



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on December 13, 2022

New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern's Reelection Prospects Looking Tough

New Zealand's socialist Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's reelection prospects look bleak amid economic woes, rising interest rates, increasing crime, and an impending recession. Ardern's falling popularity has sparked comments that New Zealand's era of "Jacindamania" may be ending.

Ardern's Labour Party was defeated by the opposition National Party in a by-election over the weekend, further indicating a decline in public support for the government. With a general election slated to be held next year, Labour will conclude 2022 by trailing National in the polls.



AP Images
Jacinda Ardern

The tide seems to have turned for Ardern, who won a landslide victory just two years ago due to reliance on her administration to tackle Covid-19. With New Zealand treating Covid-19 as endemic now, voters have shifted focus to the rising cost of living and crumbling law and order in the country.

As New Zealand emerged from Covid-19 with one of the world's lowest death rates, "there was a sense the government really can do the impossible by holding up a virus ravaging the rest of the world," said Ben Thomas, a conservative commentator.

"The prime minister has gone from untouchable — almost Olympian — levels back to being an ordinary politician again," Thomas said.

"Labour is no longer able to rely on their Covid-19 response for support, and it seems as though voters now want action across a range of issues," said Dr. Lara Greaves, a political scientist at the University of Auckland.

"In particular, New Zealanders have been concerned about an increase in youth crime."

A series of so-called ram raids have dominated recent headlines, with youngsters using stolen cars to crash into locked shops late at night to steal goods. Such crimes have become the fodder for opposition parties to accuse the government of being lenient on crime and to vow harsher penalties if elected. The fatal stabbing of a corner-store owner on Nov 23 contributed to the outcry.

To rub salt into Labour's political wound, the party is also facing trouble in the economic arena.

The central bank has sped up the pace of its rate hikes, with the Official Cash Rate rising by a record 75 basis points to 4.25 percent and indicating more rises next year as it seeks to regain control of inflation. Such rate hikes have dampened house prices and are expected to propel the economy toward a recession from mid-2023 as rising mortgage rates curb spending.

A 1News/Kantar poll previously published depicted Labour dropping one percentage point to 33 percent support, five points behind National, which is at 38 percent. National's ally, the ACT Party, rose two points to 11 percent support, which would give the pair a parliamentary majority if the results



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were duplicated at the election.

Although Ardern remains the country's most-preferred prime minister, at 29 percent to National leader Christopher Luxon's 23 percent, her rating has dropped from more than 60 percent in 2020.

National has found stability under the leadership of Luxon, a successful businessman who served as chief executive of national carrier Air New Zealand before entering politics in 2020.

Last Saturday's Hamilton West by-election was considerably won by National, retaking a seat that Labour won in 2020. While voter turnout was scarce and the result does not have any effect on the present Parliament, it is another sign of a potential reversal of Ardern's fortunes.

"It was disappointing but not unexpected," Ardern told Radio New Zealand on Monday. She highlighted that Labour also lost Hamilton West when it came to power in 2017, "so I don't think it's fair to use that seat as being indicative generally of what happens at general elections."

Luxon begged to differ, indicating that the result reflected New Zealanders' worries about "an economy going backwards" and "not feeling safe in their own homes or businesses." Also, Luxon accused the government of fueling inflation by overspending.

"Voters have sent a message to Labour that the country is heading in the wrong direction, and they need a National government to turn it around and get things done," he said.

Ardern's government has also struggled to fulfill its promise to tackle housing affordability and rising inequality. During Ardern's premiership, average home prices rose 58 percent from 2017 to 2021. Last year, the average home price passed NZ\$1 million (US\$648,000).

Ardern, 42, came under the international spotlight when she won a national election five years ago, weeks after becoming leader of the Labour Party. Public attention was on her again after she had a baby in 2018 — the second elected leader in history to give birth in office, after Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Moreover, Ardern won applause for her response to the 2019 Christchurch terrorist attacks, in which a gunman killed 51 people at two mosques.

Besides, Ardern was also featured on the cover of *Time* magazine, and was a guest on American late-night comedy shows. She built an international profile as a progressive feminist, permitting her to garner popularity among left-leaning circles and globalist politicians. She was invited in early 2022 to give a commencement address at Harvard University.

Ardern has links to the Marxist group International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY). IUSY, and its parent organization Socialist International, which so many of our current global leaders belong to, advocates modern-day Trotskyism.

Leon Trotsky (born Lev Bronstein) posited that the foundations of totalitarianism must be developed simultaneously in all Western countries, not from outside the institutions, but inside through what he termed a "permanent revolution." Many western left-wing academics promote Trotsky's ideas because they seem to offer an alternative to the violent methods used by Stalin. Such Trotskyites favor gradual social engineering, which aims to dismantle society from within in every western country using accelerating chaos, and then reset that society to a totalitarian state, with the United Nations as the crux for one-world government under global socialism.



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