

Building Bridges: Improving the Lives and Livelihoods of Migrant Construction Workers in Singapore



**A research project commissioned by
The Majority Trust and LEAP201**

THE
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Special thanks to our partners at Blackbox Research for implementing the survey and conducting descriptive analyses of survey data.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EP	Employment Pass
FCD	Factory-Converted Dormitory
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MOM	Ministry of Manpower
PMET	Professionals, Managers, Executives, and Technicians
PBD	Purpose-Built Dormitory
SSA	Social Service Agencies i.e. non-profit organisations that provide services to benefit the community.
UN	United Nations
VWO	Voluntary Welfare Organisation
WP	Work Permit

Executive Summary

Migrant workers form a significant proportion of Singapore's workforce especially in the construction, manufacturing, marine and shipyard, process and service industries.

Many come to Singapore under the Work Permit scheme, and are housed by their employers in purpose-built dormitories (PBDs). In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic the virus spread rapidly among workers in PBDs, in sharp contrast to infection rates in the broader community. This has resulted in increased public scrutiny of the living and working conditions of low-wage migrant workers in Singapore. Naturally, there have also been many discussions about migrant workers' living and working conditions.

To better inform such discussions, we embarked on a research project to discover some reference points – figures and details about Singaporean public attitudes towards migrant workers, Singaporean stakeholders' points of view, and what similar migrant workers face in other countries.

In particular, the research project focused on low-wage migrant workers in Singapore's construction sector. The project consisted of 3 Phases:

Phase 1 comprised a rapid scoping review of policies governing employment and living conditions for construction migrant workers in six cases: Kuwait, Thailand, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, and New Zealand. This phase illustrates key constraints and challenges across different economies and policy settings.

Phase 2 comprised a cross-sectional nationally representative survey (n=1,000) of Singaporean Citizens and Permanent Residents focused on Singaporeans' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of low-wage migrant worker issues, challenges, and welfare. The survey also measured attitudes towards some tradeoffs.

Phase 3 comprised group consultations and in-depth interviews with local stakeholders to gather their perspectives on the living and employment conditions of low-wage migrant workers, as well as possible next steps. Stakeholders included employers, dormitory operators, policymakers, academics and voluntary welfare organisation (VWO) leaders.

From the data collected over these 3 Phases, we identified **5 Key Findings:**

1. There is general support for improving the welfare of migrant workers, but this is conditional.

Singaporeans consider it a moral obligation to provide basic living standards and workplace safety, and moreover consider adequate healthcare coverage specifically to be a growing priority for both ethical and public safety reasons.

However while most Singaporeans were supportive of fair treatment, this did not mean they were supportive of equal treatment of migrant workers.

Amongst stakeholder roles and responsibilities, welfare was primarily deemed the responsibility of employers and dormitory operators, with SSAs providing social support and integration of migrant workers into the wider Singapore community. The Singapore government was deemed to be responsible for ensuring legal protections and social support, but not integration.

2. For better migrant worker welfare, higher costs are more acceptable than cuts to what Singaporeans feel entitled to.

Both the general public and key stakeholders expressed that limited national resources should be directed towards Singaporeans' interests first, but that there was room to consider trade-offs in favour of increasing subsidised healthcare for foreign workers.

Singaporeans generally expressed some willingness to consider higher prices from firms in return for increased worker welfare, although they were less accepting of propositions to reduce government funding or services for Singaporeans.

3. Integration means different things to different stakeholders

Stakeholders discussed social inclusion and the extent of integration, although there was no consensus regarding the desired extent of integration. Is civilly treating migrant workers and ensuring equal access and acceptance sufficient? Or should we aspire towards more Singaporean-migrant worker friendships?

4. Public misinformation and the lack of timely, quality statistics are growing risks

The pandemic and its disproportionate impact on low-wage migrant workers generally led to wider public awareness of this community. However we observed a growing trend towards absorbing information about migrant workers from social media. Most notably, those who self-reported very high levels of knowledge of

migrant worker issues were both more likely to get their information from Facebook, *and* more likely to have negative views about migrant workers.

At the same time, stakeholders also wished for more official data on migrant worker welfare. The general sense was that the lack of such data hampered better decision-making.

