

# NEW ZEALAND

## Country Statement – Item 3 a: Developing legal channels for labour migration through national policies and bilateral, regional and international cooperation, including seasonal and migration programmes, to address skill and labour force shortages

Thank you to the panellists who have highlighted the complexities of the issues that we face in the development of the Global Compact on Migration.

Well-managed and effective labour mobility, grounded in evidence and rights-based policies, benefit both countries of origin, and destination. Migrants also benefit through work experience gained and skills development, as do their families and societies.

The Global Compact on Migration should establish a long-term vision for migration that recognises these benefits and provides practical actions and solutions to move us towards better managing, rather than opposing, migration.

New Zealand's geographical position has enabled the establishment of mature and regular labour market pathways, as well as paving the way for arising opportunities as the world changes. Our immigration policy allows skilled and experienced workers and their immediate families to migrate to New Zealand to address skills gaps and labour market needs and help our economy grow, whilst providing effective tools as part of a wider rules-based system in which the rights and responsibilities of all parties are made clear.

The Compact should take into account the social and economic benefits migrants can bring to countries of destination. This can include incentives to invest for migrant entrepreneurs, and employment opportunities in destination countries for skilled workers looking to migrate. For example New Zealand has several visa options for high-value entrepreneurs to enter New Zealand and contribute to economic growth. The Global Impact Visa was recently launched in partnership with an NGO (the Edmund Hillary Fellowship). The visa is designed to accelerate the growth of New Zealand's entrepreneurial ecosystem and to enhance its global competitiveness by attracting and retaining high calibre entrepreneurs, investors and start-up teams.

We see the promotion of international cooperation on the recognition of skills and qualifications as an important part of an effective and regular labour migration framework. New Zealand has adopted the Lisbon Recognition Convention 1999 as the basis of qualification recognition. In ratifying the LRC,

New Zealand has voluntarily embraced the need and standard for fair and equitable qualification recognition across states, contributing to increased mobility of qualification holders.

The New Zealand Aid Programme, in partnership with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, also supports strengthened national qualifications frameworks in the Pacific. The Labour Mobility Arrangement recently signed by New Zealand, Australia and nine Pacific island countries supports recognition of qualifications and registration of occupations amongst the Participants.

It is also important to acknowledge the contribution low-skilled migrants can make to the country of destination. In response to the number of low-skilled temporary migrants residing in the South Island who have been in New Zealand long-term and have become well-settled but do not have a pathway to residence, New Zealand has implemented the South Island Contribution Work Visa. This time-limited visa category will provide an opportunity for this particular cohort of workers to gain a residence class visa. This is a prime example of regular labour migration pathways, where migrants are granted rights (both human rights and labour rights), benefitting the country of destination.

As we also mentioned yesterday, New Zealand has established some innovative policies and practices in the provision of temporary seasonal work, through such measures as the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme. New Zealand is trialing other new forms of temporary labour mobility. The Canterbury Reconstruction Programme is a pilot which includes workers from Tonga, Fiji and Samoa, who have been provided with one-year visas to work with employers as skilled carpenters. These workers are gaining qualifications and experience while working in New Zealand which will benefit them and their communities on their return.

Underpinning all this is the belief that fair and ethical recruitment practices are vital, Employers within our RSE scheme must be able to demonstrate that their employment and pastoral care practices are sufficient for them to be permitted to access workers under this rights-based approach. Employers are required to pay half of the cost of airfares for RSE workers, and must provide pastoral care and access to accommodation. This is a triple-win - for employers, developing communities, and individual workers - in terms of skills, economic development and remittances.

and labour rights protection  
Employers  
and the Compact should highlight operations ways of ensuring both in practice

Migrant workers must enter employment agreements openly and transparently, able to fully participate in all aspects of their employment, free from any form of exploitation. New Zealand has a strong framework of domestic laws which give migrants and temporary migrants, the same

protections as New Zealand citizens. As has been mentioned, employers who exploit migrants can face large fines and/or jail terms. The New Zealand Government has developed an approach to reassure migrants that they will not be disadvantaged by coming forward to relevant agencies with any genuine claims of workplace exploitation.

*↳ The Global Compact should raise awareness of employers obligations to reducing the risk of exploitation and modern slavery.*

New Zealand believes that a whole-of-Government- approach is vital in combating migrant exploitation. Government agencies work together to progress a wide ranging programme of work to address exploitation and trafficking in New Zealand. The result has been an integrated Government-wide view of the work priorities needed to prevent, detect, and combat trafficking and exploitation. We have also developed resources specifically targeted at migrant groups and sectors in which migrants have been identified as vulnerable to workforce exploitation, including international students, Pacific migrants and those working in the dairy farming, construction, or aged care sector.

We believe that by aligning rights, skills, and opportunities – we can benefit countries of origin, countries of destination, and of course migrants themselves.

Thank you

