

Construction sector community research – Effectiveness of resources and messaging

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Making sense of the numbers

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Executive summary

This research was commissioned by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) and focuses on how INZ communicates with migrant workers who are coming into New Zealand on a variety of visas to work in the construction industry.

The intention was to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing INZ settlement resources and current forms of communication informing migrant workers and employers of their rights and responsibilities. In the process, the research sought to shed light on how the ecosystem of migrant labour in the construction sector operates and the broader messaging that INZ does. The aim was to expand INZ's understandings about:

- Who migrant workers in the construction sector are, and what has motivated them to come to New Zealand to work
- What their experiences of working in New Zealand are
- What the circumstances and conditions of their recruitment to come to New Zealand are, and how things play out when they are here
- How these migrant workers perceive their rights, and how they find out what their rights are
- More nuanced perspectives on how the construction sector ecosystem that includes migrant workers actually operates from the perspectives of employers, including the role of the settlement products that INZ supplies.

Consequently, the research sought insights on how effective the existing resources are; whether the messaging should differ based on the findings from a companion research piece on audience and communication channels; and if so, what can be changed.

Qualitative research focused on the Auckland construction sector where over half (52 percent) of migrant workers in the industry are based. By far the largest country of origin for migrant construction workers coming to New Zealand in 2020 was the Philippines (43 percent), with China being the second highest country of origin (10 percent). Historically, Malaysia has also been a high source of migrant construction workers. So, migrant worker participants were recruited from three migrant worker nationalities: Filipino, Chinese, and Malaysian.

We spoke with 22 migrant workers, six of whom are sole trader employers or supervise/manage workers. We also spoke with four managers at two Tier two New Zealand-owned construction companies, six worker advocates, two social media stakeholders, and a representative of an Asian business association. We conducted 30 interviews in total across 35 people, most of whom were based in Auckland, with one person in China and two others in regional New Zealand. Eight of the interviews were conducted in person, and the rest were done via Zoom because of changes in COVID-19 Alert Levels in August 2021.

We designed an interactive segment for the interviews where we had people look at the settlement booklets that INZ produces for migrant construction workers and employers, and engage with the INZ websites to show us how they use them. However, while this was redesigned because of the shift to online interviews over Zoom, this did not affect the findings. Because overall, workers and employers found these products to be of only limited utility. Only two people had actually seen the booklets: a worker and an employer.

The worker who had seen it, hadn't read it. The rest of the workers were not aware the book existed, and most did not have the language skills in English to read it anyway. This is because both booklets are only available in English. Therefore, all the workers sought in-language interpretations of INZ information online and through in-person networks instead.

The other interviewee who had seen the booklets is Chinese-Malaysian and the business development director of his New Zealand-based subsidiary of an Asian-owned global construction company. He found them of very limited utility, because they did not reflect his workers' or his own experiences of being a migrant. Nor did they have much useful information about supporting and managing a workforce of predominantly Chinese migrant workers.

Engagement with the INZ websites was similar. Most migrant workers we spoke with did not use the INZ websites, because their English was not good enough, and more contextualised and culturally nuanced in-language versions of INZ information were available elsewhere. Those who had the necessary English language capacity did access the websites, but the information they found would generally always be supplemented and contextualised by the other versions of the information. These other versions were accessed predominantly through social media and/or face-to-face via friends/ family/ associates' networks, where the translating industry is busy contextualising and culturally nuancing INZ information.

Migrant and New Zealand employers, and managers/supervisors of migrant workers did use the INZ websites. However, these groups found the information did not answer the questions they needed answers to, and perceived their relationship with INZ to be frustrating and inadequate. Employers did not feel the pressures of the construction industry and what they needed as employers was understood, and felt INZ were akin to a "black box".

The information conveyed in the settlement and compliance products is legally and technically correct, so the issue is not that the information on the INZ websites or in the booklets is not good or accurate information. Rather the issues are that:

- The booklets and websites are only available in English, which makes them inaccessible for people with limited English
- The information produced by INZ is 'one dimensional' in that the formats do not cater enough to literacy levels and different ways of processing information
- The information is produced from a single cultural lens, so it does not provide the necessary context and cultural nuance required for effective communication.

We undertook desktop research looking at the ways immigration services in comparative countries communicates with workers and employers. Elsewhere, these government agencies are successfully embracing relevant languages to issue their information in. They are using multiple forms to represent and communicate the information: from written, pictorial, and diagrammatic, to narrative story forms, video, interactive chat groups, and forums, and webinars. They are also producing information in modalities that facilitate accessing online systems via mobile phones, as well as other devices. Many overseas government agencies disseminate information on platforms that migrant workers are already engaging with. The information is provided in targeted ways to combat worker exploitation and visa non-compliance, and in culturally appropriate ways to strategically facilitate communication. They are also focusing on communicating their intent to be consumer-centric in the services they supply.

Australia and Canada, for example, are being purposeful about building trust in their systems as an important step in developing effective communications. Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada launched a campaign to both highlight the importance and value of the migrant workforce and shed light on how the immigration system there works. In Australia, an agreement between the Australian Department of Internal Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman, called the Assurance Protocol, allowed migrant workers to seek help if they found themselves in exploitative situations, without the risk of getting deported. Thereby creating mechanisms that are specifically victim-centric and that give visibility to enforcement processes. These countries were developing resources for migrants in consultation with migrant communities and the sectors they are working in.

We also found research that shows the effectiveness of information campaigns in migrants' home countries as a way to counter unscrupulous recruitment processes in these locations. These were conducted predominantly online via the social media channels that were relevant to the target audience. A study on the behaviour of potential 'irregular' migrants (those who enter a country in violation of the immigration laws of that country), showed that migrants who participated in awareness-raising campaigns were 20 percent less likely to partake in irregular migration compared to those who did not participate. This is relevant because at the moment, some migrant workers coming to New Zealand have no way to access information in their home countries on the rules and rights of working here to check the promises made by recruiters.

The recommendations of this research are:

- Provide information in multiple languages
 - Having settlement and compliance products only in written English creates a real barrier for workers with low written English literacy skills
- Provide information in different formats
 - Using forms that are more varied than written information in booklets and on websites, can deliver information in contextualised and culturally nuanced ways, including spoken, pictorial, and diagrammatic information
- Widen the distribution channels and platforms of information, including collaborations with third parties
 - Third party translators are using Chinese social media and WeChat to communicate with the Chinese community in New Zealand and China, and Facebook to engage with Filipino and Malay communities around the world
 - Partnering with community organisations, Licenced Immigration Advisors, and worker advocate groups may help to disseminate information on official as well as unofficial networks
- Take a whole of government approach to the information needs of migrant workers and their employers
 - Whole of government and industry collaboration is key to shared understanding of the role of migrant workers in the construction sector.

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1 Introduction

Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) was commissioned by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) to undertake research on communicating with migrant workers in the construction sector who are coming into New Zealand on a variety of visas. The research comes under one of four priority initiatives in the INZ Construction Sector Strategy, being to increase the reach of information and education in the construction sector.¹

In order to understand the reach and usefulness of current information channels, INZ sought insights on the effectiveness of the settlement products supplied to employers and migrants. These products are intended to facilitate robust and fair work relationships with migrant workers in the construction sector, and visa compliance. Effective communication in the construction sector ecosystem is about ensuring fairness to migrant workers and the necessary support that INZ can give to the increased productivity of the construction sector in New Zealand. Therefore, this research will seek to evaluate the effectiveness of existing settlement resources and messaging.

The overall research objectives were to:

- Tell the stories of migrant workers who are coming to New Zealand to work on the array of visas that permit work, and the settlement products that INZ provides these workers
- Understand the perspectives of employers who are employing migrant workers in the construction sector to get insights on the way the ecosystem is working in the current regulatory environment. A particular focus was to be on the settlement products that INZ supplies employers.

The research was intended to generate insights on the effectiveness of current forms of communication informing migrant workers and employers of the rights and responsibilities of migrant workers in the construction sector. Additionally, it would shed light on how the ecosystem of migrant labour in the construction sector operates.

1.1 Scope

This research focuses on INZ communication processes to and within the construction sector, with a focus on migrant workers who are working legally in New Zealand, and people who are employing them. INZ considers that, within the construction sector, there are hard-to-reach communities of workers who may be at risk of exploitation from their employers, and/or may not be following the conditions of their visa.

The research focused on three migrant worker nationalities – Chinese, Malaysian, and Filipino workers – as identified by INZ in its operational activities. Unite Union advocate, Julia Liu summarised the issues this way: “There is a language barrier, a culture barrier, and a knowledge barrier.”² Part of this research was about shedding light on how these barriers are impacting migrant workers and employers of these workers within the construction sector ecosystem.

INZ had a set of assumptions/perceptions about the hard-to-reach worker communities that they are seeking to communicate more effectively with. These included:

¹ Priority initiatives in the INZ Construction Sector Strategy, approved 28 April 2021.

² <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/124279195/its-all-fake-chinese-migrant-builders-sold-a-dream-left-exploited-and-hungry>

- Hard-to-reach worker communities are likely not being reached by the settlement and compliance information provided by INZ
- The impact on migrant workers who are not following the conditions of their visa is that they are at risk of exploitation from their employers
- The impact on INZ is that visas are not being used for the purpose that they have been approved for. This adds to compliance costs and places migrant workers at risk.

The understanding that INZ have of the migrant worker community and their relationship with their employers was limited. Therefore, the following constituted the scope of the research process:

- Who migrant workers in the construction sector are, and what has motivated them to come to New Zealand to work
- What their experiences of working in New Zealand are
- What are the circumstances and conditions of their recruitment to come to New Zealand, and how things play out when they are here
- How do these migrant workers perceive their rights, and how they find out what their rights are
- More nuanced perspectives on how the construction sector ecosystem that includes migrant workers actually operates from the perspectives of employers, including the role of the settlement products that INZ supplies.

INZ already provides resources for migrants in the construction sector. However, the effectiveness of these resources hasn't been tracked. There are currently people working who are unaware of or not following the conditions of their visa. Without the effectiveness of INZ's resources being captured, it is hard to know whether they are successful with those they are currently reaching, and therefore appropriate for the hard-to-reach communities.

INZ wishes to understand:

- How effective are the existing resources? Do they cover information on both settlement as well as compliance?
- Should the messaging differ based on the findings from the partner research piece on communication channels
- What can be changed.

2 Findings

To answer the research questions, we predominantly utilised qualitative research (interviews). The methodology for the interviews included information gathering and relationship building to facilitate recruitment of interview participants. Preparation included discussions with stakeholders and employers, community leaders, and worker advocates to pitch the idea of the research in order to establish the integrity and parameters of the research, as well as the potential contribution it can make.

