

# MIGRANT EXPERIENCES IN THE TIME OF COVID

## Survey Report 2020 - About and findings

In 2020, Belong Aoteroa carried out an online survey to help gain a snapshot of migrant experiences during the time of COVID. The research is part of broader and ongoing work that seeks to amplify marginalised migrant voices, inform key stakeholders of the exasperated challenges migrant communities face and also guide our work going forward.

### Key Information about the survey:

- A.C.T Research Framework used
- Survey undertaken September 2020
- 160 respondents, representing 36 countries

Based on our findings, here are the overarching themes that we term as the “4Rs”, encompassing not ‘still-shot’ but live, ongoing COVID experiences:



## RISKS TO WELL-BEING

The effects of COVID on individual and collective well-being cannot be understated, especially among migrant communities. As shared by our respondents, the effects of COVID-19 are complex and far-reaching.



## RE-ROOTING & RE-ROUTING OF RACISM

Our research supports what has been widely reported regarding the spike in micro-aggressions towards migrants and racially motivated attacks especially involving ethnic minorities from Asian backgrounds due to COVID-19. Racism has been re-rooted in a time of extreme uncertainty and re-routed virtually, magnifying deep-seated intolerance and divisiveness that counters social cohesion.



## RESTRICTED ACCESS TO COVID-RELATED SUPPORT & INFORMATION

Despite urgency of channelling correct information and avoiding misinformation, there remains great concern around accessing timely and translated COVID-19 updates with confusion around provided information, support access and delivery, further impacted by visa status.



## RESKILLING, RELOCATION, IF NOT, RE-MIGRATION

As a result of the above challenges, our research identified migrant aspirations around reskilling and gaining new skills to enhance the chances of keeping their jobs and preventing potential job loss. Some respondents expressed wanting to leave New Zealand and re-migrating to another country.

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## Survey Report 2020 - Recommendations

The findings presented in this report highlight the vulnerability of recent migrants in Aotearoa New Zealand during a global crisis; and the systemic barriers to a positive settlement journey that existed pre-COVID yet to be fully addressed. It supports the multiple, interlinked and simultaneous risks and hazards caused by the pandemic across all systems - health, economy, governance, culture and environment - in extreme uncertainty. These risks, however, are not unknown but are in fact widely reported, and this research is about amplifying the voices behind these risks as well as highlighting their recurring call for empathy.

We conclude with an open invitation to have a conversation around and collaborate on developing a 'whole-of-society' approach to address our current challenges and build a better future.

A whole-of-society approach recognises the interdependency of systems and shifts away from an 'umbrella approach' - a mitigation strategy that seeks temporary, short-term and differential solutions, leading to differential results (e.g., some umbrellas are sturdy, others are weak - some are more protected than others). While it is impossible to fully equalise and even out the impact of COVID-19 across diverse communities, it is possible to discuss ways to recognise diversity without being divisive and to change systems while harnessing interlocked experiences and collective impact.

### We see a whole-of-society approach as:



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