

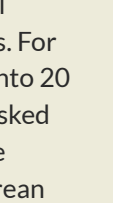
2021 MIGRANT

PERCEPTION SURVEY

About the Survey

What

The Migrant Perceptions Survey is an annual nationwide questionnaire for Asian migrants. For the research, New Zealand is broken down into 20 regions / sub-regions and respondents are asked about various aspects of their lives here. The Survey is available in Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese.

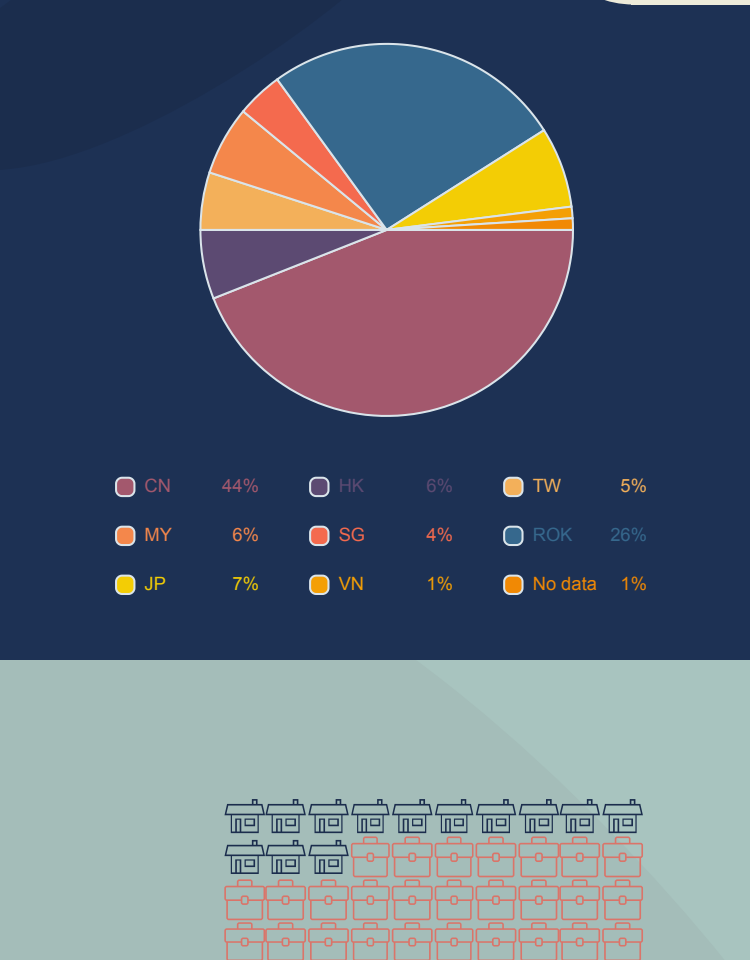


The Survey's Rationale

Why

Asian migrants to New Zealand make up approximately 15.1% of our population. According to statistics NZ this number is expected to increase to 26% by 2043. There is limited knowledge, particularly at a local level, about these communities. Our Survey seeks to build a better understanding of our migrant communities.

Respondents by language



History

When

The Migrant Perceptions Survey was first published in Simplified Chinese in 2017 and received approximately 2,000 responses. Over the following years additional languages were added and now include: Simplified Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese, making it accessible to approximately 400,000 speakers in New Zealand. In 2021, 13,342 migrants, and international students responded to the survey.

Vocations

Who

Of the respondents, 69% are working either as an employee, self-employed or as an employer. 18% are currently studying or have recently graduated and are looking for employment. This figure has significantly decreased from previous years, due to border closures. 13% are not working or studying and are mostly stay-at-home parents, or are retired, with a small number unemployed.

Basic Demographics

Who

65% of respondents are female. 72% are between the ages of 25 and 65 years old.

2021 SURVEY

FINDINGS

Executive Summary

A bit grim

Every year the Migrants Survey provides a score to indicate how welcoming New Zealand is for Asian Migrants. The score is based on feedback from Survey respondents and takes into account a range of local and national factors. The higher the score, the more welcomed Asian migrants feel. In 2021 New Zealand received its lowest score since the Survey began in 2017, down 9% on the previous year's results.

There is a range of factors underpinning the decrease in confidence expressed in this year's Survey.

At a national level, closed borders prevent migrants from travelling and meeting overseas family and friends.

