

2 April 2019

Shahil S

By e-mail: [fyi-request-9938-f220cb50@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-9938-f220cb50@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Shahil S,

**OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2019/06**

Thank you for your email of 26 March 2019 requesting information under the Official Information Act ('the Act') about permanent residents voting.

In particular you have requested:

- For the period between 1996 to 2017 elections the number of voters who had held a permanent resident visa had voted in the New Zealand general elections.
- The total number of permanent resident visa voters who are eligible to participate in the elections between the period of 1996 to 2017.
- A breakdown of the country of origin of permanent resident visa voters who had participated in the elections between 1996 to 2017.
- A breakdown of the registered political parties permanent resident visa holders voted for between 1996 to 2017.

Enrolment

Eligible electors must enrol. To be eligible to enrol a person must:

- be 18 years or older, and
- have lived in New Zealand for more than one year continuously at some time in their life, and
- be a New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident of New Zealand.

A person applying to enrol is provided with the eligibility criteria and is required to declare that they are eligible.

However the enrolment form does not require applicants to actually indicate their citizenship/residency status i.e. whether they are either a New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident. The enrolment form also does not require applicants to provide their country of origin.

For this reason, the Electoral Commission does not hold information on how many people on the electoral roll are citizens and how many are permanent residents.

### Voting

This information cannot be included on the master roll compiled after each election, so there is also no record of how many citizens have voted or not voted and how many permanent residents have voted or not voted.

### Party votes

In New Zealand voting is by secret ballot, which by its nature does not provide for any record to be made of the way that any individual voter has voted.

This means that there is no information available to determine the party votes of permanent residents.

For this reason your request is declined under section 18(e) of the Act on the basis that the information requested is not available.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to complain to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Temel', written in a cursive style.

Kristina Temel  
Electoral Commission