We also undertook quantitative research of publicly available Immigration New Zealand (INZ) data to better understand the nature of migrant work in the construction sector. Finally, we scanned academic, government, and market research to better understand how some comparative countries communicate with migrant workers.

This section covers the research findings. Further detail about the research methodology, including interview participants can be found in Appendix A. The data tables are in Appendix B.

2.1 Interviews with migrant workers, employers, and stakeholders

This section presents the findings from interviews with migrant workers, employers of migrant workers, and stakeholders. To maintain confidentiality, migrant workers and employers are given unique identifier codes, which are used to attribute quotes and experiences to throughout this sub-section. Appendix A provides further details of these interviewees.

2.1.1 How effective are the existing resources?

The existing settlement booklet and website resources are valid, and cover the legal and policy issues they need to.^{3,4} However, the way they do so is failing to engage with the lived experience and world view of Chinese, Filipino, and Malay migrant construction workers. The resources are currently 'one size fits all', with one dimensional information (a single focus or concern), and produced in English with a Eurocentric lens. This means that while the information is present, it is not effectively communicated in ways that make sense to migrants with limited English in particular. Consequently, the resources do not have the context and cultural nuance that Chinese, Filipino, and Malay migrant workers in the construction industry need to consume the INZ information on compliance. The resources also do not reflect the issues that the Chinese, Filipino, and Malay migrant workers communities face in terms of what exploitation is, understanding and exerting their rights as workers, and the process of settling and living in New Zealand.

For construction sector employers, the information in these products is relevant, but does not get to the detail of specific contingencies that they need answers to in ways that would support their businesses.

What people said about the booklets

Virtually all of the migrant workers and employers from all three of the ethnic communities that we spoke with had not seen the booklet, '*Working in Construction in New Zealand*.' For the most part, the employers were also unaware of this and the '*Are you Employing Migrant Construction Workers?*' booklet too.

³ <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/employ-migrants/guides/construction-guide>

⁴ <https://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/resources/working-in-construction>

People's reactions to the booklets were varied: Mr CW15, a construction site supervisor and project manager for a Chinese developer, laughed when we showed him the booklet and explained what it was. He said he had not seen it before, and noted that "those things are just too western." He didn't feel that it was a form of information that was very useful to him, and said "we need an actual example." By this he meant a more narrative style of imparting information about settling into New Zealand, explaining what exploitation can look, and how worker rights can make a difference. In reference to the logic of the information in the booklets and the scope of the information about settling in New Zealand that they contained, Mr CW15, said that the booklet was disconnected from who he was when he arrived in 2017. "These things, although true, sounds like fairy tales, they are so far from my experience. So that's the logic... we know it's true, but we don't believe it until we experience it ourselves."

Mr CW16, a spray painter, who had not seen the booklet either, said that a source of information like that would be very useful to him because its "officialness" signalled to him that it contained trustworthy information. However, his English is not good enough to read it. He said, "The language barrier is the biggest, most significant thing, it is very difficult for me to access and understand INZ information."

Ms CW20 and her husband came to New Zealand in 2017 when her husband secured an essential work visa as a ticketed structural steel rigger welder. She said she had not seen the booklet and that her English would not have been good enough anyway to read it. However, the Chinese immigration agent that they paid \$NZD20,000 to, provided them with very useful settlement information in Mandarin, which really helped them connect to the Chinese community in the Eastern suburbs of Auckland. This is where they found accommodation and where her husband's New Zealand-owned employer is based.

Mr ME&W13, a civil engineer who is the business development director of the New Zealand-subsidary of an Asian-owned global construction company, said that while his organisation has accessed both the employee and employer versions of the booklets, both were "good enough... [but only] because I've worked overseas so much, this is my fourth country, so I know how it works as a migrant." The point he was making is that the information contained in the resources has very limited utility for him, a Chinese Singaporean migrant senior manager of a company that is in the process of establishing and growing in the New Zealand environment. The company currently has a workforce of around 20, most of whom are Chinese or Chinese Malay migrant workers. Their way of settling and looking after their workforce is based on Chinese systems of appropriate honour-bound interactions that befit the formal relationship of mutual benefit between the employer and employee, but with deference to hierarchy that is characteristic of Chinese business protocols. The booklet is too broad to address these considerations.

The response to the booklets was similar amongst the Filipino participants. The Filipino union/migrant advocate hadn't seen the booklets, and noted that the Filipino tradespeople that his union supports often don't have education beyond primary school. Some would struggle to read a booklet like that in Tagalog let alone English. So Filipino workers are not likely to get their information about settlement and compliance through reading, rather "they get the information when they're being told a story. That's why we're conducting the hui [online in lockdown and face to face when we are not in lockdown]."

One Filipino worker, Mr FW4, a pipe logger, had seen the book, but he couldn't remember where. We asked if he had read it and he said no, because his life was too much about work and then resting and then work again, so there was no time or inclination to read this type of booklet. He

was a member of the union that the Filipino union/migrant advocate organises for, so he said that that is where he gets all his information on workers' rights and immigration matters.

Mr FW5, a scaffolder, hadn't seen the booklet. His New Zealand partner and their young baby were at the interview – she said that she would take the booklet, and read and explain it to him because his English wasn't good enough. English language ability was an issue for most of the Filipino tradespeople, but as MFW1 said, "Filipinos in the construction industry usually are not good with English, but that is the only thing we are not good at. When you talk about the work, we are better than most."

What people said about the websites

Most migrant workers we spoke with did not use the INZ websites, because their English was not good enough. Those who had the necessary English language capacity did access the websites, but the information they found would generally always be supplemented and contextualised by other versions of the information. These other versions were accessed predominantly through social media and/or face to face via friends/ family/ associates' networks, where the interpreting industry is busy contextualising and culturally nuancing INZ information.

Mr MW7, a truck driver, who has been in New Zealand since 2017, was typical in his response. He said that he does not follow the INZ websites generally. His main sources of information about immigration issues, and for the process he went through to settle here, are friend networks and Facebook. Of the immigration Facebook groups he follows, he said people post a question and then someone explains so "we don't have to do much research... they actually explain what's happening... so it's much easier to get information on Facebook instead of the immigration website." He said that a Licenced Immigration Advisor posts on the page regularly. Mr MW7 accesses Facebook on his phone and said, "Once I go to work, I'll be driving for, like 10 to 11 hours, so my phone is definitely away. But once I get home, I'll be tired, I'll just scroll around on Facebook and catch up with friends and family on."

Mr CW14, a plumbing wholesale business salesperson, did a stint as an education consultant after graduating with his Masters of Business Administration from AUT. He facilitated bringing students from China to New Zealand to study, and routinely used the INZ websites in this work. He indicated that these were only useful if you had a high enough level of English, saying "the Government might think those websites are good, but for us, in China, lots of people do not have any English. So especially for people who just want to come here to work for money and go back to China, they might not be very helpful." He also commented on the cultural framing of the information on the websites. He pointed to an image of a woman and a group of children on the front page of the New Zealand Now website and said, "I don't see that, women that young with children...we have to work, not hiking like this." In terms of settlement and orientating himself in New Zealand and the way other Chinese migrants would do this, he said, "If I have work/life problems, I usually don't use English websites to find solutions. I ask friends, or I go to Chinese sites that are in my language."

Mr CW15, who arrived in 2017 and has a Master of Global Business from AUT, said that the INZ websites were well designed and useful, but this was something he has come to understand. He said, "As I spend more and more time in New Zealand, that's when I find these websites increasingly helpful. But when I just got here, I believed more in my compatriots, they gave me the information that helped me settle here, it was cultural shock I guess."

Ms FW6 works for a labour hire company in Auckland and looks after the needs of the 120 Filipino workers in the company. These workers are mostly carpenters and concrete workers, and some steel fixers. She observed that the Filipino workers she deals with would not go to the websites because their English is not good enough. She said the English barrier is daunting for them and the situations migrants encounter in their visa applications and in worker right contexts, are often grey and not easily answered on the INZ websites. So, they go looking elsewhere for the answers. Largely this means engaging on Facebook with non-governmental organisations and the broader Filipino community in New Zealand and elsewhere.

What is missing in the INZ booklets and websites from the migrant workers' point of view?

The Migrant Association advocate, who is also a Licenced Immigration Advisor, asserted that the settlement and compliance resources have limited utility for the migrant workers she supports,

“The information is all there legally, technically, but what does it mean to a layperson? Are people able to translate that information? I find people aren't. People are still asking...we still have a lot of people come back, even people who speak English well, so they are competent enough to navigate on the net or read these books, but they will still bring their questions to someone like me, or Citizens Advice Bureau. They ask 'okay, so what does that English really mean? What does that mean for me?' So, I think people still want that human element, they need assurance, reassurance... when a person is learning about something that is this important, you can't just read that stuff somewhere, INZ can't just automate that stuff.”

The issue is not that the information on the INZ websites or in the booklets is not good information, because it is. Rather, it is more that this information is one dimensional and Eurocentric in the way it's created. Whereby, the information lacks context and cultural nuance, both of which are important to facilitate the process of communication, for those who do not speak English well and have not grown up in Western environments.

The migrant workers we spoke with talked about how they find that context and cultural nuance via the various versions of social media they access. Ms FW6 said that INZ information gets shared on Facebook group chats in discussions. She said the Filipino workers follow Filipino groups on Facebook, where people in the groups try to interpret the latest changes in immigration policies:

“Those Filipino groups have live events where they allow a forum, and you get to ask questions, and they respond to the questions, and it's all in Tagalog... if INZ wanted to communicate to a group of Filipinos, they need to use our language, and Facebook, that is key.”

The ways that the Filipino union/migrant advocate and the organisation he works for convey interpretations of INZ information on workers' rights in particular are pitched perfectly with the target audience in mind so as to facilitate communication. The Facebook livestreams they do can have several hundred people watching, and then as many as 7,000 subsequent views. These livestreams are done in Tagalog, as are their in-person meetings, but they also utilise humour and shared cultural understandings in ways that engage the audience of Filipino construction workers, whilst imparting the information.