Economic uncertainty is also a major issue. Asian migrants are 70% more likely to own a business than a non-migrant. Uncertainty about lockdowns and borders, as well as perceived 'unfriendly' government policies, are a major source of concern. Immigration NZ is also in the firing line, over slow processing and communication. At a local level, increased anti-Asian sentiment has been on the rise, with more reports of racism than in previous surveys.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, councils and businesses have moved more services online, further exacerbating the language issues, with migrants needing to navigate websites in English. With borders closed many councils have withdrawn from their international engagements which has had a negative psychological impact on migrants.

As general rule, migrants living on the North Island feel more welcome than those on the South Island, with Auckland, Wellington, the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions being considered the most hospitable. Of the remaining regions, Hastings District in particular, made good progress towards becoming a more welcoming community in 2021.

Areas where there are large existing migrant communities are generally more welcoming but come with a range of other challenges. Migrants living in areas with high Maori populations also feel more included than those living in predominantly pakeha communities. Bi/Multiculturalism plays an important role in how welcoming a community is.

Respondents were asked to list their top concerns. 80% cite their primary problem as the language barrier. Councils, generally, are particularly poor at providing translations. The Eastern Bay of Plenty councils are an exception, with all three councils providing district and service information in Chinese, Japanese and Korean. Migrants also indicated they are far more likely to buy from businesses which provide translations on their websites.

It isn't all bad. There is a feeling that things will improve in 2022 once New Zealand reconnects with the world. While it is difficult to enact change at a national level, locally, councils can make a big difference to how welcoming their communities are. Several districts have found inexpensive and innovative solutions to engage with migrants.

Key Indicators

The data



68%

2021



77%

2020

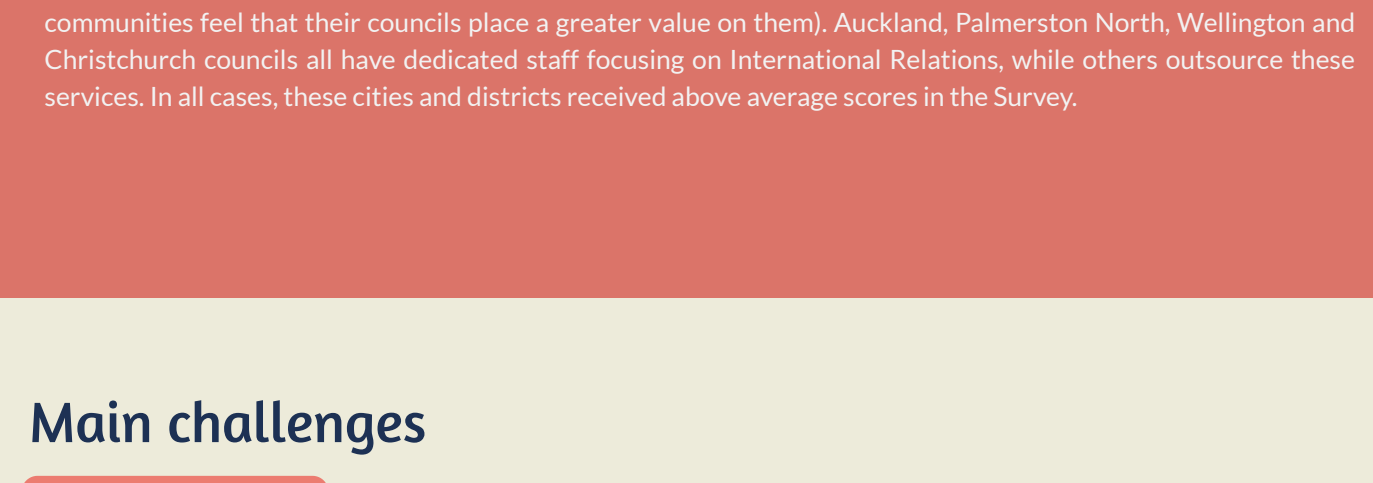


75%

2019

The Survey looks at 11 key indicators which are outlined below. Each indicator is made up of multiple data points. Respondents are also encouraged to provide additional feedback.

Scores Indicating Satisfaction Of Each Indicator



Education in New Zealand is generally held in high regard. Regardless of disruptions to the school year migrants still feel the education system meets their needs.

Healthcare also did not see a dramatic decline from the 2020 results. There is concern about the quality of New Zealand's public healthcare system, in particular, its ability to cope when Covid19 spreads throughout the community.

