



## COVERSHEET

<b>Minister</b>	Hon Andrew Little	<b>Portfolio</b>	Immigration
<b>Title of Cabinet paper</b>	Refreshing the Refugee Resettlement and Migrant Settlement strategies	<b>Date to be published</b>	15 September 2023

### List of documents that have been proactively released

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>
July 2023	Refreshing the Refugee Resettlement and Migrant Settlement strategies	Office of the Minister of Immigration
19 July 2023	Refreshing the Refugee Resettlement and Migrant Settlement strategies DEV-23-MIN-0147 Minute	Cabinet Office

### Information redacted

**YES**

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld for the reason of confidential advice to Government.

**In Confidence**

Office of the Minister of Immigration

Cabinet Economic Development Committee

**Refreshing the Refugee Resettlement and Migrant Settlement strategies**

**Proposal**

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to update the vision statements, outcome areas and descriptors, and coverage of the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy (NZRRS) and the New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy (NZMSIS) to ensure they reflect the community and government’s vision and aspirations for successful settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Relation to government priorities**

- 2 The proposals in this paper support our ongoing commitment to ensuring successful settlement outcomes for former refugees and recent migrants.

**Executive Summary**

- 3 The Government’s approach to effectively settle and integrate former refugees and recent migrants is reflected in two cross-government strategies, the NZRRS and the NZMSIS, approved by Cabinet in 2012 [CAB Min (12) 8/12] and 2014 [EGI Min (14) 15/18] respectively. Despite significant changes in migration patterns and immigration settings over the last decade, the strategies have not been updated since their inception. Migrant and former refugee communities have also expressed that the strategies no longer reflect their aspirations for successful settlement. It is therefore timely to update them.
- 4 Following engagement with communities and key stakeholders (summarised in Annex One), I am proposing new vision statements, outcome areas and descriptors for the strategies to reflect the strong aspirations our government shares with former refugees and recent migrants for their settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand (attached at Annexes Two and Three). Monitoring and reporting against new and more ambitious outcomes will ensure the services and support available for recent migrants and former refugees are evidence-based, fit for purpose, gender-appropriate and support the intended outcomes.
- 5 We want to ensure the strategies are true to their very purpose, which is to support those able to remain in New Zealand long-term to settle successfully. To this end, I am proposing coverage of the strategies be changed. Specifically, I am proposing the NZRRS coverage include other refugee groups (for example Convention Refugees and Protected Persons) and those with similar backgrounds and likely similar settlement challenges (for example Refugee Family Support Category visa holders) and that the application of the NZMSIS’ monitoring and reporting framework be changed to select priority groups based on need, rather than potential economic benefit.

- 6 Tangibly improving outcomes for former refugees and migrants will require a cross-government effort over several years. A further programme of work will come out of the refreshed vision statement and outcome areas that will be the responsibility of all agencies and relevant Ministers,<sup>1</sup> coordinated and led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). This work programme will shift the focus of settlement activities to align with the new strategies and take a more strategic approach to service-delivery and funding.
- 7 I recommend that Cabinet direct officials to report back to the Minister of Immigration (and other relevant Ministers as required) on the following:
- 7.1 Initial NZMSIS priority groups by December 2023;
  - 7.2 Initial funding requirements for newly covered groups by December 2023;
  - 7.3 Options for ongoing and sustainable funding sources for settlement services and support by the end of 2024;
  - 7.4 Embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori into the NZRRS and NZMSIS from 2025; and
  - 7.5 Review of services mix underpinning the NZRRS and NZMSIS from 2025, once the new strategies are fully developed and embedded.
- 8 I also recommend that Cabinet invite the Minister of Immigration to report back to Cabinet by August 2024 on new success indicators for the NZRRS and NZMSIS, developed in conjunction with Ministers with portfolios related to the outcome areas.
- 9 Although outside the scope of the NZRRS, it is important to identify and meet the welfare needs of Refugee and Protection claimants (asylum seekers/claimants) during their claim. I recommend that this work be undertaken by MBIE and the Ministry of Social Development (in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and other agencies as relevant) and that Cabinet direct officials to report back to the Minister of Immigration (and other relevant Ministers as required) by December 2024.
- 10 As an interim measure, I am also seeking Cabinet agreement to reprioritise \$1 million of anticipated underspends within the Immigration Services Multi-Category Appropriation (MCA) in Vote Labour Market for 2022/23 toward the next two years (\$0.5 million per year) to meet core and operational costs to provide welfare support for asylum seekers while further cross-government work is progressed.
- 11 I note that the Welcoming Communities Programme will be funded for one year from reprioritised funding while longer-term funding solutions are investigated and progressed [REDACTED] **Confidential advice to Government** [REDACTED]. In addition, a transfer of \$2.5 million of Immigration Levy underspends from the 2022/23 to the 2023/44 and 2024/25 financial years is recommended to honour contractual payments for the 26 councils that joined the programme in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years, but for which contractual payments began later than anticipated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministers of/for Immigration, Diversity, Inclusion, and Ethnic Communities, Police, Health, Housing, Education and Social Development and Employment.

- 12 Finally, I wish to seek Cabinet agreement to carry forward up to \$0.720 million of Immigration Levy underspends from the 2022/23 to the 2023/24 financial year to enable the delivery of the Standards Project of the Language Assistance Services Programme.

### **Background**

- 13 The Government's approach to effectively settle and integrate former refugees and recent migrants is reflected in two cross-government strategies: the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy and the New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy (the strategies).

#### *The New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy*

- 14 In March 2012, Cabinet agreed to the current New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy, which includes [CAB Min (12) 8/12] an overarching outcome and five integration outcomes (set out in Annex Four).

- 15 Cabinet also agreed:

- 15.1 to a number of success indicators and targets to progress towards agreed outcomes; and
- 15.2 that the Strategy initially apply to Refugee Quota intakes from 1 July 2013, with proposals for extension to other refugee categories to be referred to Cabinet once further work has been undertaken on their likely needs, the services required, and the savings available to meet the associated costs.

#### *The New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy*

- 16 In July 2014, Cabinet agreed to the current New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy that includes [EGI Min (14) 15/18] an overarching outcome and five integration outcomes (set out in Annex Five).

- 17 Cabinet also agreed to a number of success indicators to monitor progress toward agreed outcomes.

#### *Governance and reporting of the strategies*

- 18 While supporting the strategies and successful settlement is a cross-government effort, as Minister of Immigration I have ultimate responsibility for maintaining oversight of the implementation of the two strategies.
- 19 To support ongoing governance, and in acknowledgement that the strategies' outcome areas span several portfolios, there is also a Senior Officials' Group chaired by MBIE and comprised of agencies across government<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> These include the Ministries for/of Business, Innovation and Employment, Education, Ethnic Communities, Health, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Pacific Peoples, Social Development and Women, Department of Internal Affairs, Oranga Tamariki, Tertiary Education Commission and New Zealand Police.