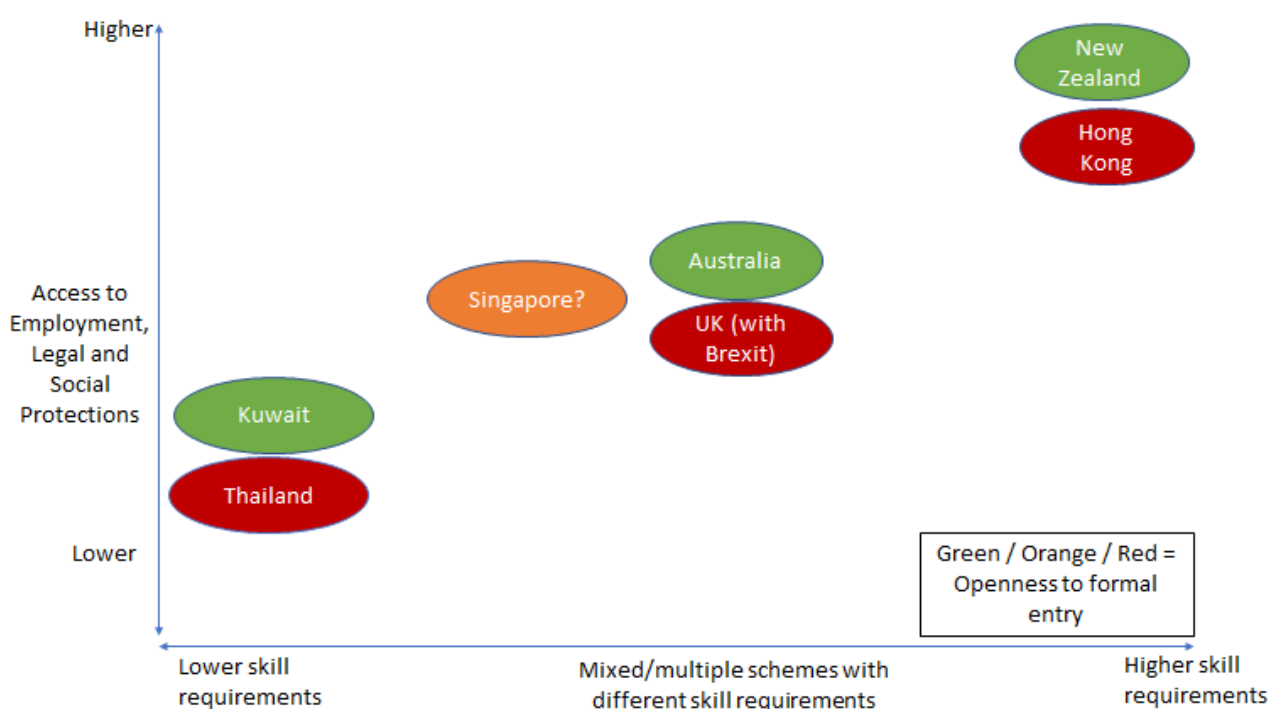
5. Low-wage migrant workers have fewer rights and less access to social services than locals everywhere, though this may not be as obvious in places with high-productivity construction sectors.

Our country analysis reveals that the legal rights and regulatory protections offered by Singapore are relatively robust compared to other countries where migration policy has aimed to ensure a steady flow of temporary low-skilled workers to construction sectors with relatively large scale and low productivity. However, those rights and protections are less comprehensive than countries that Singaporeans may consider our economic peers.

In all 6 cases, low-wage migrant workers generally have fewer protections and access to social services like healthcare, in comparison to locals.

Where there are better legal and social protections for migrant workers, these are inextricably linked to higher skill levels – and higher wages (see Figure A below).

Figure A: Matrix of case studies of varying worker skill levels and employment, legal and social



In places with high-productivity construction sectors, highly-paid locals formed the majority of the construction workforce. As low-wage migrant workers form a “minority in a minority” in those economies, their problems may appear less obvious. For example New Zealand’s productivity per construction worker is higher than the national average, but substandard employment and living conditions also persist on the ground there for low-wage migrant labour.

