

2020

WELCOME TO

# WAIKATO

The beating heart of New Zealand

COMMUNITY





## MORE THAN THE SUM OF OUR PARTS

**Our region's top priority is to build kinder, safer and more inclusive communities. A strong community gives us a sense of belonging, togetherness and cooperation. It makes us more resilient to change.**

Over the next 10 years our population is projected to grow. We'll have more people aged 65+, less young people, and our Asian, Pasifika and Maaori populations will grow significantly. With change comes both challenge and opportunity. Our diverse backgrounds, skills and experience will allow us to contribute to our communities in many ways.

We want everyone to feel welcome, included and given fair opportunity. Our ability to come together and communicate effectively will help build an intercultural society, where there is deep understanding and respect for all cultures.

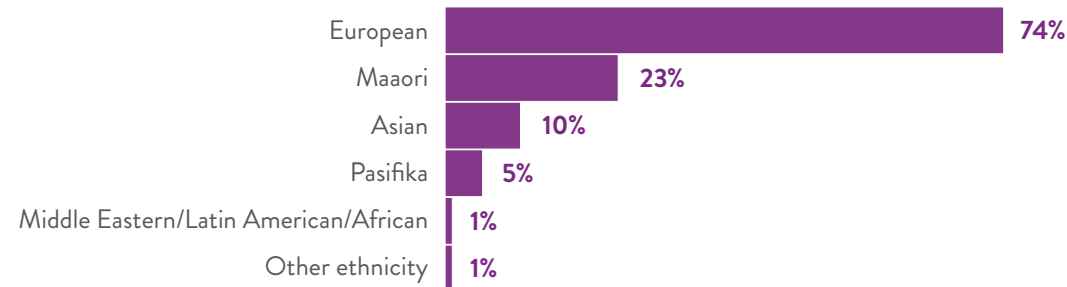
It's part of our manaakitanga, which runs strong in the Waikato. There are more of us involved in unpaid volunteering and caring work than nationally, and many of our rural communities rely on an informal economy of volunteers to provide essential services. Recognising and supporting this contribution is essential.

“We need more energy invested into increasing community connection so that we find safe spaces for each and every one of us to be seen, heard, understood and have the ability to be part of something bigger than ourselves.”

– Hamilton survey respondent

## Who are we?\*

Almost a quarter of our population identifies as Maaori, higher than the national average of 17%.



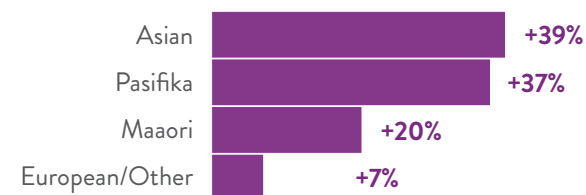
\* Proportion of the usually resident population, Census 2018.

People may identify with, and therefore be counted in, more than one ethnic group, so overall totals add up to more than 100.

## Our diverse population is growing

Over the next 10 years, the Asian and Pasifika populations will see the highest growth in the region, followed by Maaori.

### PROJECTED GROWTH 2018-2028\*



\* Projected growth in the resident population of each broad ethnic group within the Waikato Vital Signs® 2020 Region over the 2018-2028 period.

#### FIND OUT MORE:

More socio-demographic information for each local government district is available online at [www.momentumwaikato.nz/data](http://www.momentumwaikato.nz/data).

“There’s a wide representation from every ethnic background and age group, along with a growing sense of community in this family-orientated suburb.”

– Rototuna, Hamilton survey respondent

“My community is kind, diverse, inclusive, supportive and friendly.”

– Waikato District survey respondent



## Refugee settlement

**1,078** quota refugees settled in the Waikato Region between 2009 and 2019. From 2014 to 2019, the top three nationalities of people who settled here were Afghanistan, Colombia and Pakistan.

Source: Refugee and Protection Unit Statistics Pack, Immigration New Zealand, 2020.

“We live great with New Zealand but we lost everything, identity, culture, respect in a certain way, it is very hard to explain what happens to us at the moment we had to leave everything.”

