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## New Zealand “Best-Designed Government in the World”

New Zealand has the best designed government in the world, American political commentator Dylan Matthews writes for Vox.

“The shire has a mighty fine political system,” he jokes.

“Recently New Zealand held its 51st general election, in which the center-right National Party and its leader, Prime Minister John Key, made some modest gains.

“If this all sounds rather dull – a country of less than 5 million people having an election in which no power changes hands – that’s fair enough. But it’s worth paying attention, as New Zealand’s parliament is better designed than just about any other developed country government,” Matthews explains.

Matthews gives 3 reasons for New Zealand having “The world’s best electoral system:” MMP, unicameralism and constitutional monarchy.

“MMP discourages the kind of excessive party formation that happens under pure party-list representation, while still ensuring that smaller parties get some say.”

Matthews explains that MMP allows democracy to function while the 5% threshold prevents everything getting out of control.

“It’s worth emphasizing how rare MMP is: only four countries (Germany, New Zealand, Lesotho, and Romania) use it. And none of the other three can claim New Zealand’s other big advantage...Unicameralism.

“New Zealand isn’t alone in having a unicameral parliament. Sweden, Norway, Finland, Portugal, Denmark, Israel, Iceland, and Taiwan do as well, to name a few. But it stands out for being unicameral while still modelled after the British system.

“New Zealand has one sole legitimate democratic institution is the one elected to proportionately represent the population” rather than a House of Commons and House of Lords.

He also believes that having a constitutional monarchy, with the Governor General able to act on behalf of the queen, is beneficial to New Zealand.

“Generally speaking, in a parliamentary system, you need a head of state who is not the prime minister to serve as a disinterested arbiter when there are disputes about how to form a government –say, if the largest party should be allowed to form a minority government or if smaller parties should be allowed to form a coalition.”

“New Zealand would already top the list of best political systems even if it were a republic. But its constitutional monarchy only strengthens the case.”

Read the full analysis by Dylan Matthews on Vox.

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