Even so, there are practices that can inspire and inform policies in our context. Two practices are in line with comments by Singaporean stakeholders and the survey results: further regulation of recruitment agents, and expanded healthcare and insurance.

Based on our findings, we make the following Recommendations

1. Invest in better monitoring and communication of low-wage migrant workers’ living and working conditions here.
2. Provide consistent and reliable information about migrant worker communities, including their contributions to Singaporean society, to counter misinformation and stigmatisation.
3. Establish a platform for building trust and consensus among different stakeholders, so as to reach agreement on future measures.
4. Continue studying specific practices that improve low-wage migrant worker welfare, and that resonate with Singaporeans’ views.

Introduction

A cosmopolitan Southeast Asian city-state, Singapore is one of many developed countries that attracts both high and low-skilled migrant workers from across the globe.

As of Dec 2019, Singapore's total workforce numbered nearly 3.8 million, of which 1.43 million were foreigners¹. Among this group, construction workers and foreign domestic workers made up significant proportions: 370,100 and 261,800 respectively².

While COVID-19 has been well-managed in the broader Singapore resident population, purpose-built dormitories (PBD) became sites of major outbreaks in the early months of the pandemic, prompting a large-scale government response. These circumstances have also highlighted various low-wage migrant worker issues related to housing, employment conditions, and discrimination. Consequently, there has been increased public discussion about Singapore's continued reliance on low-wage migrant workers in construction, their role in Singapore's economic growth, and what should be done for them.

These issues however are complex, and defy straightforward solutions. In order to have more informed discussions about possible next steps, and the pros and cons of each, as a society we need data and details.

Hence we embarked on a research project to uncover some of these reference points – figures and details about Singaporean public attitudes towards migrant workers, Singaporean stakeholders' points of view, and what similar migrant workers face in other countries.

With these reference points, we aim to build a more solid footing for future dialogue towards sustainable and evidence-based measures.

¹ Ministry of Manpower. (2020). *Summary table: Employment*. Retrieved Sep 7, 2020, from <https://stats.mom.gov.sg/Pages/Employment-Summary-Table.aspx>

² Ministry of Manpower. (2020). *Work Foreign Workforce Numbers*. Retrieved Nov 21, 2020, from <https://www.mom.gov.sg/documents-and-publications/foreign-workforce-numbers>

Methodology

The research project focused on low-wage migrant workers in Singapore's construction sector.

The project consisted of 3 Phases:

Phase 1

Rapid country review. We conducted a rapid scoping review of policies governing employment and living conditions for construction migrant workers in six cases: Kuwait, Thailand, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, and New Zealand. This phase illustrates key constraints and challenges across different economies and policy settings.

Phase 2

Public perception survey and incentive experiment. We administered an online survey to a sample of 1,000 adult Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents, weighted to be representative of the population, between 4-23 September 2020. At the end of the survey respondents were reimbursed for their participation with an incentive valued at SGD 10, and were given the choice to accept the incentive or donate it to a migrant worker charity. Ethical approval for this survey was obtained from the National University of Singapore Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health's Departmental Ethics Review Committee.

Phase 3

Stakeholder Consultations. We conducted 3 group consultation sessions and 3 individual interviews with key stakeholders, each consultation session lasted about one hour while individual interviews ranged from 45 to 90 minutes. All sessions and interviews were conducted in a secure, password-protected Zoom meeting room, moderated by a trained researcher and subject to the Chatham House rule to protect individuals' confidentiality.

Stakeholders were asked to respond to key findings from Phases 1 and 2 and to reflect on their implications for Singapore. All sessions and interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, together with detailed notetaking, followed by rapid thematic analysis of these materials.

For more details of each Phase, please refer to the Technical Annex.

Key Findings

From the data collected over these 3 Phases, we identified 5 Key Findings:

1. There is general support for improving the welfare of migrant workers, but this is conditional.
2. For better migrant welfare, higher costs are more acceptable than cuts to what Singaporeans feel entitled to.
3. Stakeholders have varying views on social integration.
4. Public misinformation and lack of timely, quality statistics are a growing risk.
5. Low-wage migrant workers have fewer rights and less access to social services than locals everywhere, though this may not be as obvious in places with high-productivity construction sectors.