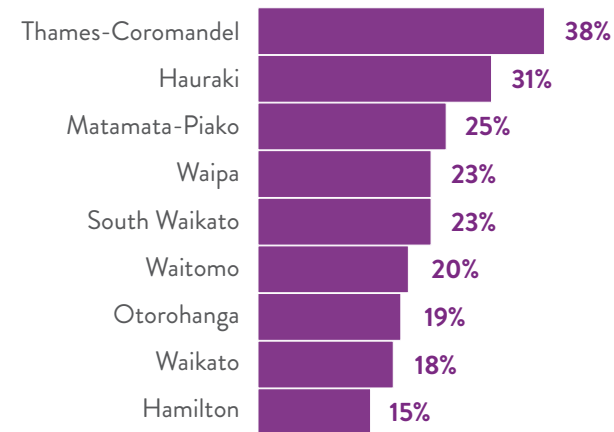
– Hamilton survey respondent



## We are getting older

**20%** of our region will be aged 65+ in 2028, an increase from 16% in 2018.

### PROJECTED POPULATION AGED 65+ BY 2028

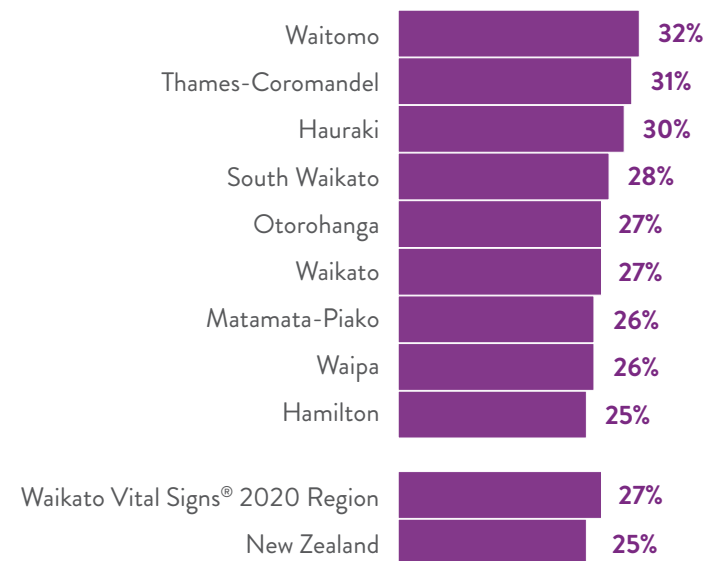


## We care about each other

Being involved in unpaid caring and volunteer work is at the heart of many of our communities. It's mahi that improves community engagement and social connectedness, while relieving pressure on health and social services.

- Māori are the most involved in caring and volunteering.
- Women are more likely to volunteer than men.
- Waitomo has the highest proportion of people involved in volunteering, followed by Thames-Coromandel.

### VOLUNTEERING\*



\* Proportion of the usually resident population aged 15+ who reported being involved in unpaid caring and volunteering work, 2018.

“There will be more people requiring access to services which are not as easily accessible in a rural community, possible social isolation, higher numbers looking for pensioner housing and elder abuse. Material hardship for some older people is expected to increase, particularly as mortgage-free home ownership is less likely.”

– Hauraki survey respondent





3,661 people applied for volunteering positions at Volunteering Waikato in 2019, up from 3,037 in 2015.

*Source: Volunteering Waikato, 2020.*

New Zealand is the third most generous country in terms of donating money, helping a stranger and volunteering time.

*Source: Charities Aid Foundation World Giving Index, 2019.*

“We need more funding towards paying volunteer leaders. If there are jobs for people in these roles they are passionate about, if there are paid opportunities to help our community, people will no longer burn out and they will be able to choose to help their communities while supporting their families.”