Mr CW15 posted a first-person narrative account on a SkyKiwi forum detailing the exploitation that he had experienced at an insulation company in Auckland. He did so because this was a meaningful format that is readily consumed in chat groups and on these types of forums. The booklets and INZ websites might outline what exploitation is, but an account like that reveals so

much more for a Chinese audience in terms of context and cultural nuance. The opportunity to comment and dialogue was equally important for Mr CW15, and possibly those who read and engaged with his post. He said, “I was also not very sure if what I experienced was legit or not; that’s why I wrote lots of those things down. Because obviously I saw there’s some exploitation there, but I wasn’t sure if it’s reasonable, so I just wrote it up to show it to everyone else, to get some comments on it.” He said that 80 percent of the comments were people expressing sympathy and support, but the other 20 percent who were “stakeholders and employers” were not. Someone posted in the comment section, “The New Zealand Chinese construction circle is small”, which was ominous for him. He was worried about another potential employer identifying him, but said that his current employer with whom he has been working with for six months “puts honour above profit to a certain degree, so I have good faith in him.”

When we asked the migrant workers from all three of the communities what it is that INZ does not understand or know about them, people talked about:

- Being separated from families
- The debt burden that paying to come to New Zealand and/or settling here has imposed on them
- The way they have to prioritise visa compliance and relegate worker rights if the employer they are tied to is not being honourable.

All the migrant workers were sending money back to their families and dependents at home or elsewhere in the world. None of these realities are addressed with any clarity in the settlement and compliance products that INZ produce.

Relationships: Employers, migrant construction workers, and INZ

The New Zealand and migrant employers we spoke with felt that INZ needed a greater understanding of the issues they face looking after their migrant workers and managing construction businesses, particularly in Auckland. Employing and managing the Filipino workforces of the Tier two New Zealand-owned and operated companies, Company A and Company B, requires work, skill, and understanding that is not adequately conveyed in the settlement products. Other Chinese, Malay, and Filipino participants who were employers or were involved in the care and supervision of migrant workers related insights that revealed the lack of context and cultural nuance in the INZ resources.

The importance of migrant workers for employers in Auckland

Both Tier two company A (Company A) and Tier two company B (Company B) asserted that their Filipino workforces are integral to their businesses. Company B has around 65 Filipino employees in their 250-person workforce, and these workers are “like gold” to them. They said “if we could have all Filipinos, we’d take them tomorrow” and talked about how hard working they are – they don’t complain and they turn up to work every day. Company B said “language can be a challenge at times, but other than that, they are phenomenal workers. Never a problem, you can count on one hand the number of problems we’ve had on the site with a Filipino.”

Company A and B, as well as several of the migrant employers and those who manage migrant workers commented on the lack of availability of skilled workers who are New Zealand citizens. They talked about the process of advertising for workers and having only New Zealanders of insufficient skill applying, or just not being interested in working. Company A and B both said that

there is not the volume required yet in the pipeline of skilled workers coming through the training institutions in New Zealand into industry. This means that the construction sector in Auckland and around the country, which is still growing, will continue to rely on migrant workers for skilled labour in the medium term.

Employers and the care of their migrant workforces

Company B recruited about half their current Filipino work force directly from the Philippines in 2016. Most have stayed with them and are now on work to residence (WTR) visas, and the company has helped bring a number of families out as well. Other Filipino workers have come to join their company, because they are known as good employers and are accredited. They have a Filipino payroll person who manages a lot of the needs of this workforce. They routinely offer advances to this workforce, more than their New Zealand workers for example, because of the obligations that the Filipino workers have towards family in the Philippines. Company B were aware that tying visas to employers, gave them a “false sense of security” but this provides them with some capacity to have a secure workforce. They are an accredited employer so they could offer WTR for many of their workers. Consequently, this sits within a relationship that is mutually beneficial for both workers and employer. Company B said,

“Once they get residency, we look for more ways to keep them loyal, they're looking for pathways that will allow them to stay here, and become New Zealand residents. That's the big ticket, because I think once they become residents, they're somewhat free to go where they want. And we're looking for ways, that once they get residency, how might we hook them in another way like offering them longer training. A lot of them are keen to get apprenticeships, so train. So, looking at how we might do that to help them as well is a priority.”

Company A has a total workforce of 100 employees, 17 of whom are Filipino, and has rented a house so a number of their guys live together. They put on regular events for them and they provide transport that they share. They said looking after their Filipino workers during the COVID-19 restrictions means being cognisant that their workers have not been able to get home for quite a while so “we make sure they have got damn good internet at the house so that they make those connections with family all the time.” Company A are not an accredited employer, and were frustrated that the new scheme to do this has been stalled. So, they remain active in making sure their workers are on time with their visa renewal processes. They see the very real impact on their workers because of the uncertainty around the visa system, and how there is no clarity on timeframes for how long this takes so this negatively compromises worker mental health.

Mr ME&W11 set up his labour hire company in response to his own experience of being exploited and living and working with others from Malaysia, Indonesia, and China who have suffered because of exploitation. He is seeking accreditation as well, and is also frustrated at the stalling of the scheme because his business model is based on paying workers at the appropriate rate with full visibility for those he contracts to as a version of competitive advantage. He is deploying his business acumen, entrepreneurship, and financial backing in an impact enterprise model, and combines this with his language skills and cultural understandings of how his workers see the world, to look after his workers.

Ms FW6 said that her responsibilities at the labour hire company she works for include helping with visa applications as well as managing of the upskilling of the Filipino workforce. Because labour is so scarce in Auckland at the moment, employees are being poached so one of the ways they are

trying to retain workers is by offering training towards New Zealand-recognised certifications in the trades.

The issue of exploitation for complying companies

Both Company A and Company B consider it a smarter and cheaper way to do business to look after workers, they are really intent on doing what they need to do to try and keep their people in the current environment and to “inspire loyalty and keep retention.” However, smaller companies who are exploiting workers are routinely encountered on worksites, and undermine the integrity of the whole system. Company B talked about how the new ‘look through contracts’ that Government projects require create real visibility around wages of all workers on sites, and the subcontractor-subcontractor-subcontractor layering that happens in the process. They were acutely aware of the extra work this requires of them. But they are supportive of the initiative because of the way the contracts could really make a difference to creating visibility around the employment structures of the cash economy segments of the construction industry and the way exploitation is happening. They get how this impacts them, but they are not sure if INZ does.

Mr ME&W13 talked about one of the biggest issues for his company is the exploitation going on that gives the perpetrators the capacity to quote at cheaper prices. As a Chinese-Singaporean run company, with a mostly Chinese migrant workforce, who work predominantly in the New Zealand-Chinese construction sector, the cash economy in this sector undermines their capacity to compete. He perceives these smaller companies to operate with a business model based on cutting cost through the exploitation of workers via low wage levels and the perpetual use of cash so as to avoid the tax system. Mr ME&W13 said these realities disadvantage complying and honourable companies like his who want to genuinely contribute to the New Zealand economy. We asked him if he thinks INZ understands what the issues are for him and his company. He laughed, and said, “I don’t know really if they know what the migrant workers feel or need exactly. There will be a common gap between the regulators and the people affected, that is normal in my experience. But it is worse here, so this needs to be bridged more.”

Employer relationships with INZ

In terms of direct relationships with INZ, one of the biggest issues for Company A and Company B was the process of going through a variation of conditions on visas, and extracting a potential employee from “an employer who’s not doing the right thing.” The timeframe for this is so fluid but the consequences are significant. Company A said,

“And sometimes we’ve waited more than three months for that to happen. So yeah, we agree. We like them tied to our business as well, we have invested in training these guys and they are valuable to us. But when you are trying to bring someone out of a bad situation and there are a few of them out there suffering that, it becomes very difficult to pull them away...they can’t resign from their current jobs, until they’ve got the visa sorted, or they could be without a job for three months and then they end up in a world of hurt as well.”

Company B said that, “INZ are not customer friendly, they won’t talk to you, they won’t give you information.” They too found the lack of clarity on timeframes for visa processing frustrating, using a building analogy to describe this:

“It’s like imagine that you’re building a house, and we would just build your house, we don’t tell you how long it’s going to take, or how much it’s going to cost. But every now and then we’ll give you a little bit of a jerk bait. ‘It’s gone up 600 grand. And while we might be finished around September, it could be July next year.’ There’s just too many variables and

too little information. And for our Filipino guys I talk to, it affects their mental health, it puts a lot of stress on those in the process. Because they are thinking, that if their visa doesn't get approved, at what point do they get kicked out of this country and have to go back to where they came from?"

Company A noted that INZ have done some great stuff lately though, like the removal of the need to recruit for a role that a migrant worker already has and is going to continue to have once their visa is renewed. But INZ remains a "black box" and not having a case officer who understands the nature of their business is a real pain point. Both companies use Licenced Immigration Advisors from time to time, but the cost is significant, and this is really a substitute for a solid, working relationship with INZ. Company B noted, "It's a huge opportunity for the Licenced Immigration Advisors, because they're obviously making some pretty big money because there's no other way for us to get answers. We literally have to pay somebody to ask the questions we should just be able to ask [and have answered]." Company A acknowledged that Licenced Immigration Advisors are not actually supplied to them by INZ, that they work independently and have an accredited knowledge of the system. But the current system does little to support business, so a commitment to be of mutual service in the bigger context would support the strategies of INZ and the realities that construction companies work within.

All of the employers and those who manage and support migrant workers considered that INZ lack understanding of what it takes to run a construction company. Company B expressed their perspective this way. They said INZ are,

"Black and white, but we in the construction industry have to deal with grey. There is a complete lack of flexibility in the system...so there's a failure to be able to even speak to anybody to explain that situation either. Some situations just don't fill in the required fields on the application form. And we can't have a conversation with anybody about that. So even when your intentions are honourable, while they hold this kind of scepticism over everyone it's as if they don't want to assist us in bringing people through this process and want to look at it from an auditing perspective, rather than at a co-operative perspective."

The employers and those who manage and support migrant workers have the perception that INZ are operating in a way that does not match the level of sophistication of business prowess and agility that their companies are having to work with in order to keep afloat and thrive within the albeit booming construction industry. Company B expressed a desire for INZ to "live a day in the life of a construction company" to evolve their understanding.

Wider relationships across Government and industry

A number of the stakeholder, advocate, and employer interviewees made comments on the bigger context of the relationships that characterise the construction sector and Government. Mr ME&W13 perceived a disconnect between INZ and workers and employers. New Zealand is the fourth country he has worked in for his parent company, so he is familiar with the 'ecosystem' in other contexts. He noted that in Singapore, there is purposeful and dedicated communication between government, employers, and employees in ways that foster a shared understanding of everything from regulation to prevailing work conditions. He referred to this as,

"The tripartite relationship...That means the employer, employee, and the ministry...That relationship needs to be bonded, constantly worked on and communicated in, which I find here is a bit lacking...Relationships are not maintained on a regular basis, not on schedule...So, I think the gap is bigger in New Zealand."

