



# SURVEY

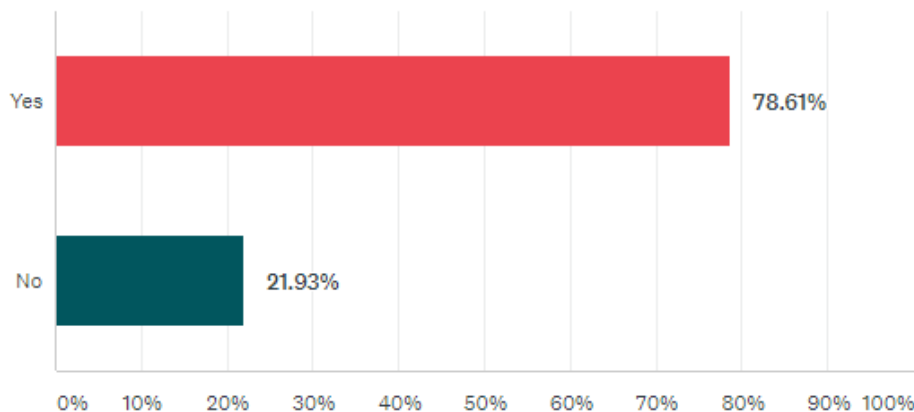
## Member feedback on temporary visas

24 APRIL 2020

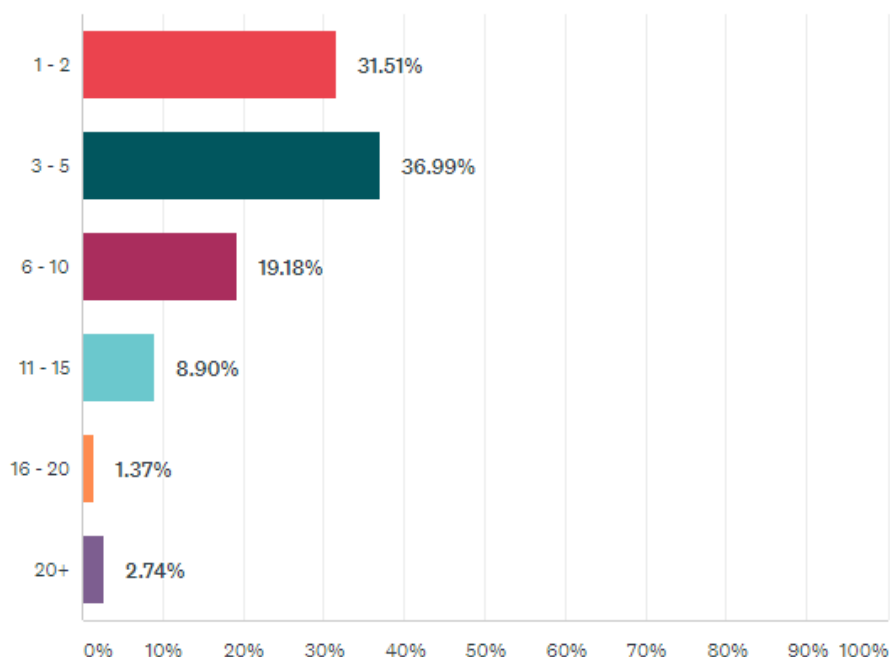
restaurant  
association  
of new zealand

We know that our industry employs a number of staff who are working in New Zealand on temporary work visas. This survey was designed to find out more about how many of our members' staff were on visas pre lockdown, and how that may have changed now, or could change in the future.