- 20 Reporting against the outcome areas and success indicators is undertaken annually (usually with a lag of about a year due to data availability). This reporting enables us to:
- 20.1 track progress towards former refugees' and recent migrants' successful settlement;
  - 20.2 present and discuss any emerging trends and implications; and
  - 20.3 informs cross-government planning and decision-making, especially with regards to those outcome areas where further settlement interventions and activities may be required.
- 21 Since annual monitoring and reporting began in 2013 (NZRRS) and 2015 (NZMSIS), there has been positive and stable progress against most success indicators.

**It is timely that we refresh these strategies to ensure they reflect our current immigration landscape and migrant and refugee voices and aspirations**

*Immigration has changed significantly since the strategies were established*

- 22 The overall vision statement and settlement outcomes under the NZRRS/NZMSIS have not changed since 2012 and 2014 respectively and no longer reflect our current immigration landscape and communities' aspirations for settlement.
- 23 Migration patterns are likely to be different than what we saw before the pandemic, with changed labour market conditions and new immigration policy settings. For example, the majority of our temporary migrant worker population was offered residence under the 2021 Resident Visa and a median wage threshold is now in place for the main employer-assisted work visa, the Accredited Employer Work Visa.
- 24 We have also expanded our refugee and humanitarian pathways. This includes the increase in the Refugee Quota Programme to 1,500 places per annum, the expanded Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship pilot<sup>3</sup>, doubled the annual places and additional support available under the Refugee Family Support Category<sup>4</sup>, and created one-off pathways to Aotearoa New Zealand following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan of 2021 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

*It is important that migrant and former refugee voices and aspirations are reflected in the strategies*

- 25 Alongside changes in immigration settings, there were increasing calls from recent migrant and former refugee communities to have their views reflected in immigration policies. Communities also noted that the outcomes sought under the strategies did not match their aspirations for what successful settlement looked like.

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<sup>3</sup> The extended pilot enables 150 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) mandated refugees to be sponsored by approved community organisations over three years.

<sup>4</sup> The purpose of the Refugee Family Support Category is to support the successful settlement of refugees and protected people (and Afghan interpreters and their family), by enabling them to be reunited with a range of family members, particularly if they have no other adult family members in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- 26 Fundamental, therefore, to considering changes to the strategies was engagement with former refugees, recent migrants and key stakeholders (such as settlement service providers and other non-government organisations). From July to October 2022, engagement was undertaken with over 720 people attending 20 face-to-face and six online sessions across Aotearoa New Zealand, and 474 responses to the online questionnaire<sup>5</sup>. In addition, 50 people participated in five workshops (four in-person across the country and one online) to design potential recommendations for change.
- 27 Effort was made to engage with groups that have historically been absent or under-represented. Separate engagement sessions were held for women, youth, Pacific migrants, asylum seekers, the Rainbow community, and migrants with disabilities and/or serious health concerns.
- 28 An External Steering Group was also created including key stakeholder representatives with expertise in refugee and/or migrant settlement and/or lived experience of being a former refugee or migrant, as well as representatives from mana whenua, local Councils and an organisation supporting disabled people to provide advice on recommendations.
- 29 Engagement highlighted that:
- 29.1 successful settlement is seen as a broad concept tightly intertwined with that of holistic wellbeing, which extends far beyond physical and mental health to include meeting one's aspirations for and meaningful participation in all aspects of life in Aotearoa New Zealand;
  - 29.2 while the strategies' outcome areas (Employment, English Language, Education and Training; Self-sufficiency; Housing; Health and Wellbeing; and Participation and Inclusion) were reconfirmed as the key elements of successful settlement and integration, how these are interpreted and defined, and consequently measured through success indicators, differ from the current focus of the strategies (which is predominantly seen in economic terms);
  - 29.3 migrants and former refugees remain eager to contribute to and participate in all aspects of life in Aotearoa New Zealand, want to feel that they truly belong here and can become a part of the fabric of Aotearoa New Zealand's communities; and
  - 29.4 migrants and former refugees are keen to be part of the solution through having input in decision-making and taking a lead role in supporting newcomers.

**I am proposing a new vision statement for the strategies which reflects both communities' and our government's vision for successful settlement**

- 30 While not measured themselves, the overarching outcomes/vision statements for the strategies are key to signalling the goals for the settlement of recent migrants and former refugees.

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<sup>5</sup> Many of these responses noted they represented groups of up to 100 people.

- 31 During engagement, there was strong feedback from former refugee and migrant communities that the current vision statements (included in Annex Four and Five respectively) no longer resonate with communities' notion of successful settlement.
- 32 Communities expressed a strong desire to focus more holistically on the key elements of successful settlement, including wellbeing, safety, sense of belonging, connections, full participation and inclusion in all aspects of life, and the ability to achieve one's goals and aspirations. These aspects were considered important to both refugee and migrant communities and resonated particularly with women.
- 33 Following this feedback, I am proposing a new vision statement for both strategies which reflects the aspirations of our Government and former refugee and migrant communities:
- “Former refugees and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)”
- and
- “Recent migrants and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)”
- 34 I consider that this proposed vision statement:
- 34.1 strongly responds to communities' vision of what successful settlement entails;
  - 34.2 reflects key elements from other national and international frameworks<sup>6</sup>; and
  - 34.3 retains central notions of successful settlement such as participation and sense of belonging.

**To support this vision statement, I am proposing to update the outcome areas of the strategies**

- 35 As referenced in paragraphs 14 and 16, both strategies currently have five outcome areas with narrative descriptions (included in Annex Four and Five respectively). These are strongly interconnected and aim to contribute to the achievement of the strategies' overall vision statements as well as other outcomes.
- 36 The outcome areas across the strategies are for the most part aligned although there are slight differences (for example the NZMSIS does not have a housing outcome area and the NZRRS has an education outcome area while the NZMSIS has an education and training outcome area).

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<sup>6</sup> Including but not limited to the 2021 Living Standards Framework, the Social Cohesion Framework, He Ara Waiora, Pacific Wellbeing Strategy, Te Whāriki, Whānau Ora, the OECD's Well-being Framework and Better Life Initiative, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

