The New Power Party (NPP) is the only “third force” party likely to be awarded at-large legislative seats, according to a new poll released yesterday by the Taiwan Thinktank, which also showed that a large majority of the party’s supporters come from the “pan-green” camp.

The poll results show that the NPP has a support rating of 5.6 percent for voters’ at-large legislative seat ballot, compared with 4.3 percent for the People First Party (PFP), 3.7 percent for the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), 2.3 percent for the Green Party-Social Democratic Party Alliance (Green Party-SDP Alliance), 1.6 percent for the Free Taiwan Party and 0.7 percent for the Republic Party (Minkuotang, MKT).

The results, polled from an effective sample of 1,068 people, with a margin of error of 3 percentage points, suggest that among the smaller parties, only the NPP could reach the five percentage point vote threshold necessary to be awarded at-large legislative seats, while other parties couldmeet the 3.5 percent threshold to be eligible for political party subsidies.

Trend Survey and Research Co chief executive officer Chou Yung-hong (□□□) said that the Jan. 16 legislative elections were likely to lead to a “reshuffling” of small parties, with the TSU facing “extinction” amid the rise of “third force” parties associated with social movements, which have drawn support away from the TSU and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

“Supporters of [DPP presidential candidate] Tsai Ing-wen (□□□), and the NPP and SDP basically overlap,” Chou said, citing the closely matching percentages of young, educated voters, who form the core of Tsai’s and “third force” party voters.

“The vast majority of NPP voters support Tsai, but some of Tsai’s voters are not turning around and supporting DPP legislative candidates,” he said, adding that the poll showed the NPP’s support was not confined to northern Taiwan and urban areas, where most of its district candidates have been fielded.

“Even though there is some competition with DPP legislative district candidates, the NPP firmly supports Tsai because it knows that many of its supporters are also Tsai’s supporters,” said Hsu Yung-ming (□□□), a Soochow University political scientist who also serves on the NPP’s

executive committee.

Poll results showed that the NPP strategy was correct, he said.

Attempts to integrate the NPP and SDP reportedly failed over the issue of whether a proposed alliance would support Tsai, with the SDP insisting on maintaining neutrality.

Steve Wang (□□□), an assistant professor in the Institute of European Studies at Nanhua University, said the poll suggest the need for the NPP and the Green Party-SDP Alliance to make electoral strategy adjustments, presenting themselves as more “green” to attract more votes from DPP and TSU supporters.

He said the alliance’s electoral focus on environmental and social justice issues failed to address voters’ concerns.

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