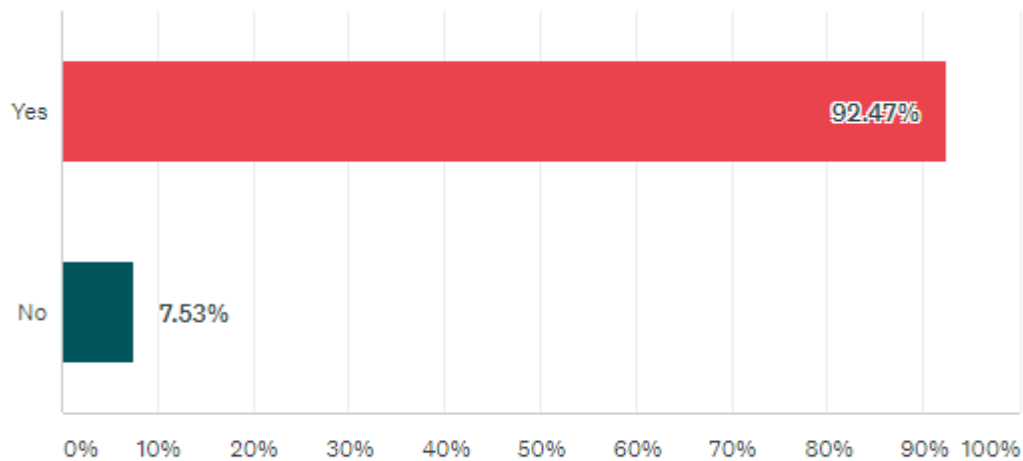
Q1. Prior to the lockdown, did you have any migrant workers on temporary visas employed in your business?



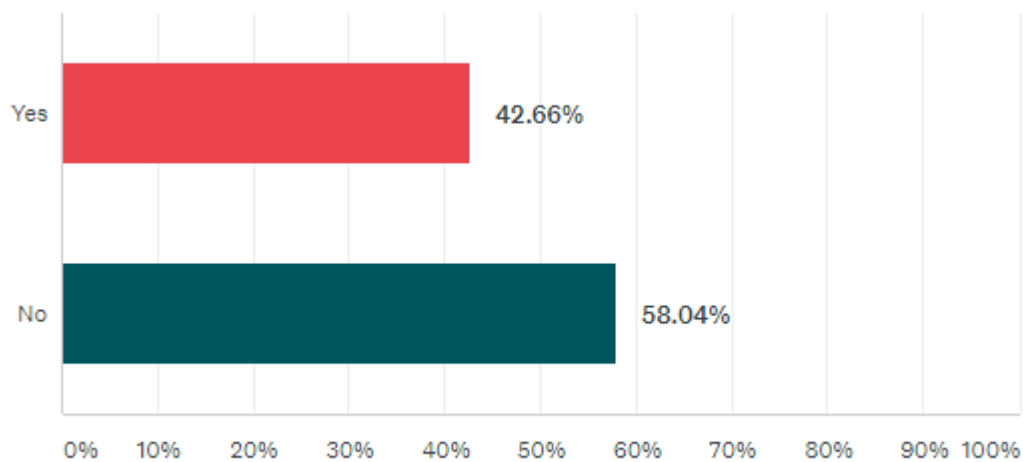
Q2. How many migrant workers were employed in your business at the time of the lockdown?



Q3. Do you still have people on temporary visas in your workforce, as at today's date?



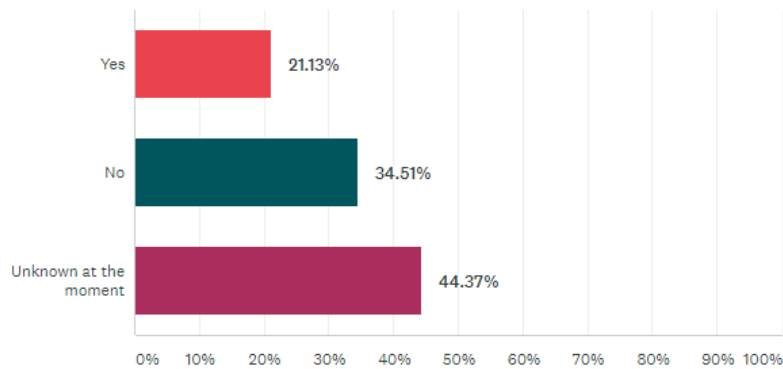
Q4. Do you have any future plans to reduce the number of temporary migrant workers in your business?