- 37 There are more obvious differences in the descriptors for each outcome area, which are largely due to former refugees' and migrants' different motivations for coming to Aotearoa New Zealand, and different settlement journeys, needs and priorities. In the NZMSIS, these give stronger recognition to the economic contribution of migration, but also reflect successful settlement initially as well as integration into communities, which is recognised as important if migrants are to make Aotearoa New Zealand their home.
- 38 Engagement highlighted a strong desire by former refugee and migrant communities, including women, to standardise the outcome areas across the strategies as they speak to key and common areas of settlement. There was a particularly marked call by migrants to have an outcome area on housing, reflecting the importance of safe and appropriate housing to successful settlement. Communities also sought to frame the outcome area descriptors in more holistic and ambitious terms, reflecting their goals in each area.
- 39 To align with the proposed vision and feedback from the communities, I am proposing to update the outcome areas for both the NZRRS and NZMSIS to:
- 39.1 Participation and inclusion: Former refugees/recent migrants and their families are welcomed and have a strong sense of belonging and acceptance in their communities and in Aotearoa New Zealand. They feel confident and safe to participate in different aspects of their lives.
  - 39.2 Health and wellbeing: Former refugees/recent migrants and their families achieve their health and wellbeing goals and thrive in their lives.
  - 39.3 Housing: Former refugees/recent migrants and their families live in homes and in communities that meet their long-term needs and goals.
  - 39.4 Education, training and English language: Former refugees/recent migrants and their families achieve their education, training and English language goals.
  - 39.5 Employment and self-sufficiency: Former refugees/recent migrants and their families achieve their employment and self-sufficiency goals, building on their skills and experiences.
- 40 These proposed outcome areas:
- 40.1 maintain the fundamental importance and interconnectedness of these outcome areas;
  - 40.2 reflect former refugee and migrant communities' shared goals for each outcome area, including women's;
  - 40.3 respond to communities' desire for more holistic outcome areas; and
  - 40.4 encourage synergies between the strategies where common approaches are desirable.



*New success indicators will need to be set to measure our progress against these outcome areas*

- 41 Progress toward the outcome areas for former refugees and migrants under the strategies is currently measured against several success indicators and one target. The NZMSIS has a set of sixteen indicators and the NZRRS has a set of seven indicators and one target (Education).
- 42 During engagement it was noted that many indicators were no longer fit for purpose and did not accurately measure what successful settlement means to communities. Stakeholders indicated that the current indicators:
  - 42.1 focus on the minimum requirements of successful settlement (e.g. indicators that track attainment of lower-level qualifications, or enrolment in government services such as healthcare);
  - 42.2 adopt a negative outlook of settlement rather than a strengths-based approach that values their contributions and capabilities (e.g. some indicators track a decrease in reliance on government services); and
  - 42.3 do not track aspects of successful settlement that they consider important (e.g. the indicators for the Participation outcome area for the NZRRS remain to be developed).
- 43 This feedback, alongside proposed new outcome areas, means new success indicators will be needed to measure our progress under the strategies for both new and existing cohorts, as well as those of women, children and other under-represented groups.
- 44 Subject to Cabinet's agreement to the new vision statements and outcome areas and descriptors, I am recommending that officials undertake further work to identify potential success indicators to give a clear and measurable indication of how we are tracking towards our agreed outcomes and report back to the Minister of Immigration and other Ministers with portfolios related to the outcome areas<sup>7</sup> and that Cabinet invite the Minister of Immigration to report back to Cabinet by August 2024 on new success indicators for the NZRRS and NZMSIS, developed in conjunction with Ministers with portfolios related to the outcome areas.
- 45 I note that this will include consideration of necessary changes to available data sources and any further data that will be required (i.e. a Refugee Survey<sup>8</sup>) in order to support the monitoring and reporting for the NZRRS.

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<sup>7</sup> Participation and Inclusion – Ministers of Diversity, Inclusion, and Ethnic Communities and New Zealand Police; Health and Wellbeing – Minister of Health; Housing – Minister of Housing; Education, training and English language – Minister of/for Education and Social Development; and Employment and Self-sufficiency – Minister for Social Development and Employment.

<sup>8</sup> A primary source of data for the NZMSIS is the MBIE's National Migrant Survey, which has been conducted annually since 2009 and is currently administered to approximately 16,000 recent migrants. The current NZRRS indicators are however impacted by the need to rely exclusively on administrative data from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI), as there is currently no survey providing additional quantitative and qualitative data pertaining to former refugees that could be used to measure more holistic, subjective and aspirational indicators.

**I am proposing we change the coverage of the strategies to better reflect the purpose of the strategies and current immigration pathways to Aotearoa New Zealand**

- 46 The concept of being covered by the strategies is one fraught with misconceptions, particularly amongst former refugee and migrant communities. Historically, communities have associated coverage with automatic access to additional settlement support.
- 47 This was confirmed through the stakeholder engagement phase whereby being covered/not covered by the strategies was interpreted as having access to/lacking access to the full suite of settlement support and services granted to Quota Refugees (in the case of the NZRRS) or permanent residents (in the context of the NZMSIS). This in turn led to broad sweeping recommendations for expansions to the strategies.
- 48 Primarily being covered by the strategies means cohorts are included in the scope of the strategies' strategic monitoring and reporting frameworks. Through this, officials gather settlement data and trends on settlement journeys and any challenges that may be encountered by the cohorts that are included. In this context coverage per se' does not have an immediate bearing on additional settlement support provided through the services mix underpinning the strategies.
- 49 On the other hand, the strategies do provide a basis for subsequent services re-alignment, cross-government funding prioritisation, and programmatic interventions to address information and services gaps and other systemic issues impacting successful settlement outcomes by cohorts. In this context coverage likely does lead to additional support over time.

*Principles for determining coverage under the strategies*

- 50 I am proposing a refreshed notion of determining who is covered under the strategies underpinned by the following broad-based principles. Coverage should be:
- 50.1 reflective of cohorts' ability to settle permanently in Aotearoa New Zealand (which would be best determined through immigration status, particularly visa type, purpose and duration);
  - 50.2 consistent with the ultimate purpose of these frameworks (which is to support improved settlement outcomes for those groups experiencing settlement challenges); and
  - 50.3 aligned with service entitlements determined by one's immigration status and visa category.

*Coverage under the NZRRS*

- 51 As outlined in paragraph 15.2 above, the NZRRS currently only applies to United Nations (UN)-mandated refugees who are resettled to Aotearoa New Zealand under our Refugee Quota Programme. However, this is not the only pathway by which refugees arrive to our country.

- 52 UN-mandated refugees can be resettled through our Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship extended pilot.
- 53 People who are onshore, are neither citizens nor residents, and who fear returning to their home country can also make a claim for Refugee or Protection status (commonly known as asylum seekers or claimants) – those whose claims are successful are known as ‘Convention Refugees’.
- 54 Likewise, there are pathways to Aotearoa New Zealand which, while not formal refugee pathways, result in the arrival of migrants who have many of the same characteristics and settlement needs as refugees. This includes those who arrive under the Refugee Family Support Category as well as those who arrive under bespoke humanitarian residence pathways.
- 55 Following the above principles, I am recommending coverage of the NZRRS be expanded to:
- “Former refugee and refugee-like resident visa holders (including partners and dependents) who have been living in Aotearoa New Zealand for five years or less<sup>9</sup>”
- 56 In practice, this would extend coverage to:
- 56.1 Convention Refugees and Protected Persons;
  - 56.2 Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship Category Resident Visa holders (including any partners and dependants) and future complementary pathways that may be introduced;
  - 56.3 Refugee Family Support Category Resident visa holders (including partners and dependents); and
  - 56.4 Afghan Evacuees and Interpreters resident visa holders (including any partners and dependants) and any other one-off humanitarian residence categories that may emerge in the future.
- 57 Expanding coverage to these groups would enable a more sophisticated and evidence-based understanding of their settlement journey and any challenges that may be encountered (which are currently mostly anecdotal in nature). This in turn enables the strategies’ services mix to be tweaked or modified to include additional support and services for these and other groups to support their successful settlement.
- 58 The inclusion of these cohorts is consistent with the principles outlined above and rationale for the NZRRS and responds to the feedback from communities.