Housing. There is a noticeable decline in satisfaction since last year's Survey, as house prices and rents continue to rise across the country. Many migrants are mindful that there is a growing resentment towards them for "taking locals' homes".

Safety is also an increasing concern for migrants. 68% of respondents have experienced racism. Many migrants feel there has been an increase in theft and violence in their communities.

Work. This indicator covers both employees and employers. In 2020 many migrants felt discriminated against by their employers as New Zealand went into its first lockdown. This situation seems to have stabilised in 2021. Employers, however, are struggling thanks to poor access to information and support.

Welcoming. This section focuses mostly on how a community embraces diversity. Sadly, this is an area which performed poorly in 2021. The biggest decline occurred in areas where councils decided to halt their migrant engagement and international programmes. This has appeared to have had a significant psychological effect on their migrant communities.

Tourism remained stable regardless of lockdown. Many migrants reported that they had taken advantage of international border closures to explore New Zealand. 52% said they had visited somewhere new in 2021. Hawkes Bay, Bay of Plenty, Nelson-Tasman attracted the most new interest.

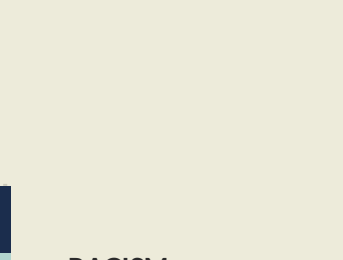
Transport is an area where migrants consistently rank New Zealand poorly. Poor transport services, lack of information about services and cost of service are the main reasons.

Services. The level of provision is generally good but many migrants are unaware of what is available to them. There a significant lack of information introducing both local and national services – a problem compounded by language barriers.

Entertainment. This indicator has remained stable, with more migrants reporting increased use of social media, streaming services and online games. Meanwhile, the use of entertainment facilities and businesses outside the home has decreased.

Livability. The overall score remains stable but there have been dramatic shifts in the regional rankings. Auckland has dropped dramatically whilst Hawke's Bay's score has seen a substantial increase.

Top Concerns For Migrant Business Owners



Regulation 51%

Settlement 15%

Opportunity 34%

19% or 1,334 of respondents are business owners.

Business owners were asked to fill out supplementary questions and to list their primary concerns establishing and running a business in New Zealand.

51% cited licencing, permits, consents and navigating regulation as their biggest hurdle running a business in New Zealand.

34% of respondents said they were willing and had resources to grow their business but struggled to find suitable opportunities.

15% cited settlement being a significant source of anxiety, particularly when relocating from a major city to a regional town.

