



Should New Zealand's summer holidays be shifted to February?

The issue:

Climate change has had a number of interesting effects, including the fact that the hottest and sunniest summer weather now seems to occur after the New Year, when New Zealanders have returned to work and not, as was previously the case, in the months leading up to Christmas. Consequently, some people have proposed moving the summer holidays to February.

Such a proposal would have a significant impact in just about every aspect of the economy and society. As a result, we decided to repeat a polling question we first asked in 2010 in order to measure public opinion on this issue.

The poll question:

The following question was asked:

1. *Do you believe New Zealand should move its summer holiday period from December to February when the weather is warmer?*

Key results:

The results to this question are presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Agreement that New Zealand's summer holidays should be shifted to February.

Q18. Do you believe New Zealand should move its summer holiday period from December to February when the weather is warmer?

	November 2014	December 2010
	500	500
	%	%
Yes	48	42
No	45	54
Don't know	6	4
Refused	0	0
Total	100	100

The base numbers shown are unweighted counts.
Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

- ◆ As shown in Table 1, respondents were divided with 48 percent agreeing and 45 percent disagreeing that the summer holiday period should be moved from December to February. A further six percent were unsure and responded that they did not know whether the holiday period should be changed.
- ◆ Between December 2010 and November 2014, a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who felt that the holiday period should be moved to February has been observed (48 percent in November 2014, compared with 42 percent in December 2010).



Demographic differences:

We have analysed the 2014 results to this question by a number of demographic variables including; age, gender, income, location, and employment status. The results to this analysis are as follows:

- ◆ The only significant difference was on a regional basis. Specifically, respondents who resided in the Upper North Island were more likely than respondents from the South Island to agree that the summer holidays should be moved from December to January (54 percent of respondents from the Upper North Island agreed, compared with 39 percent of respondents from the South Island).
- ◆ There were no other significant differences between demographic sub-groups, including between respondents who were employed and those who were not working at the time of the survey (49 percent of those who were employed agreed that the holiday period should be shifted, compared to 47 percent of those who were not employed).

Comment:

“There is clearly considerable support for moving the summer holidays to February. We will re-measure this again in 12 months’ time to see if support has grown any further”, said Research New Zealand Director, Emanuel Kalafatelis.

The Research New Zealand poll was conducted with 500 people aged 18 years and over, by telephone from the 25th of November to the 8th of December 2014. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.5 percent (at the 95 percent confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of the general population of New Zealand. The polls were not taken on behalf of any organisation, but as part of Research New Zealand’s monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

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TABULATIONS

November 2014 results by demographic sub-groups

Do you believe New Zealand should move its summer holiday period from December to February when the weather is warmer?

Table 2: Gender

	Base =	Total 500 %	Male 224 %	Female 276 %
Yes		48	48	49
No		45	48	42
Don't know		6	4	8
Refused		0	0	1
Total		100	100	100

The base numbers shown are unweighted counts.
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Table 3: Age

	Base =	Total 500 %	18 to 34 years 136 %	35 to 54 years 199 %	55 years and over 165 %
Yes		48	46	47	52
No		45	49	45	41
Don't know		6	4	8	7
Refused		0	1	0	0
Total		100	100	100	100

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Table 4: Income

	Base =	Total 500 %	Under \$40,000 164 %	\$40,000 - \$80,000 125 %	\$80,000 or more 165 %	Don't know/refused 46 %
Yes		48	47	44	53	47
No		45	44	52	41	45
Don't know		6	8	3	6	8
Refused		0	1	1	0	0
Total		100	100	100	100	100

The base numbers shown are unweighted counts.
Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Table 5: Location

	Base =	Total	Upper North Island	Lower/Central North Island	South Island
		500	146	251	103
		%	%	%	%
Yes		48	54	49	39
No		45	40	44	53
Don't know		6	6	6	6
Refused		0	0	0	2
Total		100	100	100	100

The base numbers shown are unweighted counts.
Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 6: Employment Status

	Base =	Total	Employed	Not Employed or Retired
		500	317	183
		%	%	%
Yes		48	49	47
No		45	45	44
Don't know		6	6	7
Refused		0	0	1
Total		100	100	100

The base numbers shown are unweighted counts.
Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.