*Coverage and prioritisation under the NZMSIS*

- 59 Currently, the NZMSIS applies in principle to the whole recent migrant population who have lived in Aotearoa New Zealand for five years or less. In practice, the NZMSIS’ monitoring and reporting framework focuses on those migrant categories

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<sup>9</sup> The focus on the first five years acknowledges the early years of settlement are crucial and settlement needs often reduce over time.

who can make the largest potential contribution to our economy. These are commonly known as priority groups.

- 60 The current NZMSIS priority groups have been agreed by Cabinet and include both permanent and temporary migrant groups with pathways to residence or more likely to transition to residence (i.e. Skilled Migrant Category visa holders, Skilled Temporary visa holders including Essential Skills visa holders in skilled employment, and Work to Residence visa holders, former international students on Post-Study work visas and the partners and families of skilled principal migrants and skilled temporary visa holders).
- 61 Consistent with the principles above and changes to immigration settings, I am recommending that coverage under the NZMSIS be changed to be more reflective of recent migrant cohorts' ability to settle permanently in Aotearoa New Zealand (determined through immigration status, particularly visa type, purpose and duration). This means the exclusion of temporary visa holders with no clear path to residence from the scope of the NZMSIS' monitoring and reporting framework.
- 62 I am also recommending application of the NZMSIS' monitoring and reporting framework to selected priority groups be changed to be based on need, rather than potential economic benefit as current priority groups are chosen.
- 63 This would mean those where evidence supports greater needs (e.g. Pacific migrant resident visa holders) would be prioritised. Should Cabinet agree to this proposed approach, officials will undertake further work to determine which groups should be initially prioritised by December 2023. I am recommending that decisions on NZMSIS priority groups be delegated to the Minister of Immigration (in consultation with other Ministers as relevant) in order to enable the priority groups to be reviewed as needed.

**Changes to the strategies will be followed by further work to ensure the necessary services and support are provided to meet our vision...**

- 64 Subject to Cabinet agreement to the inclusion of new cohorts under the scope of the strategies, I consider there is a need for a strategic, cross-government stocktake and gap analysis to inform an initial expansion of services and support available to those covered by the strategies. **Confidential advice to Government**  
I am recommending that officials report back to the Minister of Immigration and other relevant Ministers on the initial funding requirements to support the newly covered cohorts by December 2023.
- 65 I am recommending that a further, comprehensive cross-government review of the services and support underpinning the strategies be undertaken from 2025, once the strategies' new monitoring and reporting frameworks are fully developed and embedded.

*Ensuring consideration is given to support the needs of those not covered under the strategies*

- 66 The recommendations made in this paper do not extend coverage to anyone without a clear pathway to residence in Aotearoa New Zealand as the strategies' recommended focus is on those who are able to settle here. This does not mean that those not covered will not have their support needs considered, just that this would be done outside of these settlement strategies.
- 67 Notably, consideration of the needs and support provided to Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers is currently being undertaken in a review of the RSE scheme which will be considered by Cabinet.
- 68 Based on my recommendations in this paper, asylum seekers would not be covered under the NZRRS until their claim was accepted. This is on the basis that this group includes temporary visa holders with no clear pathway to settlement and individuals with unlawful status, which does not align with the purpose or focus of the strategies. Successful claimants would instead be covered once their claim had been approved and their needs and any necessary support identified as part of the NZRRS monitoring and reporting framework.
- 69 It is however recognised that work is required across government to identify and address any barriers that would prevent asylum seekers from pursuing their asylum claim effectively. There is also currently no government funding available to address the immediate welfare needs of this group (which can be complex), in order to support them while they focus on pursuing their asylum claim.
- 70 I am therefore recommending that further work be undertaken by MBIE and the Ministry of Social Development (in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and other agencies as relevant) on this with advice provided to the Ministers of Immigration and Social Development and Employment by December 2024. Confidential advice to Government
- 71 As an interim measure, I am also recommending that \$1 million of anticipated underspends in the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market for 2022/23 be made available to cover core operational and other costs to provide community-based welfare support for asylum claimants for two years (\$0.5 million per year).

**... and that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is embedded in the strategies**

- 72 There is an opportunity to reflect Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and ensure that these are foundational to recent migrant and former refugees settlement journeys in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 73 During engagement, feedback from former refugees and migrants confirmed that many would like to learn about Te Ao Māori, and the history of Aotearoa New Zealand, including Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Many indicated that they would like to be welcomed by Māori and that local iwi should be resourced to provide a welcome, education and support for new migrants and former refugees when they arrive in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- 74 Mana and tangata whenua were invited to participate in all the stakeholder engagement activities and governance of this work. It was recommended that to reflect and embed Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori in settlement support time would be needed to build trust and partner with the various iwi across the country, and that this work should unfold in the context of broader work implementing the recommendations from the Productivity Commission Report on immigration, which was published during the Refresh.
- 75 As outlined in the Government's interim response to the Productivity Commission's report, a focus for MBIE is to progress work on the Commission's recommendation to improve engagement with Māori on an ongoing basis and to discuss how to reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori in immigration settings and institutions [DEV-23-MIN-0003].
- 76 Further engagement with iwi and Māori to discuss ways in which Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles should be reflected in settlement policy through the NZRRS and NZMSIS will be progressed alongside current work to implement the Productivity Commission's recommendations. I am recommending that officials report back to the Minister of Immigration on proposals to embed Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi into the strategies from 2025.
- 77 I have asked officials to prioritise engagement with iwi by leveraging existing and new relationships through the Welcoming Communities Programme (discussed below).

**I am seeking to maintain existing funding for Welcoming Communities so we can continue to partner with iwi and local councils to support successful settlement**

- 78 In advance of further work being undertaken on what further settlement support and services may be required to meet our vision for successful settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand, I want to ensure that existing supports and emerging partnerships are not diminished.
- 79 Welcoming Communities is a programme led by MBIE in collaboration with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities and the Human Rights Commission. The programme contributes to healthier, happier and more productive communities by welcoming newcomers into the local community. It is a central programme to both strategies.
- 80 Spending of up to \$1.6 million is currently appropriated annually for the Welcoming Communities programme. However, \$1.1 million of this funding was due to end on 30 June 2023. MBIE officials have indicated that they will continue to fund the full Welcoming Communities Programme for one year from the assessment and processing sub-category of the appropriation while longer-term funding solutions are investigated and progressed **Confidential advice to Government**  
In effect there would be no direct impact on visa processing as a result of the reprioritisation as it is a small amount relative to the overall appropriation, it would be spread across the wider appropriation, and there is a forecasted surplus for the Visa Memorandum Account for the 2023/24 financial year. However, there is a residual risk that if budgeted costs increase faster than forecast revenue then there could be an impact on the fees and memo account.

