

## 14.7 out of 45. An endorsement for the junta?

In the controversial April 2006 election the Thai Rak Thai party received almost 16 million votes. Many argued that this was an illegitimate election victory, largely because of the boycott by the main opposition parties and the low voter turnout. What was the result in yesterday's referendum? With results from about 97% of booths, the Election Commission is indicating that the "yes" vote received about 14.3 million votes. [**UPDATE:** The final count is 14.7 million, so I have added to .7 to the title of this post.] This represents about 56% of votes cast. [**UPDATE:** The final figure is 57.81%.] What will be most disappointing for the junta is that the voter turnout was relatively low, at about 55% of those registered to vote, despite its massive publicity campaign. [**UPDATE:** The final figure is 57.6%.] In the three elections of the Thaksin era the turnout was 70%, 72% and 65%.

So, of the 45 million Thais registered to vote, 14.7 million have endorsed the proposed constitution. It is a victory of sorts (and key no vote campaigners have accepted it), but not an impressive one. The international reaction will be interesting to watch.

[For detailed coverage and discussion see [Bangkok Pundit](#) who provides the figures on previous voter turnout quoted above.]