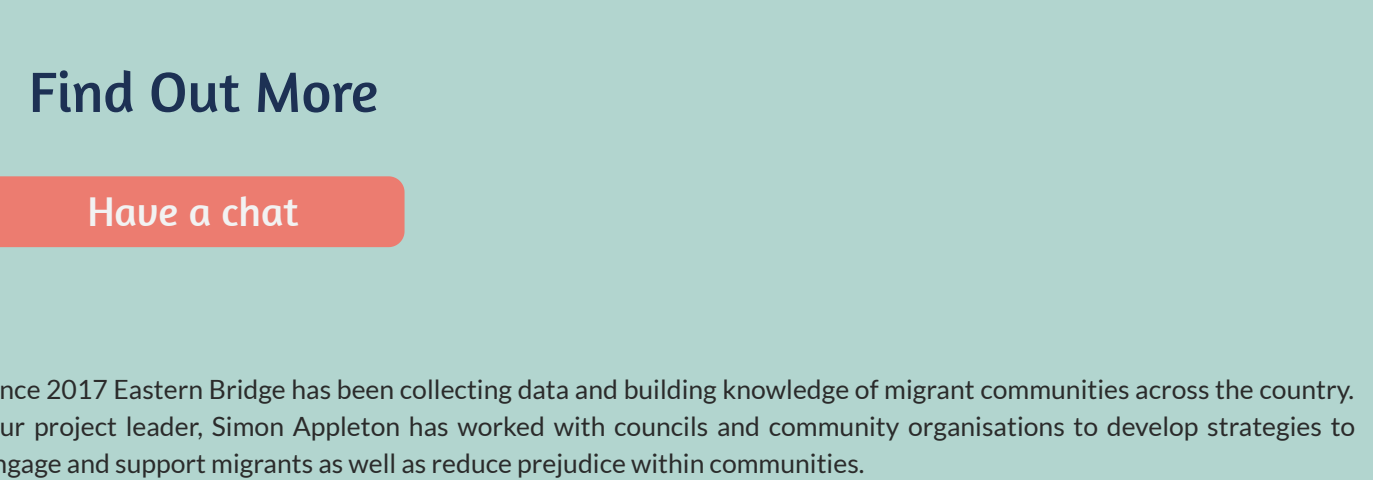
The regions

More data

2021 has seen a significant shift in how migrants perceive their communities. The data below looks at 20 geographic regions. The chart isn't necessarily a true indicator of how welcoming each community is. Individual towns and districts within a region may perform better than others. Certain indicators which may affect only a minority of the overall community may also distort the results.

When we look at individual districts and cities it is clear there are many variations in how councils engage with their migrant communities. Overall, it would appear that the majority of councils have now realised the importance of migrant engagement. More councils are deciding to join the government's "Welcoming Communities" programme, which is a very positive step forward.

Some councils rely on third party providers to deliver migrant engagement services. The results of this vary greatly. It is important for a council to undertake due diligence before they contract a company, charity, CCO or individual to deliver such services. In several instances a poor choice of service provider further alienated migrant communities.



While some councils used covid 19 as an excuse to halt their community engagement work, others used the downtime to revamp their community strategies, translate portions of their websites and engage directly with their migrant groups.

There are a number of councils which also look beyond New Zealand's borders. (Generally, the councils which are internationally facing, tend to be more supportive of their migrant communities and, in turn, their migrant communities feel that their councils place a greater value on them). Auckland, Palmerston North, Wellington and Christchurch councils all have dedicated staff focusing on International Relations, while others outsource these services. In all cases, these cities and districts received above average scores in the Survey.

Main challenges

The problems

Access to information / language assistance is the the number one concern for Asian migrants in New Zealand:

ACCESSING INFORMATION IN ASIAN LANGUAGES

Across all regions (but excluding Auckland) Asian migrants listed accessing information in their own language as their biggest challenge.

While many migrants have conversational English, the vast majority, over 80%, would prefer to access information in their native language.

Almost 20% of Asians migrants said that they would have very little comprehension of English language news and information.

The language barrier affects migrants in almost all areas of daily life in New Zealand. While several central government sites provide translations, much of the information available is siloed and difficult to find. Few local councils provide translations, and many of the ones that do, provide only superficial content.

Councils should consider providing access to information relating to: tourism, economic development and doing business (including licencing and permits), services, rates, building consents and an over view of resource management act legislation, for their migrant respondents.

Businesses would also benefit from being multi-lingual, with many migrants saying they would be more likely to buy from a business which makes an effort to communicate in their native language, either by a multi-lingual website or a social media account for a bi or multi lingual staff member.

LACK OF TRUSTWORTHY INFORMATION

An increasing concern for Asian migrants living in New Zealand is the amount of inaccurate or misleading information being circulated. Lack of trustworthy information has been the leading issue for migrants living in Auckland since 2019.

Publishers of untrustworthy information are ubiquitous and include several migrant news businesses, private companies, political organisations and individuals.

Offending businesses are often related to immigration, education, accounting, legal services and investment.

Addressing the spread of misleading information is challenging as it is often distributed through personal social media accounts. The worst offenders for sharing misleading information include the usual suspects; Facebook, Wechat, Line and Kakao.

RACISM

68% of respondents said they had experienced overt racism, while a further 15% have suffered passive racism. Migrants in all regions have experienced racial prejudice but the problem would seem to be more severe in certain districts.

Fortunately the proportion of migrants who have felt physically threatened because of their race is low, around 5%. This is, however, an increase of 2% since 2020.

ISOLATION

Approximately a third of migrants said they felt isolated from their community. Isolation affected migrants in smaller communities more than in the main centres like Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

For 62% of the immigrants who reported feelings of isolation, it isn't a significant concern. For 38% of respondents, however, isolation had the potential to affect their mental health. Around 20% of migrants were considering moving towns or cities to find a community which is more inclusive.

In most cases, migrants who feel isolated have lower English language proficiency.

Find Out More

Have a chat

Since 2017 Eastern Bridge has been collecting data and building knowledge of migrant communities across the country. Our project leader, Simon Appleton has worked with councils and community organisations to develop strategies to engage and support migrants as well as reduce prejudice within communities.



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