81 Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were considerable delays in councils joining the programme between May 2020 and July 2022, and therefore contractual payments (for four years) began much later than anticipated. These costs in 2023/24 and 2024/25 cannot be met within existing baselines for 2023/24 and 2024/25, respectively.

82 I am therefore seeking your agreement to transfer \$2.5 million of Immigration Levy underspends from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years in the *Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants* category of the Immigration Services MCA as follows:

82.1 \$1.450 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 financial year, and

82.2 \$1.050 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2024/25 financial year.

83 The funding carried forward will be to fund contractual payments for the second and third years of funding for the 26 councils that joined the programme in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years.

*Further work is required to ensure more strategic and sustainable funding for settlement services and supports*

84 Maintaining the existing level of funding for Welcoming Communities illustrates only one aspect of the funding implications of implementing the strategies. Expansion of the coverage of the NZRRS and identifying priority groups for the NZMSIS based on need is also expected to lead to an expansion of settlement services and support beyond historical levels.

85  Confidential advice to Government

**I am also seeking to transfer Immigration Levy underspends to the Language Assistance Services Programme, which ensures former refugees and migrants with limited English language ability have equitable access to public services and support**

86 I am also seeking to carry forward \$0.720 million for the Language Assistance Services Programme. This relates directly to the Standards work which supports a four-stage process ultimately culminating in interpreters becoming accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), which will be the standard required for all interpreters working in our public sector from July 2024.

87 Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been delays in both the development and approval of courses for interpreters, which means that a number still need to complete their course in the final year of the programme (July 2023 to June 2024), in addition to the second and third stages of the programme, before they can sit the final test.

- 88 In addition, there is currently a backlog of applications for testing at NAATI and while they are working hard to clear the backlog, this is expected to continue through to at least early 2024. The delays have meant that fewer interpreters completed the accreditation in 2022/23 and it is expected that this group will complete in 2023/24 alongside the others that have recently commenced the programme. The cut off for completion is 30 June 2024 and it is expected this deadline will be met. The carry forward of the funding will enable costs to be met and the Standards Project to be delivered, bringing the Language Assistance Services Programme to a close. These costs cannot be met within existing baselines for 2023/24.
- 89 Accordingly, I seek your approval for an in-principle expense transfer of up to \$0.720 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 financial year for the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category of the Immigration Services MCA.

## Financial Implications

### *Refreshing the strategies*

- 90 The proposals to refresh the NZRRS and NZMSIS have financial implications, although not immediate ones.
- 91 While expanding coverage would not have any immediate or direct financial implications under the proposed approach, there would remain an implicit assumption that if any cohorts were found to experience settlement challenges, these would be addressed through reprioritisation of existing programmes that are no longer aligned to the strategies and/or further settlement support, which could require additional funding.
- 92 As outlined in paragraphs 64 and 65 above, I note that further work arising from the refreshed strategies will consider the most immediate settlement needs of those newly covered in light of the new outcomes, ahead of a comprehensive review of the services and support underpinning the strategies when these are fully developed and embedded. This will be progressed hand-in-hand with a review of the sources of settlement funding to ensure their sustainability as noted in paragraph 85. The additional funding required to meet the outcomes set out in this paper will be sought by MBIE and other relevant agencies through standard processes.<sup>1011</sup>

### *Providing interim funding for asylum welfare support*

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<sup>10</sup> The NZMSIS services mix is funded through several funding sources, including Crown funding, the Immigration Levy, the Accrued Migrant Levy revenue, and hypothecated Pre-purchased English language tuition (PELT) funds. Services for refugee settlement are primarily supported by Crown funding. The funding for NZMSIS services is allocated using the MBIE-led interagency settlement funding prioritisation process, a collaborative approach in which all agencies decide on funding allocations. The process is based on specific eligibility criteria agreed by Cabinet that settlement services agencies need to meet to be considered for funding.

<sup>11</sup> The NZMSIS services mix is funded through several funding sources, including Crown funding, the Immigration Levy, the Accrued Migrant Levy revenue, and hypothecated Pre-purchased English language tuition (PELT) funds. Services for refugee settlement are primarily supported by Crown funding. The funding for NZMSIS services is allocated using the MBIE-led interagency settlement funding prioritisation process, a collaborative approach in which all agencies decide on funding allocations. The process is based on specific eligibility criteria agreed by Cabinet that settlement services agencies need to meet to be considered for funding.



- 93 As outlined in paragraphs 71 above, providing interim funding to support the immediate needs of asylum seekers while further work is being undertaken to identify and address their broader needs during their claim journey requires transferring \$1 million of anticipated underspends in the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market for 2022/23 to cover core operational and other costs to provide community-based welfare support for asylum seekers for two years (\$0.5 million per year).

*Maintaining the existing levels of funding for Welcoming Communities*

- 94 The Welcoming Communities Programme will be funded for one year from reprioritised funding while longer-term funding solutions are investigated and progressed [REDACTED] **Confidential advice to Government** [REDACTED] as outlined in paragraph 79. That funding is a mix of Immigration Levy funding and fee funding and makes up the bulk of the overall Immigration MCA (around \$373 million in 2023/24). In effect there would be no direct impact on visa processing as a result of the reprioritisation as it is a small amount relative to the overall appropriation, it would be spread across the wider appropriation, and there is a forecasted surplus for the Visa Memorandum Account for the 2023/24 financial year. However, there is a residual risk that if budgeted costs increase faster than forecast revenue then there could be an impact on the fees and memo account.

- 95 As noted in paragraphs 81 to 83 above, maintaining the funding for Welcoming Communities to continue partnering with iwi and local councils to support successful settlement also requires transferring \$2.5 million of Immigration Levy underspends from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years in the *Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants* category of the Immigration Services MCA.

*Delivering the Language Assistance Services Programme*

- 96 As outlined in paragraphs 86 to 89 above, honouring current commitments and payments as part of the Standards Project of the Language Assistance Services Programme will require a carry-over of up to \$0.720 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 financial year for the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category of the Immigration Services MCA in order to deliver the Standards Project and conclude the Programme as a whole.

**Legislative Implications**

- 97 There are no legislative implications resulting from the proposals in this paper.

**Impact Analysis**

**Regulatory Impact Statement**

- 98 As no changes to legislation are required for this policy change, the regulatory impact requirements do not apply to these proposals.

### **Climate Implications of Policy Assessment**

- 99 The Climate Implications of Policy Assessment (CIPA) team has been consulted and confirms that the CIPA requirements do not apply to this proposal as the threshold for significance is not met.