He talked about his experience of the networking that happens in other construction ecosystems that he has set up and managed companies elsewhere in the world. There were regular meetings face to face with government officials, employer and employee associations, and the various government agencies whereby there is “constant communication throughout the year ...you will have employers organising their own functions, they would invite people from grassroots and also from the authority, and vice versa, there are constant communication processes and channels for you to go to.” Here he was referring to a density of communication and a commitment to a level of engagement on the part of all participants in the ecosystem that is purposeful. Mr ME&W13 was an associate member of the New Zealand Malaysian Business Association (NZMBA) and the Master Builders Association on behalf of his employer, because these were mechanisms through which he and his organisation could connect into broader systems within the ecosystem. He said,

“I think we have to start from NZMBA and Master Builders [and other associations like these]. All these associations need to be connected and housed and managed by somebody from the ministry. So, when you get all the stakeholders to meet up regularly, then you have constant feedback, then you have a better understanding. Then people have a way to voice their opinion in a scheduled manner...instead of waiting for things to be overlooked, under-looked, under-taken care of.”

He commented on the intent at the level of government to communicate and engage with industry. He said in Singapore,

“The Government take it upon themselves that it is their responsibility, not just a purely private sector initiative...So, I would say New Zealand needs a more active, rather than passive approach, because if you wait for things to happen, then everything you do, decide, or the policy you set, are always two or three steps behind. A more active approach, to start communicating, understanding and getting involved — that’s how you can be one step behind at most...I do think a top-down approach has to be done. It’s not a one-dimensional issue; the government has to do their part and so does industry, and the workers for the whole thing to work. It’s very multi-dimensional. But they can start somewhere.”

The Chinese migrant employment advocate concurred. She said that what is needed is a more focused collaboration between INZ, Inland Revenue, and the Labour Inspectorate as an example of this higher-level commitment to relationships. She said,

“They must work together. An employer with compliance issues, they almost 100 percent always have tax issues, [but] they may not have immigration issues because they use immigration as their bargaining chip...so these three departments must work together more to make the enforcement more effective. Without enforcement, the law is toothless.”

2.2 Data analysis

The focus of this research was on the effectiveness and usefulness of existing resources and messaging for employers and migrant workers in the construction sector. To better understand the composition of the migrant workforce in the construction sector, we analysed INZ data from January to December 2020. Further detail on the data sources is in Appendix A, sub-section B.

2.2.1 Location of the migrant construction worker population

Over half of the migrant workers in the construction sector were based in Auckland with a total of 4,701 workers (52 percent). There was a considerable drop to the region with the next largest

migrant construction worker population, Canterbury with 792 workers (nine percent). Otago was not far behind with 597 workers (seven percent), largely due to having 25 percent of Builder's Labourers (108 out of 438).

Wellington and Waikato had 528 (six percent) and 492 (five percent) of migrant construction workers respectively. Wellington's numbers were boosted by high numbers of Painters (15 percent of the total), while Waikato had 11 percent of the Electricians (General). There are almost no migrant construction workers in the West Coast, with small numbers in the rest of the regions. However, the location of 1,212 was unknown (13 percent), and it could be that there are larger populations of migrant workers in some of these regions than the data would suggest.

Table 1 in Appendix B has further detail of the occupational spread throughout the regions. A total of 9,123 migrant construction workers are covered by this dataset.

2.2.2 Labour market checks

Close to sixty percent of all migrant construction workers had the case for their visa made by their employer (5,277 workers, 58 percent). Carpenters and Machinery Operators and Drivers are 55 percent of this group. Other Labour Market tests were undertaken for 1,170 workers (13 percent), while skill shortage lists supported the applications of 438 workers (five percent). This was made up of:

- Long Term Skill Shortage List – 255 workers (three percent), mostly Electrician (General) with 222 workers
- Construction and Infrastructure Skill Shortage List – 165 workers (two percent), over half are Carpenters (54 workers) or Fibrous Plasterer (36 workers)
- Immediate Skill Shortage List – 18 workers.

However, labour market checks were not recorded in the visa applications of 2,214 workers (24 percent), including half of the Electricians (General) (240 workers) and Building and Engineering Technicians (183 workers).

Table 3 in Appendix B has further detail of the labour market checks for each occupation. A total of 9,099 migrant construction workers are covered by this dataset.

2.2.3 Migrant construction worker demographics

Nationality/country of origin

By far the largest country of origin for migrant construction workers coming to New Zealand is the Philippines with 3,906 workers (43 percent). Sixty eight percent of all Carpenters came from the Philippines (1,887 workers), 70 percent of all Scaffolders (366 workers), and 34 percent of all Machinery Operators and Drivers (606 workers).

China was the second highest country of origin with 906 workers (10 percent), including 12 percent of Carpenters (324 workers) and 75 percent of Bricklayers (108 workers). Eighteen percent of Builder's Labourers (81 workers), and 17 percent of Scaffolders (90 workers) also came from China.

Seven hundred and eleven migrant construction workers came from India (eight percent). However, two thirds are Machinery Operators and Drivers, and Compliance Officers say this cohort is largely employed in horticulture not construction.

Thirty percent of all Electricians (General) came from South Africa (159 workers). Seventy six percent of Building and Engineering Technicians were from Mainland Europe (150 workers).

Table 2 in Appendix B has further detail of the nationality/country of origin of different construction occupations. A total of 9,123 migrant construction workers are covered by this dataset.

By age and gender

The majority of migrant construction workers were between ages 30–39 years (3,588 workers or 40 percent) and 40–49 years (2,832 workers or 32 percent). A smaller number are between 20–29 years (1,704 workers or 19 percent). This younger age group were more likely to be Builder's Labourers.

Unsurprisingly, with the construction sector being a highly masculinised workforce, 98 percent of migrant construction workers were males. Machinery Operators and Drivers (36 percent) and Construction Project Manager (11 percent) roles made up nearly half of the female migrant construction workforce.

Table 4 in Appendix B has further detail of age breakdown of different construction occupations (covering 8,973 migrant construction workers), while Table 5 details gender (9,219 workers).

2.3 Desktop research on channels used to communicate

The aim of this section is to provide evidence on the effectiveness of the channels used to communicate with potential and existing temporary migrants in countries outside New Zealand. It is crucial that the effect of all communication campaigns or policy measures be measured during and after the interventions to measure success and limitations. This ensures that the measures can be refined over time.

2.3.1 Building trust in the system is an important step in developing effective communication

An agreement between the Australian Department of Internal Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO), called the Assurance Protocol, allowed migrant workers to seek help if they found themselves in exploitative situations, without the risk of getting deported. Migrant workers who breached the conditions of their work-related visa and assisted FWO with their inquiries were protected from visa cancellations. As of 30 June 2018, the Assurance Protocol was applied to 35 visa holders, with 60 percent being student visa holders and 23 percent being on a temporary (skilled) work visa. The Department of Home Affairs noted the need to promote the protocol more effectively to reach wider groups of work visa holders.

In 2018, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) launched a campaign called Immigration matters. The purpose of this campaign was not just to promote a positive and fact based public perception of immigration, it also helped spread awareness about how Canada's immigration system worked. The campaign shed light on the cultural and economic benefits that immigrants brought to Canada. The campaign aimed to build positive engagement between temporary migrants and Canadians, highlighting the benefit migrants bring to local communities rather than how Canada helped newcomers succeed. The goal was to change the perception of immigration by way of humanising migrants and portraying them as more than just ways to fill labour shortages. This also helped build trust between the migrant community and IRCC, and portrayed IRCC as an organisation that was genuinely concerned about outcomes for migrants.

2.3.2 Awareness raising campaigns in source countries can help reduce irregular migration

Many studies have shown the importance of awareness raising campaigns before migrants leave for their host countries.⁵ Oftentimes, they do not have complete knowledge of their workplace and visa obligations even after arrival to their host country. Migrants who do not speak English are highly susceptible to being exploited by agents, and can be unaware of their visa conditions due to language barriers. Many migrants often begin their journeys with incomplete or inaccurate information. A study on the behaviour of potential irregular migrants⁶ showed that migrants who participated in awareness-raising campaigns were 20 percent less likely to partake in irregular migration compared to those who did not participate.⁷

Online campaigns were found to be the most efficient method to raise awareness in origin countries. They were able to reach a wider audience at a comparatively lower cost than in-person community events. These campaigns also generated a large amount of clicks and there was a high level of engagement through Facebook. A key aspect of the effectiveness of these campaigns was how the message was packaged. Personal experiences and testimonials shared by peers had a larger impact than official factsheets and leaflets as migrants could relate to the experiences and stories of their peers.

In June 2019, Canada launched an information campaign in India to warn potential migrants about immigration fraud and increase awareness about Canada's immigration system. This campaign was run in newspapers, radio, Facebook, and Google in English, French, Punjabi, and Hindi. The campaign is thought to have improved the quality of temporary migrant applicants to Canada. The European Union (EU) has also developed a similar strategy to reduce irregular migration.⁸ A large number of Indian citizens were found to be working in the EU on visitor visas. In response, the India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMP) was established. This was a framework for cooperation between India and the EU to better manage migration flows. The importance of understanding migrants' perspectives and challenges were identified as key to preventing irregularity.⁹ Moreover, it was also pointed out that community engagement was crucial, particularly through village leaders and social organisations. The importance of disseminating information on the risks and realities of irregular migration on both sides of the migration line, and providing avenues for voluntary returns was underscored. Seminars were held in the United Kingdom and India to educate migrants about visa types, avoiding fraudulent agents, and share stories of the challenges faced by irregular migrants, particularly in the case of low-skilled migrants who used the tourist visa channel to gain entry and then begin employment.

2.3.3 Using multiple channels and providing in-language resources improves engagement

A communication strategy that was noted as being particularly effective was disseminating important information using multiple sources, particularly in the target migrant groups' native

⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/migration/netcom/blog/awareness-raising-effects-in-origin-countries.htm>

⁶ Irregular migrants are those who enter a country in violation of the immigration laws of that country.

⁷ Tjaden, J. (2020). *Assessing the impact of awareness raising campaigns on potential migrants – what we have learned so far*. Retrieved from <https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/ch37-assessing-the-impact-of-awareness-raising.pdf>

⁸ International Centre for Migration Policy Development. (n.d.). *India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility*. Retrieved from <https://www.icmpd.org/file/download/54087/file/INDIA-EU%2520MIGRATION%2520GOVERNANCE%2520-%2520Initiatives%2520to%2520prevent%2520and%2520tackle%2520irregular%2520migration.pdf>

⁹ International Centre for Migration Policy Development an International Labour Organisation. (2019). *Seminar on sharing of good practices on migration governance*. <https://www.icmpd.org/file/download/47922/file/Seminar%2520of%2520Sharing%2520of%2520Good%2520Practices%2520on%2520Migration%2520Governance.pdf>

language. Communication channels should also make use of social media, places of worship, and migrants' connections with communities in their origin countries.¹⁰ These should be tailored to the specific migrant group being targeted. This ensures that migrants can access important information on their own and not rely on third parties such as agents and employers for important information on workplace rights and visa information.

