

Public Perceptions of the Municipal Election Results

Suan Dusit Poll surveyed a sample of 1,104 people (online and field survey) Between May 13–16, 2025

Key Findings:



57.25%

Want the new mayor to crack down on vice, drugs, and local influential figures



37.32%

Believe that the elected officials are likely to follow through on their campaign promises



78.80%

Agree that local political families (“ban yai”) still hold influence in local elections



45.13%

Say “ban yai” remain influential due to close ties and active presence in community events



37.50%

Think lack of national party support would cause some impact, but local governance remains feasible

The poll results reflect that people want local leaders who can ensure safety and justice, particularly by addressing drug issues, vice, and local influential figures. At the same time, “Ban Yai” political families remain key power brokers, from the municipal level to the national stage—acting both as territorial gatekeepers and agenda-setters. This deeply rooted power structure can facilitate local governance, but it may also stand in the way of the changes that citizens are hoping for



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Hope for Change, Call for Better Lives

According to the poll results, the top priority that people wanted the newly elected mayors to address was the suppression of vice, drug problems, and local influential figures (57.25%), followed by solving environmental issues, waste management, and air pollution (48.64%). Meanwhile, 37.32% of respondents believed that the elected officials would likely follow through on their campaign promises, while 34.51% thought they would not. These findings reflect that citizens prioritize immediate, everyday concerns—focusing on quality of life, safety, the environment, and fairness in society. However, there remains some uncertainty about whether the elected leaders can truly turn their policy pledges into real outcomes.

“Ban Yai” Influence Runs Deep in Municipal Politics

A majority of respondents agreed that local political families or “Ban Yai” still had influence over local elections (78.80%), while 21.20% disagreed. The main reason cited for this influence was their close connection with the public and involvement in local activities such as merit-making ceremonies, funerals, and traditional events (45.13%), followed by a strong voter base and long-standing relationships with the community (43.19%). Most people believed that if local political groups did not receive support from national parties, it would have some impact, but local administrations would still be able to manage on their own (37.50%). These findings suggest that local politics remains shaped by cultural ties and personal relationships within the community. At the same time, they reflect a growing sense of local autonomy, even in the absence of national-level political backing.



One of the most striking aspects of this poll is that in the recent municipal elections, all winning candidates were affiliated with major political parties that already held power in local politics. This outcome suggests that local political activity continues to rely heavily on support from national-level political forces. Without backing from a major party—especially one in power—it becomes significantly more difficult to advance local development in any meaningful way. Moreover, political loyalty at the local level often stems from everyday economic needs and a culture of obligation, which further strengthens the dominance of major parties in elections. As a result, candidates supported by powerful national parties secured victory in this round. However, this also reflects a broader stagnation in Thai politics, particularly in localized areas, where there is limited space for new political actors to emerge and offer alternative visions for development—free from clientelist traditions.



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