### **Population Implications**

- 100 The proposals in this paper demonstrate our ongoing commitment to provide protection to refugees and support recent migrants and former refugees to settle well and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. The strategies' monitoring and reporting frameworks will enable us to ensure that their settlement needs and challenges are identified early on and addressed. This will have enduring benefits for these groups as well as all New Zealanders.
- 101 On the other hand, expanding coverage under the strategies and any additional support which may subsequently be provided could cause concern, if it is seen to be above and beyond, or prioritised ahead of support for other New Zealanders. This may be particularly pressing in the context of increased demand in areas already under pressure, such as the health sector and housing and urban system.
- 102 Equally the recommendation that coverage be changed to align with cohorts' ability to settle permanently in Aotearoa New Zealand could cause concern in those temporary cohorts with welfare needs but no pathway to permanent settlement (including asylum claimants). This paper has set out how these concerns are being addressed.
- 103 The proposal in this paper, including to maintain funding for Welcoming Communities, also supports ongoing efforts to build social cohesion and partnerships with iwi which have positive effects for all New Zealanders.

### **Cost of Living Implications**

- 104 There are no immediate cost of living implications resulting from the proposals in this paper. However in the longer term, the strategies' monitoring and reporting frameworks will enable us to ensure that former refugees' and recent migrants' settlement needs and challenges are identified early on and addressed. This may have positive impacts on the rising cost of living for these cohorts.

### **Human Rights**

- 105 While the Immigration Act 2009 recognises that immigration matters inherently involve different treatment on the basis of personal characteristics, immigration policy development seeks to ensure that any changes are necessary and proportionate. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment considers that the proposals in this paper are consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

### **Use of External Resources**

- 106 External resources were employed to develop the recommendations in this paper. Specifically, a consultancy firm, Think Place, was engaged from July to December 2022 to co-develop and facilitate co-design workshops with former refugee and

migrant communities to discuss key elements of successful settlements. These co-design sessions identified future priorities for settlement and informed the recommendations for changes to the strategies.

- 107 Given the extensive scope of the future body of work resulting from the changes proposed to the strategic frameworks of the strategies, it is possible that external resources would be required to progress parts of the future workstreams.

### **Consultation**

- 108 This paper was prepared by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. The following ministries/departments/agencies were consulted: the Ministries of Justice, Education, Health, Social Development and Housing and Urban Development; the Ministries for Pacific Peoples, Women and Ethnic Communities; the Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Internal Affairs; New Zealand Police; The Treasury; Oranga Tamariki, Te Whatu Ora; Tertiary Education Commission and Kāinga Ora.

- 109 As outlined in paragraph 26, significant public consultation was undertaken from July to October 2022. Engagement occurred with over 1,100 individuals from 89 different countries/ethnicities. A summary of this feedback from this engagement is attached at Annex One.

### **Communications**

- 110 Subject to Cabinet decisions, I intend to announce these changes and signal further work resulting from these changes. I note that the communications approach will have to be managed carefully in order to anticipate and respond to concerns and questions from community groups and manage expectations as to what these changes will and will not do.

### **Proactive Release**

- 111 This paper will be proactively released in line with the Cabinet Office circular Proactive Release of Cabinet Material: Updated Requirements [CO (18) 4].

### **Recommendations**

The Minister of Immigration recommends that the Committee:

*The New Zealand Refugee Resettlement and Migrant Settlement and Integration strategies*

- 1 note that in March 2012, Cabinet agreed to establish the current New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy (NZRRS), including an overarching outcome, five integration outcomes, success indicators and targets [CAB Min (12) 8/12 refers];
- 2 note that in July 2014, Cabinet agreed to establish the current New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy (NZMSIS), including an overarching outcome, five integration outcomes and success indicators EGI Min (14) 15/8 refers];
- 3 note that since the NZRRS and NZMSIS were agreed, there have been changes to migration, immigration settings and increasing views from communities that the

strategies do not reflect their aspirations for successful settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand;

*Vision statement and outcome areas*

- 4 agree that both the NZRRS and NZMSIS replace the existing overarching outcomes with these vision statements:

“Former refugees and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)”

and

“Recent migrants and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)”

- 5 agree that both the NZRRS and NZMSIS replace the existing integration outcomes with the following settlement outcomes:

- 5.1 Participation and inclusion: Former refugees / recent migrants and their families are welcomed and have a strong sense of belonging and acceptance in their communities and in Aotearoa New Zealand. They feel confident and safe to participate in different aspects of their lives
- 5.2 Health and wellbeing: Former refugees / recent migrants and their families achieve their health and wellbeing goals and thrive in their lives
- 5.3 Housing: Former refugees / recent migrants and their families live in homes and in communities that meet their long-term needs and goals
- 5.4 Education, training and English language: Former refugees / recent migrants and their families achieve their education, training and English language goals
- 5.5 Employment and self-sufficiency: Former refugees / recent migrants and their families achieve their employment and self-sufficiency goals, building on their skills and experiences.

- 6 agree to publicly release the new strategic frameworks for the NZRRS and NZMSIS as appended in Annex Two and Three;

*Success indicators*

- 7 invite the Minister of Immigration to report back to Cabinet by August 2024 on new success indicators and data sources required to measure progress against the outcome areas agreed in recommendation 5 developed in conjunction with Ministers with portfolios related to the outcome areas (Participation and Inclusion – Ministers of Diversity, Inclusion, and Ethnic Communities and New Zealand Police; Health and Wellbeing – Minister of Health; Housing – Minister of Housing; Education, training

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and English language – Minister of/for Education and Social Development; and Employment and Self-sufficiency – Minister for Social Development and Employment);

*Coverage under the strategies*

- 8 note that currently the NZRRS only applies to Quota Refugees, however, there are other refugee and refugee-like cohorts in Aotearoa New Zealand who have similar settlement challenges and needs;
- 9 agree to change the definition of coverage under the NZRRS to:  
“Former refugee and refugee-like resident visa holders (including partners and dependents) who have been living in Aotearoa New Zealand for five years or less”
- 10 agree subject to your agreement to recommendation 9 to amend coverage under the NZRRS to:
  - 10.1 Convention Refugees and Protected Persons; and
  - 10.2 Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship Category Resident Visa holders (including any partners and dependants) and future complementary pathways that may be introduced; and
  - 10.3 Refugee Family Support Category Resident visa holders (including partners and dependents); and
  - 10.4 Afghan Evacuees and Interpreters resident visa holders (including any partners and dependants) and any other one-off humanitarian residence categories that may emerge in the future).
- 11 note that the NZMSIS currently applies to all recent migrants, however, the monitoring and reporting framework focuses on priority groups who can make the largest potential economic contribution to Aotearoa New Zealand;
- 12 agree that the NZMSIS coverage be changed to recent migrant cohorts with the ability to settle permanently in Aotearoa New Zealand (determined through immigration status, particularly visa type, purpose and duration);
- 13 agree that priority groups under the monitoring and reporting framework be changed from those who may make the largest economic contribution to those with the greatest settlement needs;
- 14 delegate decisions on which groups should be prioritised under the NZMSIS to the Minister of Immigration (in consultation with other Ministers as relevant) and report back to the Minister of Immigration by the end of 2023;