This is something that has been recognised in Australia and Canada, and has been proven to be effective. As part of the FWO's Multicultural Access and Equity Plan 2016-2019, the FWO in Australia removed barriers of access to FWO advice and services for multicultural communities. An automatic translation of the FWO website was available in 36 non-English languages. The website also had a language help page with content available in 30 professionally translated languages. This included downloadable fact sheets on workplace rights and obligations and in-language video content. The in-language videos and other content was developed in consultation with migrant workers, community organisations, and cultural advisers. The anonymous reporting tool was available in 16 (non-English) languages. For the Seasonal Workers and Pacific Labour Scheme specific information, videos were being made available in eight additional Pacific Islander languages.

These resources were being used by migrants and were found to be effective. During the 2019-2020 year, FWO's website was translated 263,533 times, and their in-language information was viewed 222,672 times, which was a 77 percent increase from the year before.¹¹ The in-language videos were viewed over 56,000 times. The top three languages were simplified Chinese, Korean, and Spanish. After being provided feedback from the Migrant Workers' Taskforce, FWO redesigned its Fair Work Information Statement (the FWIS provided new employees with information about their conditions of employment). The anonymous reporting tool of the FWO enabled migrant workers to report employers who were breaching their rights in 16 non-English languages. During the 2019-2020 year, 1085 of these reports were made in a language other than English. Five percent of all reports were from the building and construction industry. The top languages (other than English) in which reports were filed were Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean, and Japanese. This data helped the FWO target its compliance activities to specific precincts in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane.¹²

There was a specific focus to increase compliance in the horticulture sector. To this end, the FWO developed a digital horticulture showcase, available in 36 languages, as a source of information on workplace rights and obligations for employees and employers, particularly migrants. This coincided with a large communications campaign to educate employers and workers in the horticulture industry, with social media and video advertising. Campaign messaging was seen over 6.7 million times over all channels. During 2019-2020, the pages in the showcase were viewed 95,000 times. The FWO also had a presence on social media such as Facebook, WeChat, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Employers and employees could create an account on their website to receive targeted information, based on the industry they were in. During 2019-2020, eight percent of all enquiries answered by FWO through their website were from the construction sector. They also used targeted advertisements on Korean and Chinese websites and Facebook. The Korean advertisements were viewed over a million times in 2017. Migrant workers also had the option to talk to FWO via an interpreter. This service was provided free of charge.

¹⁰ <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/guidelines/guideline-6-communicate-effectively-migrants>

¹¹ Fair Work Ombudsman (2020). *Fair Work Ombudsman Annual Report 2019-20*. Retrieved from <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/accountability/annual-reports>

¹² Commonwealth of Australia. (2019). *Report of the Migrant Workers Taskforce*. Retrieved from https://www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/mwt_final_report.pdf

The Australian Department of Home Affairs undertook regular awareness raising activities with employers to encourage voluntary compliance with employer obligations. During 2016-2017, 979 employer awareness activities were undertaken. One of the key strategies was to promote the Visa Entitlement Verification Online system (VEVO), which allowed visa holders, employers, education providers and other organisations to check visa conditions. Eight million checks were conducted in the 2016-2017 year alone.

In Canada, the Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) department of the Government of Canada also had some unique strategies in place to communicate with temporary migrants and build trust. Temporary foreign workers had the option to anonymously report abuse using an online form available on IRCC's website.¹³ This form was available in seven non-English languages, which were French, Hindi, Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Tagalog, and Thai. Moreover, they provided a fact sheet for temporary foreign workers on the official website.¹⁴ This fact sheet provided the contact details of workplace health and safety offices and employment standards offices in each territory and province. This was available in seven languages, other than English.

In Germany, Integreat was a government funded app that aimed to reduce information poverty amongst new migrants.¹⁵ The app was originally funded by a non-profit organisation and prize money, and then by local municipalities. These municipalities provided most of the information on the app, including help for migrants on work rights and where to seek aid. This official information could be accessed by migrants in multiple languages, depending on which municipality they wanted information on. For example, information on Munich was available in seven different languages. Due to the popularity of this app, now, 60 cities all over Germany participate and provide data and information on the app. This also provided an additional channel for migrants who were looking for information but might be hesitant to engage with official information channels, or might be blocked out of them due to limited fluency in the local language.

2.3.4 Evidence shows that in-language resources are extremely useful for migrants

The Migrant Workers' Taskforce of Australia conducted a survey to identify the best communication channels for migrant workers and the usefulness of existing channels.¹⁶ The survey had 2010 respondents from various ethnicities, ages, education levels, and industries. Results showed that the main sources of information for workers were in-language and English social media websites and family and friends in the country. In terms of usefulness, the FWO website was ranked the highest prior to arrival in Australia. The need for providing information at different points was highlighted by the fact that migrants indicated that the best times to receive information was when they were looking or applying for a job, when they started a new job, when their visa was granted or when they arrived in Australia.

Existing material that was rated the highest were FWO in-language videos, and the FWO and the official Department of Home Affairs Facebook pages. Participants also indicated that the government should provide information through universities, employers, libraries, and in-language social media pages to stress the importance of being aware of workplace rights and obligations. The survey also found that there was a divide between migrants who spoke English fluently and

¹³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/report-abuse/tool.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/protected-rights.html>

¹⁵ <https://integreat-app.de/en/>

¹⁶ Australian Government. (2018). *The information needs of vulnerable temporary migrant workers about workplace laws*. Retrieved from https://www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/migrant_workers_taskforce_final_report_appendix_d.pdf

those who didn't. Migrants who were fluent in English were more likely (by 14 percentage points) to access official information, while those who weren't would turn to in-language social media, online forums, or friends. Written information was identified as a useful medium since it could be machine translated, once again highlighting the importance of in-language resources.

The survey respondents also stated that the information they received through official channels was often too information heavy, which discouraged them from reading it. They preferred succinct, bullet pointed, key information, preferably fact sheets with good design and pictures/graphics that clearly send the main message across. Since the FWO in-language videos on workplace rights and laws were considered to be extremely helpful, respondents suggested that these should be widely circulated through social media, particularly in-language social media and YouTube, to increase awareness among the migrant community about the availability of these.

3 Recommendations

This research was undertaken in tandem with a partner report on the audience and communication channels for Immigration New Zealand (INZ) information. Although the research objectives and findings for the two reports differ, the recommendations for both reports are the same. The recommendations are to:

- Provide information in multiple languages
- Provide information in different formats
- Widen the distribution channels and platforms of information, including collaborations with third parties
- Take a whole of government approach to the information needs of migrant workers and employers.

The rationale and related findings for each recommendation follows.

3.1 Provide information in multiple languages

Currently, information about immigrating to and working in New Zealand, including employment law, is provided in a single language (English). Migrant workers overwhelmingly expressed a need to read immigration and employment information in languages they understand. Indeed, the burden is on the migrant worker to know their rights and obligations. Many identified they felt they had to choose complying with the conditions of their visa over exploitative working conditions. This is a false choice – complying with New Zealand employment law is key to complying with their visa. But lack of adequate English language ability excludes many migrant workers from accessing crucial information and knowledge.

An information vacuum has resulted from the mismatch in information needs and information provision. Into the vacuum has stepped an array of third parties, who are translating INZ information into a range of languages as part of their business model. There are no checks and balances on the accuracy of the translated information, which many migrant workers are relying on to make immigration and employment decisions.

Our desktop research found New Zealand is an outlier when it comes to providing information to migrant workers in English only. Research from the Migrant Workers' Taskforce in Australia found those who were not fluent in English were less likely to seek information from official channels. Immigration and employment information in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada is available in multiple languages through official channels. The European Union also provides relevant information in a range of languages.

Migrant workers understanding their employment rights and obligations is essential to migrant workers in the construction sector working lawfully in New Zealand and not being exploited.¹⁷ Using a wider range of languages representative of those in the migrant workforce will enable INZ to communicate more effectively on key issues around immigration and employment. At the least, given over half of migrant construction workers come from the Philippines or China, official information on working in construction in New Zealand would ideally be available in Tagalog and

¹⁷ Long term sector outcome in the INZ Construction Sector Strategy, approved 28 April 2021.

Simplified Chinese. More widely, INZ information needs to be produced in languages that can be understood by the main migrant groups coming to New Zealand to work in construction.

3.2 Provide information in different formats

Third party INZ information translators are finding numerous ways to package INZ information that are also culturally specific to ethnic groups. Providing information in a variety of formats resonates with migrant workers, particularly where it considers their experience of the world, the ways they are familiar with being communicated and engaged with, and their level of literacy. These third parties are using the multiple functions available within social media platforms to provide written, spoken, pictorial, and diagrammatic information. Additionally, they are leveraging off the platforms capacity to socially interact with others via discussions and dialogue about INZ information, and the particularities of individuals' and groups of workers' situations. This creates a layering of information that adds multiple dimensions to the one-dimensional nature of INZ information as it is provided at the moment.

In other countries, online campaigns have been shown to raise awareness with high levels of engagement. Personal experiences and testimonials showed a larger impact than official factsheets and leaflets. Where fact sheets have succeeded, they have been succinct and bullet pointed, with key information and good design. Pictures and graphics are also considered to be helpful where they convey the main message. In Canada, resources are available as webpages, in pdf format, in large print, braille, audio cassette and CD, e-text diskette and CD, and Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY).

Using the language of the migrant group *and* forms of information that are more varied than written information in booklets and on websites, can deliver information in contextualised and culturally nuanced ways. Licenced Immigration Advisors on Chinese social media and on Facebook, and worker advocate groups on Facebook who are targeting Chinese, Filipino, and Malay construction workers are potentially producing translated versions of INZ information that are impactful and achieving the aims of INZ. Collaborations between Licenced Immigration Advisors and worker advocate groups provide examples of democratising potentially high-quality translations, particularly when Licenced Immigration Advisors' expertise is combined with the mandates of the advocate groups.