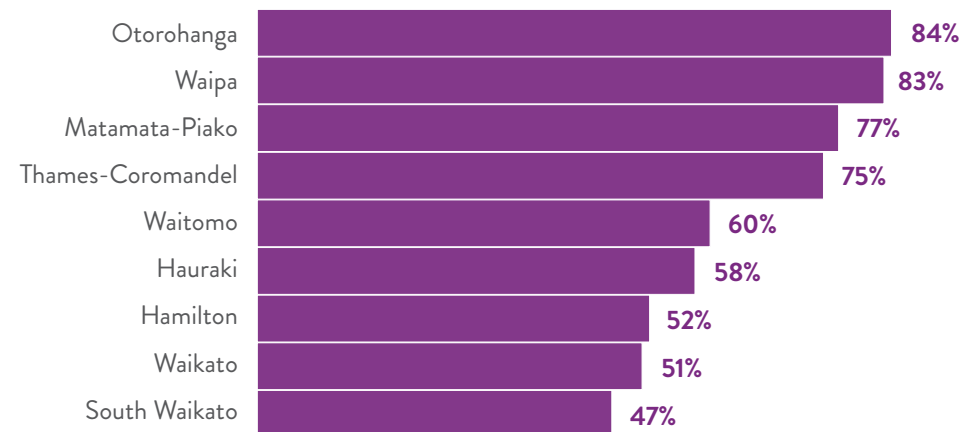
– Hamilton survey respondent

“The people in Tokoroa are caring, kind, honest and work very hard for what they get. An unnecessarily high proportion have been ‘set up to lose’ in this life, which is not fair and a systemic fault. However, this doesn’t stop them giving to others in need.”

– South Waikato survey respondent

## Community pride

**62%** of people in the Waikato Region feel proud of their city or district.



*\* Level of agreement among the surveyed population on whether they feel a sense of pride in the way their city/town looks and feels, 2018.*



“It’s important to me...that we continue to make our town a vibrant and happy place to live, with nice amenities that give people who live here a sense of pride in our town and activities, that either cost nothing or are minimal cost so they are accessible to all who live here.”

– Waipa survey respondent

## 1 in 5 of us feel lonely

Self-assessed loneliness\* helps to measure social connectedness.

*\*Proportion of the population aged 15+ in the North Island (excluding Auckland, Wellington, Northland, BOP and Gisborne), who reported feeling lonely all the time, most of the time or some of the time over a four-week period, 2018.*

“Since we moved into Huntly, I have not made any connections within the community. Our neighbourhood is quiet and each household tends to keep to themselves. Each family is busy in their own lives and not wanting to extend their circle with their neighbours.”

– Waikato District survey respondent

## 4 in 5 of us are satisfied with our life

New Zealand ranks 9 out of 36 OECD countries for overall life satisfaction\*.

*\*Proportion of the population aged 15+ in the North Island (excluding Auckland, Wellington, Northland, BOP and Gisborne), who self-reported to be satisfied with their life, 2018.*

“I believe that connection is a huge part in improving our wellbeing and therefore moving towards more people thriving.”

– Hamilton survey respondent



## Voter turnout

Local body voter turnout\* is a measure of civic engagement. It shows how connected and invested we are in the issues facing our community.

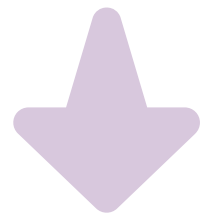
BETWEEN 2016 AND 2019



Voter turnout increased overall for Thames-Coromandel, Hauraki, Hamilton, Matamata-Piako, Otorohanga, Waikato and Waitomo district/city councils.



Voter turnout stayed the same for Waikato Regional Council.



Voter turnout decreased overall for South Waikato and Waipa district councils.

Regional authority	2016	2019
Waitomo District Council	38%	53%
Matamata-Piako District Council	24%	52%
Hauraki District Council	44%	49%
Otorohanga District Council	25%	45%
Waikato Regional Council	44%	44%
Thames-Coromandel District Council	38%	40%
Hamilton City Council	34%	39%
South Waikato District Council	44%	37%
Waipa District Council	39%	36%
Waikato District Council	31%	34%

\* Total voter turnout. Source: Local Government New Zealand, 2020.

## Community engagement

Community engagement with local government is an important aspect of democracy in New Zealand. In the Waikato Region there has been a significant decline in the proportion of people who believe the public has some or a large influence on the decisions of council.



“Create stronger communities by using the technology available to allow people to participate in the decisions that affect them, move forward using the principles of co - design so that our communities feel like they too have ownership and have contributed to the outcome.”  
– Waipa survey respondent

## Crime

Waipa has the lowest rate of crime victimisation\*, while Hamilton has the highest.

Hamilton City	612
Waitomo	544
Hauraki	500
Thames-Coromandel	470
South Waikato	439
Matamata-Piako	382
Waikato	364
Otorohanga	346
Waipa	273
<b>Waikato Vital Signs® 2020 Region</b>	<b>472</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>447</b>

\* Number of crime victimisations reported annually per 10,000 population, year ending June 2019.