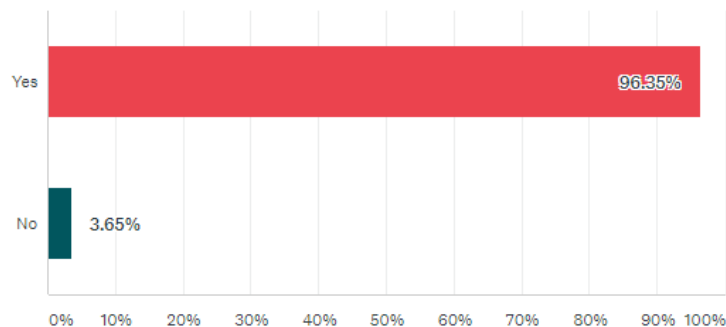
Q5. Of those employers who said they had future plans to reduce the number of temporary migrant workers in the business, by how many and in which sections of the business?

	1-2	3-5	5-10	10+
Kitchen roles	63% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in kitchen roles by 1-2 in total	31% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in kitchen roles by 3-5 in total	4% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in kitchen roles by 5-10 in total	2% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in kitchen roles by 10+ in total
Front of house roles	62% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in front of house roles by 1-2 in total	27% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in front of house roles by 3-5 in total	9% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in front of house roles by 5-10 in total	2% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in front of house roles by 10+ in total
Other roles	100% said they would reduce the number of migrant workers in other roles by 1-2 in total			

Q6. After the lockdown has ended, do you believe you will have a need to employ further people on temporary work visas?



#### Q7. Have you claimed a wage subsidy for any temporary migrant worker staff?



#### MEMBER FEEDBACK:

At the time of the lockdown we were down to one chef and had a work visa application with Immigration NZ for a second chef - our normal level. We still need to recruit another chef but may not be able to bring the selected employee into New Zealand for a year or more. Prior to COVID-19 there was a shortage of overseas chefs in NZ - we suspect there will be a surplus of them emerging over coming months. We have already had enquiries from tourism locations where staff do not expect to retain their jobs when the employer wage subsidy runs out.

Re the question about needing temporary workers after lockdown, I think while we still have some with visas it's ok but when their visas expire we are concerned we won't be able to get migrant workers in the future. We do not think there will be a great pool of NZ workers here in Queenstown wanting to work in hospitality.

I have two employees, that have 2 year visa's they have both worked for me for over 1 year.

I want to keep employing my migrant workers as long as I can afford them. One foh person's visa is extended to 25 Sept. I would like to employ her after 25/9 if I can. One person has a 3 month with one employer condition. I want to continue her employment past 3 months until the end of the wage subsidy, because otherwise that would cause her undue financial hardship due to reasons outside her control. If I have to let go of her after 12 weeks (which I probably would) what will she do if she is stuck here in NZ and doesn't qualify for the unemployment benefit and can't get another hospo job because there is so much unemployment?

We need all our immigrant workers to continue employment with us. They are very valuable & important to our model. We hope they can stay employed with us.

We have not treated our migrant workers any different from our kiwi

workers. We have had a 2 return home on mercy flights. In our business there have never been any kiwi bakers so we will still need migrants after will be interesting to see the new rules by immigration as when we place adds there have never been kiwis apply.

We have 2 chefs who have recently been granted work visas on the skills shortage visas. I have written letters for them to give immigration promising them an annual salary. I will find it very difficult to fulfill the salary total for the year now. What should I do?

Once the alert levels are down so a normal restaurant operation is possible we will need overseas chefs and front of house for our seasonal contracts!

I have got 4 staff but they still have a few months visa left. I don't know how we can keep them in future. We spent quite a lot hard work & time to trained them & I don't want to lose them.

I have a problem with staff caught in limbo awaiting immigration decisions. There visa expired or were in the process of transferring and therefore can't get subsidy, can't work.