3.3 Widen the distribution channels and platforms of information, including collaborations with third parties

Both the qualitative and desktop research was clear – migrant workers are using social media as a primary source of immigration and employment information. Ensuring migrant workers can access accurate official visa and employment information, includes distributing information on social media platforms (as well as in appropriate languages and formats) that they already use and have well established pathways to finding information they trust. Using multiple channels also counters the proliferation and the potentially partial translations of INZ information by taking the lead in online and community spaces in New Zealand, and in migrants' home countries.

These channels may also be offline – communication strategies that include places migrant workers socialise ensure they can access important information on their own, and not rely on paying a third party or asking their employer.

Would-be migrant workers outside of New Zealand need to be able to access information in their own language and in forms that they can engage with that can give them insights into what a recruiter can promise and provide – and what they can't. Workers coming to New Zealand need clarity on what the rules are for working in New Zealand, so they can be self-regulating and voluntarily compliant.

Some migrant construction workers may have access to laptop and desktop computers, but many will be accessing online content exclusively via their smart phones. Therefore, it's vital that information can be easily accessed, consumed, and understood on phone screens.

In New Zealand, access to information about what exploitation is and ways to get help with this that work with cultural conventions in the different communities is really important if the culture of non-compliance and the cash economy that abounds in the construction industry is to be changed. The need for sustainable stakeholder relationships has been acknowledged in the INZ Construction Sector Strategy, particularly in respect to INZ messaging reaching currently disconnected workers and communities in the sector.

Third party INZ information interpreters have stepped into the vacuum created by English-only resources. Some of these interpreters are doing a good job of providing varied, contextualised, and culturally nuanced INZ information, but others are giving partial, inaccurate, or misleading information. Some are financially extractive in inappropriate ways.

The activity of Licenced Immigration Advisors, for example, is less likely to be inappropriate, and in fact the way they translate information for migrant workers is clearly providing a service. However, their services are expensive and there is no clarity around how they are providing information and how much they retain information in order to preserve their business model. They are an important part of the wider INZ information system, but their ongoing capacity to provide accessible information needs further consideration if INZ want to deliver information to migrants that genuinely makes a difference. This is about democratising contextualised and culturally nuanced information. Collaborations between INZ, worker advocate groups, and Licenced Immigration Advisors though have the potential to deliver robust, democratised information.

3.4 Take a whole of government approach to the information needs of migrant workers and their employers

Research indicates that a whole of government approach is best used when it is clear that this approach will achieve the desired outcomes.¹⁸ In particular, whole of government approaches work well as strategic enablers, as responses to “wicked” problems, and to enable more effective service delivery models, which require sector or industry support and collaboration.

“The “whole of government” approach is one in which public service agencies work across portfolio boundaries, formally and informally, to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues. It aims to achieve policy coherence in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency. This approach is a response to departmentalism that focuses not only on policies but also on programme and project management.”¹⁹

A united approach is a key enabler in the INZ Construction Sector Strategy, particularly the need for all government agencies with construction interests to collaborate effectively to achieve shared

¹⁸ Colgan, A., Kennedy, L.A., and Doherty, N. (2014). *A Primer on implementing whole of government approaches*. Dublin: Centre for Effective Services.

¹⁹ https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_17-en.pdf

outcomes. Broadening the public focus to perpetrators of exploitation is vital to achieving the strategic objective of self-regulating and voluntarily compliant employers.²⁰ Strategically and purposefully fostering relationships with industry bodies and other government agencies will support the enforcement of consequences and penalties for the employers of non-visa compliant workers. Establishing positive relationships with sector bodies and major employers is a priority initiative in the Strategy, and our research with employers supports the work that is underway on this priority.

A whole of government approach also needs to consider mechanisms that improve modes of communication and engagement with construction sector employers of migrant workers, as well as relationships with industry bodies. Regular and varied communications and activities that raise awareness with employers have been shown to encourage voluntary compliance with employer obligations.

²⁰ Long term sector outcome in the INZ Construction Sector Strategy, approved 28 April 2021.

Appendix A Research methodology

To answer the research questions, the researchers utilised qualitative research (sub-section A) and data analysis (sub-section B). We also undertook a scan of academic, government, and market research to better understand how some comparative countries communicate with migrant workers.

A Interviews with migrant workers, employers, and stakeholders

We spoke with 35 people across 30 interviews, eight of which were conducted face to face and the others were done online via Zoom. In one instance, we used Zoom for video and WeChat for audio for a participant who was in China. The interviews were generally around one hour long, some ran up to two hours, and two interviews with social media stakeholders were around 40 minutes long.

There were two broad cohorts of interviewees: stakeholders and migrant workers. Stakeholders included advocates who are on the side of migrants, and employers of migrants in the construction sector. All the employers were workers as well, including some who owned their own business, ran businesses on behalf of larger organisations, or were in senior management so the category of ‘employer’ was more nuanced. Three of the 35 participants were New Zealand-born and the rest were migrants. The advocates were citizens, some workers and employers had permanent residence, and the rest were on various types of visas, from essential skills through to one who was currently on a visitor visa.

Interviews were held with:

- **Six Filipino workers**, including five male tradespeople, and a woman who is an administrator for a construction worker labour hire company
- **Seven Malay workers**: including two sole traders, a male and female, who owned their own businesses; a male labour hire company owner; a male CEO of a New Zealand subsidiary of a multinational Asian owned construction company; a male head of health and safety for a New Zealand subsidiary of a European owned Tier two company; two male tradespeople
- **Nine Chinese workers**: including six male tradespeople; the wife of a male tradesperson who is in China and unable to return to New Zealand due to managed isolation restrictions; and two sole traders, a male and a female, who own their own businesses
- **Four workers/management** at two Tier two New Zealand-owned construction companies
- **Two Facebook administrators** for Malaysian and Filipino Facebook pages
- **One representative from an Asian country business association**
- **Six worker advocates**: a male Australian immigration lawyer; a female Chinese migrant employment advocate; a male Filipino union/migrant advocate; a female Chinese union advocate; a male New Zealand Pākehā union advocate; and a Migrant Association advocate who is also a Licenced Immigration Advisor.

Recruitment of migrant worker participants was done across forums and WeChat groups on Chinese social media for ethnically Chinese people (some Malay fit this category), and across eleven

Facebook group pages for Malay and Filipino participants. Some participants contacted us to opt into the project after being told about the research by others we had interviewed.

Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms for workers and employers/other stakeholders were translated into Tagalog, Bahasa Malay, and Simplified Chinese, by the Translation Service at the Department of Internal Affairs. These documents were also in English, and there were stakeholder and worker advocate versions of these documents that were only in English.

We conducted a digital ethnography component while we were recruiting and as the project evolved, to assess the way social media is used to interact with information from INZ. Our Mandarin-speaking, New Zealand-born, Chinese-New Zealand research assistant did the recruitment for the ethnically Chinese participants, and our Thai-Singaporean Chinese research assistant did the recruitment of the Filipino and Malay participants.

At the proposal stage of the project, the intention was to conduct all the interviews in-person. However, changes in COVID-19 Alert Levels in Auckland from August 2021 meant that we had to pivot to online modalities. In some ways, this was an advantage, because workers and employers who previously worked 60–70 hour weeks or more on site were now far more available (and inclined) to do interviews. Doing interviews on Zoom was less straightforward, but the research team were able to work very effectively with participants so they could tell us their stories.

The focus of the ‘Effectiveness of Resources and Messaging’ part of the project in the interviews was designed to be more interactive. We planned to ask interviewees to give us feedback on specific parts of the physical booklets and three INZ websites via an iPad. However, in the in-person interviews we did before lockdown, the participants had not seen the products and were interested in them in limited ways only. Once it was only possible to do online interviews, the capacity to interact with both the booklets and the websites became too complex, especially when interpreters were in the mix. The planned interaction changed into a broader discussion with participants once lockdown happened. As the findings show, this did not compromise the outcome of the research process.

For interviews where the researchers did not speak the language of the participant, an interpreter from EziSpeak was present via Zoom for both in person and online interviews. Interviews were done by Dr Jane Horan, the research assistant who recruited the participant, the EziSpeak interpreter, and the participant, or with Dr Jane Horan and the participants if the interview was in English. Notes were taken in the interviews and recordings were made with participants’ consent to make sure verbatim quotes were recorded faithfully. Consent forms were signed by all participants, and worker participants were given a \$100 supermarket voucher to say thank you for doing the interview. Interviewees were all living in Auckland at the time of the interview, except for three who were elsewhere: one in Tauranga, one in Christchurch, and one in southern China.

Ethics review

We conducted an ethics review of the parameters of the scope of the project and the design of the methodology. This was done by peers of Dr Jane Horan by a convening of the ethics committee of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa New Zealand.²¹ The qualitative interview process, and the analysis and synthesis were done as per the ethical guidelines of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa New Zealand.²²

²¹ <https://www.asaanz.org/research-ethics>

²² <https://www.asaanz.org/code-of-ethics>

Interviewee biographies

The following bullet-points include the biographies of each of the interviewees, including occupation, relevant work and immigration history, and demographic features where relevant to the research. We used a shorthand system to code each interviewee, which is reflected in the findings in section two of the report. The shorthand system includes the codes: FW= Filipino worker; MW = Malay worker; CW = Chinese worker; E = employer. The interviewees were as follows:

- **Mr FW1:** Builder, leading hand; certifications in carpentry and cabinet and furniture making; late 30s; on work to residence (WTR) as of April 2021 which was organised by his employer; been travelling internationally for work since 2006 (Qatar, Saudi Arabia); arrived in New Zealand in October 2017, and has been working for the same labour hire company since he arrived. The labour hire company employs around 400 workers, mostly Filipinos (down from 1000 because of the level of poaching that is happening due to border closures)
- **Mr FW2:** Plumber; arrived in New Zealand in 2017; essential skills visa but his company are talking about WTR with him; worked offshore since 2006 (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, parts of Africa); late 30s
- **Mr FW3:** Fire rated door estimator and detailer; trained as an architect in the Philippines; arrived in New Zealand in 2017 on a tourist visa to see his daughter who is a nurse with permanent residence; found a job with a company who would sponsor his work visa; but can't find a 'WTR company' so just renews visas; has worked in Saudi Arabia and Qatar
- **Mr FW4:** Pipe lagger/insulator; mid-40s; came as a tourist in 2016, studied management at level seven for a year, then got a post-study work visa; has not worked elsewhere; was an operations manager in a security firm in the Philippines; did not use a "manpower company" (labour on hire agency)
- **Mr FW5:** Ticketed scaffolder; arrived in New Zealand in February 2019; early 30s; has a Pākehā New Zealander partner and nine-month-old baby; on an essential skills visa; worked in the Middle East
- **Ms FW6:** Came to New Zealand to finish her Masters in Management at the beginning of 2020 on a study visa; got a work visa to work as admin for a labour hire company who have a representative in the Philippines who is her neighbour there; Labour Hire company has 120 Filipino workers, mostly carpenters and concrete workers, and some steel fixers; late 20s
- **Mr MW7:** Concrete bulk truck driver; works for a large concrete company; came to New Zealand in 2017; standard work visa; mid 40s; wife and son were in New Zealand too, but could not renew visa so went back to Malaysia, he is trying to get them back here
- **Mr MW8:** Carpenter; Chinese Malay; 30; came to New Zealand in 2016; essential skills work visa; works for a Chinese-New Zealand company, his boss is Malay and they subcontract to Tier one companies; team leader because his English is excellent and he is very experienced; runs a team of up to 40 carpenters on site; came on a working holiday visa, then his wife got a study visa and eventually he got an essential skills visa
- **Mr MW9:** Quality, safety, health and environments (QSHE) national manager for a Tier two construction company that is a New Zealand subsidiary of a European-owned multinational

construction company; WTR and came to New Zealand with his family on a full relocation package in 2019; oversees health and safety on site, and sets and implements policy for his company; his company are involved in large infrastructure projects in Auckland; he deals with workers on the ground through to upper echelons of management of primary contractors on the infrastructure sites; late 30s