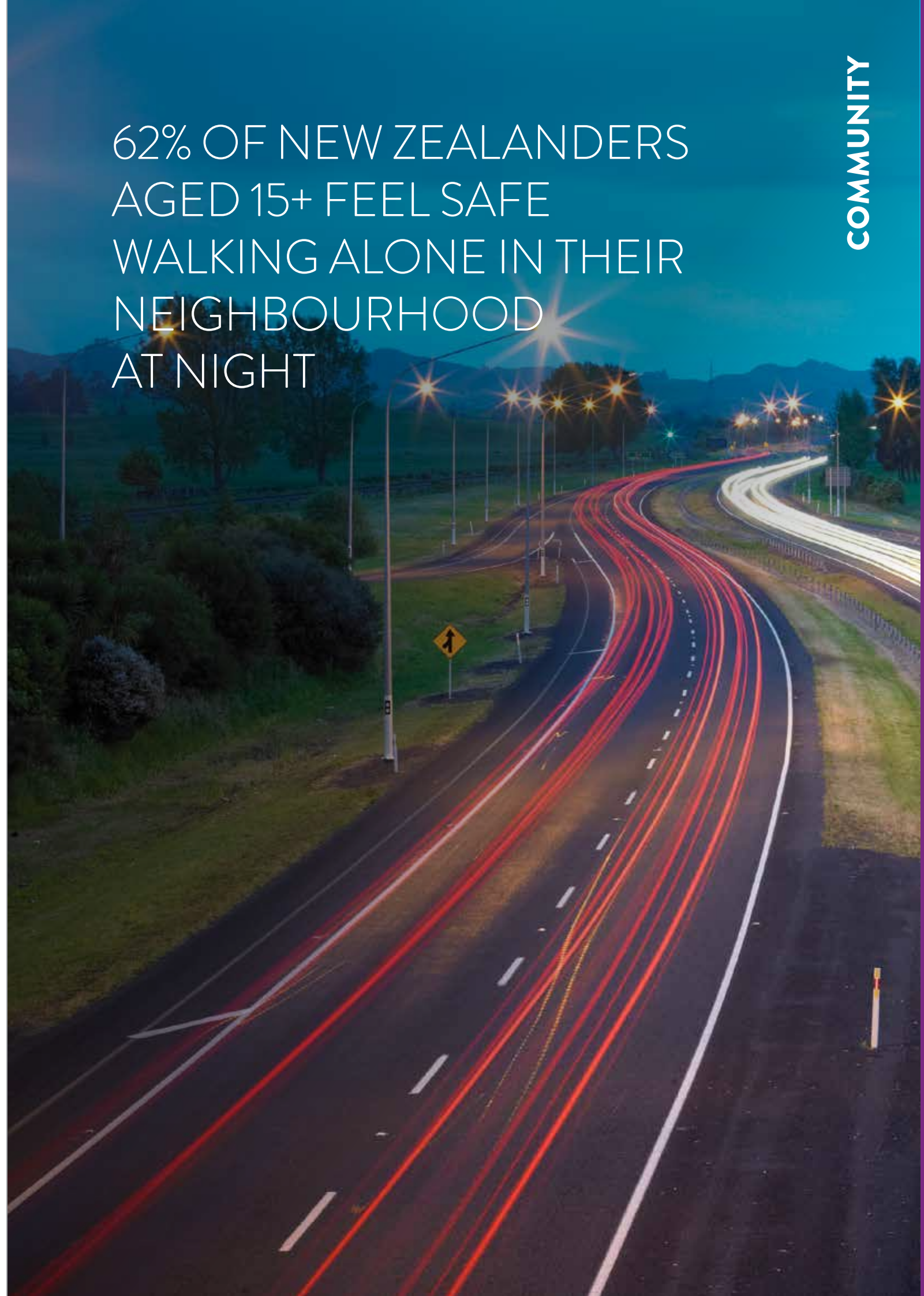
## Motor vehicle casualties

We want to live in a society free from the risk of avoidable death or injury. Our region has a higher road casualty rate\*\* than New Zealand, and Waitomo's casualty rate is four times the national average.

