th September 1992** - was the **99th anniversary of the signing of the women's suffrage legislation into law**.

Original info Source: www.elections.org.nz/voting/mmp/history-mmp.html
Accessed: 28/11/2011