- **Mr MW&E 10:** Plasterer; has permanent residency, and owns his own company; employs a Māori man; mid 40s
- **Mr ME&W11:** Labour hire company owner with around 40 Chinese, Vietnamese, and Indonesian workers; has serious financial backing and came in on the investment visa; came to New Zealand for a break arriving the day before the first level four lockdown in 2020; decided to stay and work in construction labouring and fruit picking, but was appalled at the exploitation in the sectors, and is determined to set up his labour hire business in a way that makes being ethical a competitive advantage; late 20s
- **Ms ME&W12:** Kitchen and bathroom designer; owns a kitchen and bathroom renovation company that contracts in Chinese workers; has permanent residency, arrived in New Zealand in the late 90s
- **Mr ME&W13:** Civil engineer and business development director of a New Zealand subsidiary of an Asian-owned multinational construction company (employs around 1,500 workers globally); he has been establishing and building the company in New Zealand since 2018 when he arrived; they have a workforce that is predominantly Chinese migrants on visas; has worked around Asia extensively; on a skilled work visa; late 40s
- **Mr CW14:** Wholesale sales person in a plumbing business; mid 30s; came on a student visa in 2014 to study English and then chef training; then did a Masters of Business Administration at AUT, and got a post-study visa; currently has a standard work visa
- **Mr CW15:** Construction site supervisor and project manager for a Chinese developer; mid 30s; came to New Zealand in 2017 to do a global business masters at AUT on a study visa; currently has an open work visa; worked at an insulation company and was exploited, posted about this on SkyKiwi
- **Mr CW16:** Spray painter, early 30s; arrived in New Zealand in 2019; paid a recruitment agent \$40,000 to come here; worked extensively in Japan and Dubai and is considered very experienced
- **Mr CW17:** Carpenter but currently has a job painting; arrived in 2016; came to New Zealand on a tourist visa and found a job; no training in China, he served in the military; has permanent residency via his wife
- **Mr CW18:** Ticketed carpenter; arrived in New Zealand August 2018; late 40s; worked in Singapore and has carpentry qualifications from Singapore; paid a recruiter \$45,000; currently on a tourist visa because of irregularities with his recruiter, which has caused problems for him when he has sought to renew his visa. He is not currently working

- **Mr CW19:** Bricklayer; 30 years' experience; arrived in New Zealand 2017; early 50s; paid a recruiter (same one as Mr CW18) \$NZD60,000 to come to New Zealand; on a limited work visa because of irregularities with his recruiter; worked in Japan and Singapore
- **Ms CW20:** Wife of a ticketed structural steel rigger welder; her husband came to New Zealand in November 2017, and she and their child came in 2018; the family went back to China for a holiday in January 2020 and are unable to return to New Zealand due to border closures; they paid a recruiter \$NZD20,000, and while they were not guaranteed a visa or a job, they got both and her husband had an excellent work experience with his employer in Auckland; the family is desperate to get back to New Zealand and were devastated that they were not here when the new visa was announced; essential skills visa and partner visa
- **Mr CW&E21:** Urban designer and construction project management company owner; employs two migrant workers on visas and two second generation Chinese-New Zealanders; has permanent residency; works predominantly for Chinese developers doing large scale residential projects and multi-unit residential developments; arrived in 2006
- **Ms CW&E22:** Architect and sole trader; works with both New Zealand and New Zealand-Chinese clients; came to New Zealand in 2011 to study architecture and graduated with a Masters in Architecture in 2019; has permanent residency; engages contractors, but is trying to employ a migrant architect on a visa but is finding this difficult; late 20s
- **Tier two New Zealand-owned and operated construction company A:** 100 employees, including 17 Filipinos; do contracts in the commercial, industrial, and civil space; none of their workers are on WTR, they are trying to achieve the accredited status so they can offer this to their workers; we spoke with two representatives from this company
- **Tier two New Zealand-owned and operated construction company B:** 250 employees, of which 80-90 are on work visas, 65 are Filipino and most are on WTR; this company are accredited employers; the Filipino workers are predominantly employed in the concrete structure build part of the business; went to the Philippines to recruit for around 40 workers in 2016, most are still working with the company, others have come through their Filipino employees' networks; they contract in teams of Chinese workers regularly as is required; we spoke with two representatives from this company
- **Malaysian Facebook group administrator:** Real estate agent; has PR; runs a community Malaysian Facebook page, that mentions immigration matters regularly amongst other content
- **Vietnamese Facebook group administrator:** Works for a Licenced Immigration Advisor and runs Filipino and Malay Facebook pages that deal exclusively with immigration matters on behalf of her employer
- **Asian-County Business Association representative**
- **Immigration lawyer**
- **Chinese migrant employment advocate**
- **Filipino union/migrant advocate**

- **Chinese union advocate**
- **New Zealand Pākehā union advocate**
- **Migrant Association advocate, who is also a Licenced Immigration Advisor.**

B Data sources for analysis

Six data tables covering January to December 2020 were sourced from the INZ Migration Data Explorer.²³

- Migrant Population by Gender, Age group, Nationality, Visa application substream
- Migrant Population by Nationality, Visa application substream, Visa application criteria, Age group
- Work occupation, Nationality, New Zealand region, Labour market check
- Work occupation, Nationality, New Zealand region, Visa application substream
- Work occupation, Nationality, New Zealand region, Age group
- Work occupation, Nationality, Age group, Gender.

Across the four work occupation datasets, the seven variables collected are defined as:

- Work occupation – ANZSCO level four occupation title
- Nationality – Country passport, individual travelling under
- New Zealand region – Region within New Zealand, individual moved to
- Labour market check – Labour market test undertaken, e.g. occupation is on the Long Term Skill Shortage List, or the Construction and Infrastructure Skill Shortage List
- Visa application substream – Application substream the visa was being applied for under, e.g. Work-RSE, Relationship, or Working holiday
- Age group – Recorded age of individual within one of the age groups covering 0-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-64, and 65+
- Gender – Recorded gender of individual (male, female, not recorded).

To make the analysis of workers in the construction sector more meaningful, the Nationality, Visa application substream, and Work occupation were grouped as follows:

- Nationality – From 209 individual countries down to 21 countries and regions (Rest of Africa, Rest of Asia, China, Rest of Europe, Fiji, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Malaysia, North

²³ https://mbienz.shinyapps.io/migration_data_explorer/

America, Rest of Oceania, Other, Philippines, Samoa (Western), South Africa, South and Central America, Tonga, USA, South Korea, and Vanuatu)

- Visa application substream – From 14 groups to nine groups (Approved in principle, Crew, Humanitarian, Other, Relationship, Skilled work, Work-RSE, Work to residence, and Working holiday)
- Work occupation – From 1,007 level four ANZSCO occupations to 42 occupations. Of these 33 were construction occupations, while the remaining nine occupations were the level one ANZSCO occupation groups.

With Work occupation and Nationality, the common variables across the four work occupation INZ datasets, BERL used these to examine the Age, Gender, Visa application substream, Region, and Labour market checks for working migrants in 2020, for 33 identified construction occupations:

- Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic
- Bricklayer
- Builder's Labourer
- Building and Engineering Technicians nec (not elsewhere classified)
- Building Insulation Installer
- Cabinetmaker
- Carpenter
- Concreter
- Construction Estimator
- Construction Project Manager
- Construction Rigger
- Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator
- Drainer / Drainlayer
- Driller
- Electrician (General)
- Excavator Operator
- Fencer
- Fibrous Plasterer

- Floor Finisher
- Gasfitter
- Glazier
- Home Improvement Installer
- Joiner
- Landscape Gardener
- Painting Trades Worker
- Paving Plant Operator
- Plumber (General)
- Project Builder
- Quantity Surveyor
- Roof Tiler
- Sales Workers
- Scaffolder
- Solid Plasterer
- Wall and Floor Tiler
- Machinery Operators and Drivers.