*Support for those covered under the strategies*

- 15 direct officials from MBIE and other relevant agencies to identify the immediate needs of those individuals newly covered by the strategies, and to report back to the Minister of Immigration and other relevant Ministers as required by December 2023;

- 16 direct officials from MBIE and other relevant agencies to undertake a comprehensive review of the services and support underpinning the new strategies when these are fully developed and embedded, and to report back to the Minister of Immigration and other relevant Ministers as required from 2025;

*Settlement funding review*

- 17 note that I have asked officials to investigate options for ongoing and sustainable funding streams for settlement services and support in the context of the initial service expansion and the next review of Immigration Fee and Levy rates anticipated for 2024;
- 18 direct officials from MBIE to report back to the Minister of Immigration on options to ensure funding sustainability by the end of 2024;

*Support for those not covered under the strategies*


- 19 direct officials from MBIE and the Ministry of Social Development in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and other agencies as relevant to do further work on the support needs of asylum seekers during their claim process and report back to the Ministers of Immigration and Social Development by December 2024;
- 20 agree in-principle to reprioritise \$1 million of anticipated departmental output expense (Crown-funded) underspends within the Immigration Services Multi-Category Appropriation (MCA) in Vote Labour Market for 2022/23 towards the next two years to meet core and operational costs to provide welfare support for asylum seekers while further cross-government work is progressed;
- 21 authorise the Minister of Finance and Minister of Immigration jointly to increase the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category (departmental output expense) within the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market for 2023/24 by up to \$1 million, following completion of the 2022/23 audited financial statements, with no impact on the operating balance and net debt across the forecast period.

*Embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori into the strategies*

- 22 note that I have asked officials to prioritise engagement with iwi on settlement practice through leveraging existing and new relationships through the Welcoming Communities programme;
- 23 direct officials from MBIE to report back on proposals to embed the Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori into the strategies from 2025;

*Welcoming Communities funding*

- 24 note that funding of \$1.6 million is currently appropriated annually for the Welcoming Communities Programme through to 30 June 2023 but that due to COVID-19 impacts, there is \$2.5 million of underspends from the 2022/23 financial year;

- 25 note that ongoing funding currently appropriated for the Welcoming Communities Programme reduces to \$500,000 per annum from 1 July 2023;
- 26 note that this reduction in funding would only allow for ongoing administrative support and would not cover work currently underway with iwi partners, the development of complementary programmes with Council and iwi and may impact on MBIE's ability to deliver on its action of 'Increasing the visibility of the Welcoming Communities Programme' as part of Te Korowai Whetū Social Cohesion strategic framework;
- 27 note that the Welcoming Communities Programme will have increased funding for one year from reprioritised funding **Confidential advice to Government**  

- 28 agree to an in-principle expense transfer in the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category of the Immigration Services MCA to fund contractual payments for the second and third years of funding for the 26 councils that joined the Welcoming Communities programme in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years of up to:
- 28.1 \$1.450 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 financial year, and
- 28.2 \$1.050 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2024/25 financial year;
- 29 authorise the Minister of Finance and Minister of Immigration jointly to increase the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category of the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market for 2023/24 by up to 1.450 million and for 2024/25 by up to 1.050 million, following completion of the 2022/23 audited financial statements, with no impact on the operating balance and net debt across the forecast period;
- 30 authorise the Minister of Finance and Minister of Immigration jointly to increase the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category of the Immigration Services MCA in Vote Labour Market for 2023/24 by up to \$0.720 million for the 2023/24 financial year following completion of the 2022/23 audited financial statements, with no impact on the operating balance and net debt across the forecast period;

*Language Assistance Programme funding*

- 31 agree to an in-principle expense transfer of up to \$0.720 million from the 2022/23 financial year to the 2023/24 financial year for the Settlement and Integration of Refugees and Other Migrants category of the Immigration Services MCA.

Authorised for lodgement

**IN CONFIDENCE**

Hon Andrew Little

Minister of Immigration

**IN CONFIDENCE**



## **Annex One: Summary of findings from engagement with communities**

Common themes arising from the stakeholder engagement activities were:

### **a. There is a strong appreciation of what Aotearoa New Zealand offers**

Former refugees and migrants appreciate what Aotearoa New Zealand offers, such as safety, freedoms (of speech, assembly, religion), opportunities (in education, employment and business), nature and our beautiful environment, and a relaxed pace of life. Many are grateful for the opportunity of living in Aotearoa New Zealand and consider themselves very lucky to be here.

In return, they would not only like to fully participate in life and feel like they truly belong here; but, they would also like to contribute to all aspects of life, including through civic participation (i.e. enrolling to vote, voting, and running for office), and becoming part of the fabric of communities.

### **b. Successful settlement takes time and is tightly intertwined with holistic wellbeing**

Settlement is a long but important process. Arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand is only part of the journey, which also includes setting up, becoming established, finding housing and employment, starting education, connecting with others, etc.

Former refugees and migrants note that whilst the elements of successful settlement are broad, these are tightly intertwined with holistic wellbeing, which extends far beyond physical and mental health to include meeting one's aspirations for and meaningful participation in all aspects of life in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### **c. Equity is important**

Former refugees and migrants acknowledge they all start at different points; but, should end up with similar re/settlement outcomes, having received equitable support and services to achieve these outcomes.

For many, equity also translates to ensuring coverage of the strategies is extended to various refugees and migrant cohorts (i.e. Convention Refugees, Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship, Parent / Parent Retirement Resident visa holders, International Students, Recognised Seasonal Employer visa holders) and that information about who is covered and what coverage means is communicated to all former refugees and migrants.

### **d. Former refugees and migrants experience barriers, racism, bias and discrimination**

When asked what they find difficult about living in Aotearoa New Zealand, the top response for former refugees was language. For migrants, it was the high cost of living. Racism was the second most frequently named difficulty for both groups.

Most, if not all, former refugees and migrants have experienced racism, especially with regards to employment, education, health and housing, and at all ages. Many parents are concerned about their children being bullied and ostracised at school due to race and stereotypes related to immigration status. Former refugees and migrants with disabilities and/or health conditions, and those who are part of the rainbow community report additional layers of discrimination which in turn, negatively affects all areas of life, including mental health and wellbeing. This pervasive racism translates to not receiving fair or equitable treatment and being prevented from full economic and social inclusion.

There is a need to shift attitudes and the onus of settlement to include preparing and educating the wider community about diversity, inclusion, cultural competency and disability responsiveness.

**e. Connection is a key component of successful settlement**

From the lived experiences that were shared, it is evident that being able to connect with other people in the community is paramount. Building social cohesion, social connection, and a sense of belonging are extremely important.

Former refugees and migrants note that they can have all their basic needs met; but, will not feel as though they are settled or that they belong until they have at least one meaningful connection with someone in the community.

