

Women, Ethnic Minorities and Electoral Success

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Abstract : As the population of the Auckland region in New Zealand becomes markedly more super-diverse, the question of fair and effective representation becomes increasingly relevant. This paper explores who stood and who was elected to local office, in the three Auckland triennial local elections, following the 2010 amalgamation of the regions local authorities. It addresses the question of how representative the electoral candidates and elected members of local government in Auckland were of the diverse population they serve. A quantitative analysis of the gender and ethnicity of the Auckland Council candidates and elected members in 2013, 2016, and 2019 triennial elections was undertaken, and the gender and ethnicity compared with that of the Auckland population. Our findings show that under the two-tiered shared governance model established by the Local Government Act (Auckland Council) 2009, electoral candidates have become more ethnically and gender representative of Aucklanders at the local level, while at the regional level, divergence from predominantly New Zealand European, male local representatives is emerging, albeit with less pace. These findings warrant further investigation, but overall, the research presents a cautiously optimistic picture of Auckland local democracy in terms of increasing representational diversity.

Keywords : local government, representation, diversity, gender, ethnicity

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