Appendix B Migrant worker data tables

Table 1 Region within New Zealand that migrant workers in the construction sector moved to, 2020

Occupation	Region																Total
	Auckland Bay of Plenty	Canterbury	Gisborne	Hawke's Bay	Manawatu-Wanganui	Marlborough	Nelson	Northland	Otago	Southland	Taranaki	Unknown	Waikato	Wellington	West Coast		
Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic	87	6	15	0	3	3	0	3	9	3	0	0	9	12	12	3	165
Bricklayer	99	0	21	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	9	9	3	0	144
Builder's Labourer	237	3	15	0	3	0	0	3	0	108	12	0	18	15	24	0	438
Building and Engineering Technicians nec	36	0	9	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	135	3	0	0	198
Building Insulation Installer	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	3	0	0	0	33
Cabinetmaker	63	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	3	0	9	0	0	87
Carpenter	1,470	51	219	0	36	6	0	6	9	99	6	0	588	117	168	3	2,778
Concretor	93	6	12	0	6	6	0	0	3	12	0	0	9	6	6	0	159
Construction Estimator	27	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	6	0	45
Construction Project Manager	105	6	9	6	0	6	0	0	6	3	0	0	30	18	24	0	213
Construction Rigger	21	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	33
Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator	39	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	48
Drainer / Drainlayer	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	12
Driller	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	9	0	3	0	18
Electrician (General)	222	33	27	0	12	12	3	3	21	21	0	3	87	57	30	0	531
Excavator Operator	84	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	102
Fencer	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	12
Fibrous Plasterer	120	12	42	0	0	6	0	0	3	21	0	0	24	18	27	0	273
Floor Finisher	39	0	9	0	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	0	6	0	6	0	69
Gasfitter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Glazier	39	3	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	0	63
Home Improvement Installer	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Joiner	39	3	27	0	6	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	12	6	0	99
Landscape Gardener	39	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	6	0	0	6	9	0	0	69
Painting Trades Worker	138	6	48	0	3	3	0	0	6	57	6	0	15	30	54	0	366
Paving Plant Operator	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	6	0	6	0	24
Plumber (General)	111	12	0	0	6	3	0	3	3	12	0	3	12	3	24	0	192
Project Builder	24	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	6	0	9	0	45
Quantity Surveyor	60	9	6	0	3	0	6	3	0	6	0	0	3	6	6	0	108
Roof Tiler	60	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	9	15	12	0	132
Scaffolder	285	12	51	0	6	0	6	9	3	21	0	3	75	6	45	0	522
Solid Plasterer	72	3	21	0	0	0	0	0	3	12	0	0	0	3	3	0	117
Wall and Floor Tiler	117	15	30	0	3	0	0	0	0	42	0	0	3	3	3	0	216
Machinery Operators and Drivers	936	96	177	18	42	18	12	3	39	114	33	9	138	120	48	0	1,803
Total	4,701	285	792	24	147	72	27	45	108	597	57	30	1,212	492	528	6	9,123

Table 2 Nationality migrant workers in the construction sector were travelling under, 2020

Occupation	Nationality																	Total		
	Africa	Asia	China	Europe	Fiji	France	India	Malaysia	North America	Oceania	Other	Philippines	Samoa	South Africa	South and Central America	Tonga	United Kingdom		United States of America	Vanuatu
Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic	3	6	9	9	42	6	33	0	0	3	0	36	0	12	0	0	6	0	0	165
Bricklayer	0	0	108	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	3	0	12	0	0	144
Builder's Labourer	0	15	81	27	9	3	12	0	0	0	0	54	18	3	111	27	75	3	0	438
Building and Engineering Technicians nec	0	12	3	150	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	198
Building Insulation Installer	0	0	9	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	33
Cabinetmaker	0	0	18	9	9	0	12	0	0	0	0	15	0	9	9	0	6	0	0	87
Carpenter	3	45	324	93	78	21	15	21	6	0	0	1,887	24	27	102	21	111	0	0	2,778
Concreter	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	129	0	0	6	0	15	0	0	159
Construction Estimator	0	6	6	6	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	9	9	0	0	0	0	45
Construction Project Manager	6	12	9	18	3	6	6	3	3	0	0	9	0	102	0	0	36	0	0	213
Construction Rigger	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	33
Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator	0	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	0	0	0	27	0	6	0	0	6	0	0	48
Drainer / Drainlayer	0	3	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Driller	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
Electrician (General)	0	3	9	45	45	6	60	0	6	0	0	108	0	159	18	0	66	6	0	531
Excavator Operator	0	0	6	0	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	102
Fencer	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	12
Fibrous Plasterer	0	6	9	18	0	3	18	0	3	0	0	123	3	0	75	0	15	0	0	273
Floor Finisher	0	6	9	9	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	18	0	6	6	0	6	0	0	69
Gasfitter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Glazier	0	0	12	9	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	27	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	63
Home Improvement Installer	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Joiner	0	6	12	3	6	3	0	3	0	0	0	21	0	18	9	0	18	0	0	99
Landscape Gardener	6	0	0	9	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	12	0	9	15	0	3	3	0	69
Painting Trades Worker	0	42	15	33	6	0	15	3	0	0	0	135	0	0	81	0	33	3	0	366
Paving Plant Operator	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	18	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	24
Plumber (General)	0	3	3	9	33	0	0	0	3	0	0	39	0	72	3	0	27	0	0	192
Project Builder	0	6	3	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	3	12	0	0	45
Quantity Surveyor	0	9	15	12	0	3	6	6	0	0	0	3	0	27	3	0	21	3	0	108
Roof Tiler	3	24	6	24	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	39	0	9	6	3	15	0	0	132
Scaffolder	0	27	90	9	3	0	9	3	0	0	0	366	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	522
Solid Plasterer	0	0	48	9	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	27	0	0	21	0	9	0	0	117
Wall and Floor Tiler	0	0	51	12	0	0	3	39	3	0	0	36	0	3	63	0	6	0	0	216
Machinery Operators and Drivers	3	48	42	144	198	12	471	15	3	0	0	606	3	63	81	12	99	3	0	1,803
Total	24	279	906	684	462	66	711	96	27	9	0	3,906	48	552	630	66	636	21	0	9,123

Table 3 Labour market test undertaken by migrant workers in the construction sector, 2020

Occupation	Not recorded	Case made by employer	Labour Market Check				Other Labour Market Tests	Total
			Construction and Infrastructure Skill Shortage List	Immediate Skill Shortage List	Long Term Skill Shortage List			
Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic	33	126	0	0	0	6	165	
Bricklayer	27	99	3	0	0	15	144	
Builder's Labourer	24	327	0	0	0	87	438	
Building and Engineering Technicians nec	183	12	0	0	0	3	198	
Building Insulation Installer	6	24	0	0	0	3	33	
Cabinetmaker	18	51	0	0	0	18	87	
Carpenter	621	1,695	54	9	3	387	2,769	
Concreter	12	120	0	0	0	27	159	
Construction Estimator	18	18	0	0	0	9	45	
Construction Project Manager	117	63	3	0	3	27	213	
Construction Rigger	3	24	0	0	0	6	33	
Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator	6	36	0	0	0	6	48	
Drainer / Drainlayer	3	3	0	0	0	3	9	
Driller	9	9	0	0	0	0	18	
Electrician (General)	240	48	0	0	222	21	531	
Excavator Operator	33	57	0	0	0	9	99	
Fencer	0	12	0	0	0	0	12	
Fibrous Plasterer	39	150	36	3	0	42	270	
Floor Finisher	21	33	6	0	0	9	69	
Gasfitter	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	
Glazier	12	39	0	0	0	12	63	
Home Improvement Installer	0	6	0	0	0	0	6	
Joiner	30	39	15	3	0	12	99	
Landscape Gardener	9	60	0	0	0	0	69	
Painting Trades Worker	51	273	0	0	0	42	366	
Paving Plant Operator	9	9	0	0	0	6	24	
Plumber (General)	57	99	9	3	0	24	192	
Project Builder	21	21	0	0	0	3	45	
Quantity Surveyor	54	24	0	0	24	6	108	
Roof Tiler	39	69	9	0	0	15	132	
Scaffolder	114	312	0	0	0	96	522	
Solid Plasterer	39	48	12	0	0	18	117	
Wall and Floor Tiler	42	138	9	0	0	27	216	
Machinery Operators and Drivers	324	1,230	9	0	3	231	1,797	
Total	2,214	5,277	165	18	255	1,170	9,099	

Table 4 Age groups of migrant workers in the construction sector, 2020

Occupation	Age_Group							Total
	0-19 Years	20-29 Years	30-39 Years	40-49 Years	50-59 Years	60-64 Years	65+ Years	
Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic	0	48	78	27	12	0	0	165
Bricklayer	0	6	36	57	27	0	0	126
Builder's Labourer	6	183	177	78	21	0	0	465
Building and Engineering Technicians nec	0	12	72	30	63	18	0	195
Building Insulation Installer	0	6	15	15	3	3	0	42
Cabinetmaker	0	12	30	21	6	0	0	69
Carpenter	0	207	1,107	1,128	255	9	3	2,709
Concreter	0	15	54	84	6	0	0	159
Construction Estimator	0	18	24	9	0	0	0	51
Construction Project Manager	0	48	93	57	42	6	0	246
Construction Rigger	0	9	15	15	0	0	0	39
Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator	0	6	15	24	0	0	0	45
Drainer / Drainlayer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Driller	0	6	18	6	3	0	0	33
Electrician (General)	0	120	207	126	30	3	0	486
Excavator Operator	0	3	48	42	9	0	0	102
Fencer	0	6	3	0	0	0	0	9
Fibrous Plasterer	0	54	93	78	12	3	0	240
Floor Finisher	0	9	30	12	3	0	0	54
Gasfitter	0	0	6	0	3	0	0	9
Glazier	0	3	36	36	3	0	0	78
Home Improvement Installer	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	6
Joiner	0	27	51	39	6	3	0	126
Landscape Gardener	0	33	24	15	0	6	0	78
Painting Trades Worker	0	72	138	78	21	9	0	318
Paving Plant Operator	0	3	3	9	3	0	0	18
Plumber (General)	0	48	84	57	12	0	0	201
Project Builder	0	6	24	12	3	0	0	45
Quantity Surveyor	0	60	30	12	0	0	0	102
Roof Tiler	0	27	51	21	3	6	0	108
Scaffolder	0	96	300	165	24	0	0	585
Solid Plasterer	0	24	57	54	3	0	0	138
Wall and Floor Tiler	0	24	93	81	21	0	0	219
Machinery Operators and Drivers	3	510	573	444	159	15	3	1,707
Total	9	1,704	3,588	2,832	753	81	6	8,973

Table 5 Gender of migrant workers in the construction sector, 2020

Occupation	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic	0	174	174
Bricklayer	0	135	135
Builder's Labourer	15	447	462
Building and Engineering Technicians nec	9	186	195
Building Insulation Installer	0	39	39
Cabinetmaker	0	105	105
Carpenter	3	2,787	2,790
Concreter	0	144	144
Construction Estimator	3	36	39
Construction Project Manager	18	189	207
Construction Rigger	0	33	33
Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator	0	51	51
Drainer / Drainlayer	0	12	12
Driller	0	27	27
Electrician (General)	3	504	507
Excavator Operator	0	114	114
Fencer	0	18	18
Fibrous Plasterer	6	276	282
Floor Finisher	3	75	78
Gasfitter	0	3	3
Glazier	0	84	84
Home Improvement Installer	0	12	12
Joiner	6	114	120
Landscape Gardener	6	90	96
Painting Trades Worker	6	324	330
Paving Plant Operator	0	18	18
Plumber (General)	0	186	186
Project Builder	0	36	36
Quantity Surveyor	12	60	72
Roof Tiler	0	96	96
Scaffolder	3	558	561
Solid Plasterer	6	123	129
Wall and Floor Tiler	6	210	216
Machinery Operators and Drivers	60	1,788	1,848
Total	165	9,054	9,219