**f. Many seek engagement between former refugees, migrants and tangata whenua**

Many former refugees and migrants acknowledge tangata whenua as indigenous people of the land and have identified the absence of tangata whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the immigration and settlement processes.

Many former refugees and migrants described their positive experiences engaging with Māori, and learning about Te Ao Māori, including the language. There is a strong interest in understanding Māori culture, and connecting with Māori, noting that local iwi should be resourced to provide a welcome (pōwhiri), education and re/settlement support.

The tangata whenua who attended engagement sessions expressed a desire to welcome former refugees and migrants through a pōwhiri, and to incorporate manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga in the re/settlement process. Concerns raised include how this would be appropriately planned and resourced, so it is meaningful and sustainable.

There are some concerns about multiculturalism within a bicultural context, and if it would affect equity for new migrants, former refugees and tangata whenua. This reinforces the need to appropriately plan and resource engagement so that it is safe for all.

**g. There is a strong desire to contribute and be recognised for one's strengths**

Former refugees and migrants want to contribute and be seen for the value, strengths, and mana they hold. They are also keen to be part of the solution to issues and barriers their communities face through having input into decision-making processes and taking a lead in supporting other newcomers.

Former refugees would like to change the narrative from being victims of trauma, unable to do contribute, to being recognised for their courage, strength, perseverance, and abilities.

They acknowledge there is trauma and that many may need support to work through it; but they do not want to be defined by this nor miss out on opportunities because of the negative perceptions.

Migrants, including Pacific migrants, also do not want to be seen as “less than”, “othered”, nor labelled in a negative way.

**h. Full economic inclusion means having their capabilities valued**

Former refugees and migrants want employment that recognises their strengths (i.e., at the same level as their qualifications, training, and previous experience) and that gives them a sense of worth and purpose.

Former refugees and migrants, however, find it challenging to receive recognition of prior qualifications and experience. Many note that to work in their chosen field sometimes required complete retraining, preceded by English language education. Yet, there is no guarantee of work given attitudes of employers to overseas experience, people for whom English is not their first language, and people with non-English names. The result is former refugees and migrants not achieving their employment potential, and often just feeling like a cog in the system. This impacts on family income, well-being and self-esteem, Aotearoa New Zealand's productivity performance and creates a negative reinforcing loop. There were also concerns raised about exploitation, especially with regards to former refugees. Some reported working without an employment agreement, long hours, take-home pay in cash that appeared to be under minimum wage, deductions for items that should be supplied by the employer.

**i. English language is important and individual language needs differ**

Many former refugees and migrants recognised English language skills as being crucial for living and working in Aotearoa New Zealand, and that one of the biggest barriers to successful settlement is language barriers.

Motivation for learning English varies. Some want to learn English for further studies, others for employment. Many want to improve conversational English; others may only want to learn enough to converse with their grandchildren. Many former refugees and migrants note that sometimes English language classes available do not meet their needs.

For many, there is a desire to learn the language whilst they are settling, as opposed to having to learn it, and then settle, or being forced to choose between two competing priorities (e.g. English language classes or employment). They also note that the settlement process should be enabled and supported without the need to learn English first, and that there is a need for proficient, professional interpreters.

**j. Information is important for full social and financial inclusion**

Re/settling in a new country is a very stressful time. Many former refugees and migrants note they were overwhelmed with all the information they received when they first arrived. They would prefer access up to date “just in time” information, education and support when needed, at all stages of their re/settlement journey, and in different languages. The type of information they would like is wide-ranging and would allow them to confidently navigate social, community and health services.

**k. Climate change is an emerging concern**

At many of the engagement sessions, migrants asked about their role in climate change mitigation. They would like to support Aotearoa New Zealand in its goals to address climate change. Many migrants, especially Pacific migrants, expressed concerns about the future of the Pacific Islands and asked that the Refresh consider extending coverage to future climate change refugees.

## Annex Two: Proposed New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy

# New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy

The vision of this strategy is that former refugees and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)

*Quota Refugees; Convention Refugees and Protected Persons; Community Organisation Sponsorship Category; Refugee Family Support Category; Afghan Evacuees and Interpreters are covered by this strategy*

The vision is underpinned by five settlement outcomes:



### Participation and Inclusion

Former refugees and their families are welcomed and have a strong sense of belonging and acceptance in their communities and in Aotearoa New Zealand. They feel confident and safe to participate in different aspects of their lives

### Health and Wellbeing

Former refugees and their families achieve their health and wellbeing goals and thrive in their lives



### Housing

Former refugees and their families live in homes and in communities that meet their long-term needs and goals

### Education, Training and English Language

Former refugees and their families achieve their education, training and English language goals



### Employment and Self-Sufficiency

Former refugees and their families achieve their employment and self-sufficiency goals, building on their skills and experiences

## Annex Three: Proposed New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy

# New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy

The vision of this strategy is that recent migrants and their families settle successfully, achieve their goals, and thrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes feeling safe and well, having a sense of belonging and being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of life (social, economic, cultural, and civic)

*Priority groups to be identified*

The vision is underpinned by five settlement outcomes:



### Participation and Inclusion

Recent migrants and their families are welcomed and have a strong sense of belonging and acceptance in their communities and in Aotearoa New Zealand. They feel confident and safe to participate in different aspects of their lives

### Health and Wellbeing

Recent migrants and their families achieve their health and wellbeing goals and thrive in their lives



### Housing

Recent migrants and their families live in homes and in communities that meet their long-term needs and goals

### Education, Training and English Language

Recent migrants and their families achieve their education, training and English language goals



### Employment and Self-Sufficiency

Recent migrants and their families achieve their employment and self-sufficiency goals, building on their skills and experiences

## **Annex Four: Current New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy**

The overarching outcome of the current New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy is:

*Refugees are participating fully and integrated socially and economically as soon as possible so that they are living independently, undertaking the same responsibilities and exercising the same rights as other New Zealanders and have a strong sense of belonging in their own community and to New Zealand*

The five integration outcomes and descriptors for the current New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy are:

*Self-sufficiency: all working age refugees are in paid work or are supported by a family member in paid work*

*Participation: refugees actively participate in New Zealand life and have a strong sense of belonging to New Zealand*

*Health and wellbeing: refugees and their families enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives*

*Education: refugees' English language skills enable them to participate in education and achieve qualifications, and support them to participate in daily life*

*Housing: refugees live independently of government housing assistance in homes that are safe, secure, healthy and affordable*

## **Annex Five: Current New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy**

The overarching outcome of the current New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy is:

*Migrants make New Zealand their home, participate fully and contribute to all aspects of New Zealand life*

The five integration outcomes and descriptors for the current New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy are:

*Employment: working-age migrants have work that matches their skills and New Zealand-ready qualifications*

*Education and training: migrants achieve educational and vocational qualifications*

*English language: migrants confidently use English in their daily lives*

*Inclusion: migrants participate in and have a sense of belonging to their community and to New Zealand*

*Health and wellbeing: migrants enjoy healthy lives and feel confident and safe.*