Waitomo	251
South Waikato	177
Hauraki	150
Matamata-Piako	138
Otorohanga	135
Waikato	112
Thames-Coromandel	88
Waipa	58
Hamilton City	40
<b>Waikato Vital Signs® 2020 Region</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>63</b>

\*\*Number of people seriously injured or killed in motor vehicle crashes as a proportion (per 100,000) of the total population, year ending June 2018.

62% OF NEW ZEALANDERS  
AGED 15+ FEEL SAFE  
WALKING ALONE IN THEIR  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
AT NIGHT





# To inclusion and beyond

The diversity of Waikato's ethnic make-up reflects both settlement that happened generations ago and more recent migration patterns and drivers.

People from minority backgrounds experience the same challenges as every other member of society, as well as their own particular hardships, including discrimination, that stand in the way of their aspirations and can multiply the impact of universal everyday difficulties.

At the same time, common values and priorities can prompt dialogue between differing peoples, engagement that is needed to realise a fully inclusive and intercultural society. Reciprocity, respect, family, faith and self-sufficiency can motivate people of any and every background.

Jenny Nand, Senior Advisor Community Led Development Practice at the Department of Internal Affairs in Hamilton, says that while ethnic groups have arrived in Aotearoa-New Zealand over the last century-and-a-half via various paths, the aspirations of minority culture migrants are a constant.

"People want to belong and contribute to the society that has given them shelter, but they also need to be recognised and to feel legitimate as themselves, so they can fully participate as citizens," says Jenny.

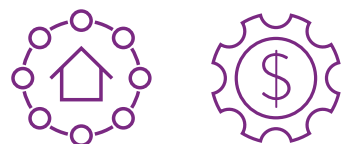
"We all benefit when all of us can realise our full potential, our nation's prosperity depends on the innovations and connections that come from embracing and enabling diversity.

"Yet new migrants, especially former refugees, face significant hurdles, and their chances of success here are tied to how the wider community engages and responds to them, rather than anything the government can do for them."

Common issues are perhaps obvious. Qualifications and experience not being recognised make it difficult to find work. Language and cultural differences being mishandled leads to negative employment, health and democratic outcomes. Not being fully welcomed into a new place can lead to social isolation.

There are also challenges specific to each stream of migration. Pasifika respondents to Waikato Vital Signs® 2020 Survey, for instance, flagged language retention and keeping their young people engaged with their communities as their leading issues (the latter echoing similar concerns held by submitters from small towns).

A Filipina respondent pointed to her kababayan who have worked on dairy farms and paid taxes here for years but continue to struggle to gain the security of residency due to constantly shifting immigration policies.



International students from India said they celebrate our clean air and uncorrupted governance but can't find even minimum wage work to survive.

A Somali respondent pointed to the absurdity of former refugees who rely on their kids to translate English being expected to home-school them during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Which all points to the issue that survey respondents most often ranked as a priority for action – 'Community Connectedness'. Survey results suggest many Waikato people recognise the need to empower ethnic communities to create a more cohesive and thriving society, but clearly those of the majority culture need to be much more pro-active to achieve this.

Jenny sees meeting this challenge as an opportunity and suggests the following steps.

- Building trust between communities by actively facilitating and promoting interaction, inclusion and shared values.
- Providing opportunities for communities to express and celebrate their language and culture and share them with all of the Waikato.
- Supporting organisations and programmes assisting with migrant settlement.
- Adapting governance structures, institutions and services to the needs and expectations of a diverse population.
- Providing opportunities for diverse communities to participate in decision-making.
- Supporting initiatives and entities that promote and reflect diversity.
- Proactively addressing discrimination and prejudice.

The Waikato Cultural Inclusion Fund was set up by Momentum Waikato in partnership with the Waikato's major ethnic community groups after the Christchurch terrorist attack in 2019, with the goal of enabling and promoting ongoing interculturalism across the region.

Work on its Charter is now well advanced and its volunteer governance committee will be recruited soon. Survey responses from members of ethnic and migrant communities suggest it will have lots of opportunities to tackle these issues.



**Waikato Vital Signs®**  
Momentum Waikato Community Foundation

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*Te Puaawaitanga o Waikato*

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