

# Immigration & recruitment challenges

## Member feedback

### Auckland restaurateur

Have actively tried to get staff with limited success and its making it very difficult to manage day to day, and re invent my business. Productivity has declined. My Sous Chef is leaving Auckland because cannot get enough points to work towards residency after 4 years with me. This is crazy, not an even playing field, and many of my colleagues in the same boat going what a bad time to be in Auckland Hospo as a Owner.

### Queenstown restaurateur

We are facing huge challenges recruiting skilled staff in both Front and Back of House. We have advertised through Work and Income – both locally and nationally. We were advised there were 1500 people on their books and there was not one match.

It is extremely upsetting and stressful; not only for our staff but also when trying to recruit (it puts huge amount of pressure on the existing staff when you do not have enough employees to cover) – the anxiety and cost to all parties is high, when our business is only trying to do the right thing.

I invite the Minister to sit with me (a NZ Kiwi and some of our staff both Kiwi's and migrants) to explain in more detail.

### Wellington casual eatery owner

We are finding that it is the most difficult time to find staff out of the 11 years that we have been in business. There are not many applicants from job advertisements (eg facebook, various online community jobsites, trademe). We recently advertised on trademe and received only 2 applicants. A lot of my business owner friends are also feeling the same – we advertise positions but either there are very few applicants or they are unsuitable or both. Most people are saying that they feel forced to take on staff that may not be suitable just to keep staffing numbers.

### Auckland eatery - group

At the end of this month we are closing a store because we just do not have enough staff. Our current staff are spread so thin they're over worked and we're at risk of losing even more so unfortunately we are having to shut down one of our for stores in order to survive.

### Hospitality group owner

If it continues the way it is there will be an influx of tourists when the borders open and no staff in hospitality. Crippling one of New Zealand's largest industries.

### Cafe owner

We are at a critical stage where we can't grow our business anymore. We have 2 cafes and have worked hard to make the cafes successful. Our business plan was to open 2 more cafes in the next year. Last week we found 2 suitable sites and had to make a decision. We decided with the current dire staffing problem to open another business would be near impossible. We decided not to go ahead. In effect we halted economic growth for a number of potential employees, suppliers, government revenue of GST and PAYE. As a Director of the cafes I should be focusing on growing the business... yet all my time is spent on recruitment.

### Auckland cafe owner

Very, very hard to find anyone at the moment. Minimal applications. Simply no one to work.

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### Christchurch restaurateur

The acute shortage of qualified, experienced staff already affects our team, our product and our customers. Our current staff are already overworked and they work hard but we pay overtime and bonuses and provide whatever perks we can come up with at great cost to us, I am worried they will burn out and leave. I am kept awake at night by what might happen to our business if we can't fill these positions, the staff we spend so much time and money keeping happy and motivated will leave and we won't be able to offer our customers what we need to.

### Auckland coffee house owner

Hard to find chefs as immigration's hard policies are affecting us recruiting chefs.

I started working in the kitchen at the age of 53, managing the store as well and on top of that 80 -120 minutes drive to and fro. Struggling. Health is deteriorating day by day.

Immigration has to change the policies or government have to bring people in off the benefit if they can't change the policies to bring more skilled people. Really disappointing 😞

### Christchurch cafe owner

Immigration has a different idea of what a 'chef' is to the reality of what a chef actually does at work. They classify everyone as kitchen hands unless they are the head chef who is planning and creating the menu. Our chefs can't get, or struggle to get visas because immigration has no idea how the kitchen works.

### Wellington cafe & bakery owner

Because of recruitment challenges, we are in a phase of "stagnation". We would like to grow our business and we are ready to open more sites BUT we are worried not to be able to recruit the right people (if any) to fulfill the new Teams.

### Hospitality group owner

There are genuine skills shortages in our industry. After the Minister's announcement last night, my staff on Essential Skills visas are very stressed and worried about their future here in NZ, and the lack of information, clarity and certainty means I don't know what to tell them or how to help them. Our business would not be the same without our international workers. They bring so much more to us than just their job skills.

### Wellington bar owner

I think something like raising the amount of hours a person can work while also receiving a student allowance would make a big difference. This wouldn't need to be across the board- maybe only if they choose to find work in an industry that is struggling/ has been really effected by COVID19 (hospitality & tourism etc). There are lots of students looking for work, but the restrictions placed on them by the government with regards to employment makes it very difficult to fit them into a roster- especially in an industry where those rosters are notoriously fickle/people are often called in last minute.