All migrant workers are on full time working visas, just not sure how we will be able to provide full hours as per contract if business won't have income as before. What would be the rules: would it be OK to provide only 20 - 30 hours per week or must be 30+?

We have one migrant on a working holiday visa and one migrant on a student visa.

We may have to let one chef go when his visa expires in September if we

can't guarantee the 40 hours per week that immigration requires?

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At the end of February we had 3 employees on visas and we want them all back for next summer. 2 of them because of their visa requirements had to go and spend 12 weeks in the farming sector but have asked if we can sponsor them next summer which based on their history with us we definitely want to do.

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A lot of hospo depends heavily on migrant workers. In our location we are particularly dependent as there is no willing local labour. With lottery based WHV's temporarily on hold, we have no idea whether we will be able to staff our business post lockdown. Immigration NZ will need to act quickly to address this as we move down the COVID levels.

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Going forward it is difficult to estimate the problems of recruiting temporary staff, particularly migrant workers, during high-season as we will not have the usual influx of backpackers.

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If redundancies occur, we would like to provide migrants with any assistance the MSD may offer after the wage subsidy has been used.

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It is still unclear the situation where we need to reduce hours for people for whom we have supported visa's with minimum hours.

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We have collected the subsidy for all of our staff that were on our books at the time of this all occurring, therefore we understand that we need to keep paying it to them for the whole 12 weeks. After that ends we will have no work for them.

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We have two staff members waiting on residency. Which should have come through for them - but now lockdown has occurred they have no idea when this will happen now.

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We have had multiple very good chefs who have been made redundant at other restaurants ask for jobs from us. Does immigration have any plans to fast track new visas for migrant workers who have been made redundant to get into new jobs. Some of these workers even have pending residency applications on immigration's desk.

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We are doing the best we can at present to retain our staff. However, the difficulty remains as to whether we can deploy those staff in different areas of the business in order to keep them employed without affecting the requirements of their Visa. e.g If someone is employed in the restaurant can they work in the vineyard or winery. We are constantly reviewing the situation, at present.

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I think moving forward it is about finding skilled workers, Hopso will no longer be short staffed. Finally businesses will be able to find skilled staff rather than being a shortage.

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We won't be able to provide the minimum thirty hours to our staff on visas, do we continue to employ them as some work is better than no work or let them go?

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We would like to retain some of the staff we have on current sponsorship visas however we need to have the flexibility to reduce hours from the minimum 30 hours or do a variation on their pay rate. These are the two questions we keep asking but neither NZ Immigration or NZ Employment are prepared to work together and come with something. We are good employers and look after our staff - all being paid on at least average \$22 per hour. If we could do a variation on their pay for even 6 months, and reduce their hours - they would be able to retain their jobs. Otherwise they will have to be let go after the subsidy runs out.

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The industry will go through a period of realignment with possibly more

New Zealanders or permanent residents wanting to work in a lesser number of positions.

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Our wish is to keep as many staff as we can and have asked them all to reduce hours / wages temporarily as an interim solution. The skilled migrants are concerned that if the temporary wage rate is less than the threshold for their visa requirements, especially those who are awaiting an outcome regarding residency, that their visas will be cancelled or residency application will be refused.

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In the past we have sponsored quite a few Employer Assisted Work Visa's as we found the skill levels of these employees to be generally higher than that of locals. We have spoken recently regarding this topic and believe with the high unemployment rates we are likely to be looking at, as a NZ business we have a duty to ensure that hiring NZ residents/citizen should be prioritized over that of immigrants.

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I have 3 staff on sponsored visas. All of them are on a high wage and need to be on 30-40 hours per week which I'm not going to be able to support. Very keen to understand what my options are here.

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Due to the minimum income required by his Visa, we cannot reduce his hours which may mean if things get really bad after we re-open we may need to make him redundant since he will lose his Visa if his income is reduced.

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I don't need the wage subsidy for my 2 migrant workers and have not received it so that's good. Mine left to get home pretty quickly.

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