KEY FINDING 1

There is general support for improving the welfare of migrant workers, but this is conditional.

Most Singaporeans regard protecting the safety and well-being of migrant workers as a moral obligation upon their entry into Singapore. Our survey shows that Singaporeans are generally supportive of protecting the welfare of migrant workers, recognising it as a public health and safety concern (83%) and a moral obligation (80%), expressing that Singapore should protect workers' welfare once they are here (80%).

However, there was no input on what these basic acceptable standards entail and no clear consensus on who bears full responsibility of ensuring the living and working standards that are deemed appropriate.

The majority of respondents (62%) also agreed that the Singapore government is currently doing enough to support the welfare of migrant workers while slightly more than half (56%) agreed that current levels of welfare and benefits provided to migrant workers were acceptable.

In particular, our findings show relatively strong public support for increased action and enforcement in this space, focused largely on occupational health and safety and living and employment conditions.

These domains were perceived to largely fall within the purview of employers' responsibility, with legislative and rule-based efforts by the government seen as the most feasible way to drive improvements.

However, despite positive sentiments there are still many complex questions. The spectrum that between what is fair and what is equal, for example, requires deep societal introspection along with considerations of economic and political feasibility. For instance, during the stakeholder engagements stakeholders highlighted the continued existence of a Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) attitude among many Singaporeans when it came to low-wage migrant workers.³



³ The NIMBY attitude is not new. There has been public outcry over the government's efforts to house migrant workers near residential housing. Most notably in 2008, 1,400 Serangoon Gardens residents petitioned the government against the proposed housing of foreign workers next to their homes. The authorities partially acquiesced, reducing the size of the dormitory, creating integrated amenities for the workers (so they would not go into the estate), and building a separate access road.

See Ng, Jun Sen. (2020). "Migrant worker housing: How Singapore got here." May 9. TODAY Online. Retrieved Nov 21, 2020, from <https://www.todayonline.com/big-read/migrant-worker-housing-spore-how-we-got-here>.

KEY FINDING 2

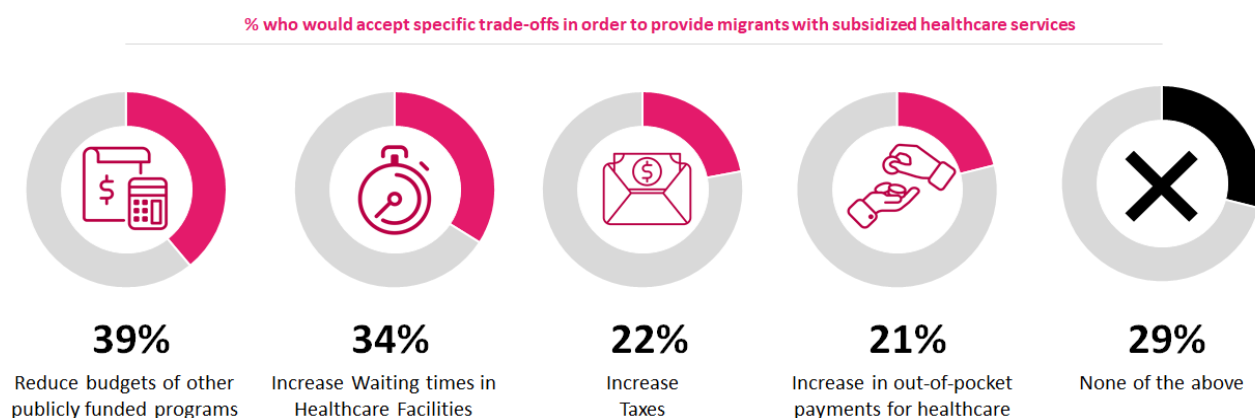
For better migrant welfare, higher costs are more acceptable than cuts to what Singaporeans feel entitled to.

Only a minority of survey respondents were in favour of expanded welfare support.

The survey asked respondents to indicate how acceptable some trade-offs were in order to provide subsidised healthcare for migrant workers (see Figure 1 below):

- Most respondents (71%) reported being willing to accept at least one trade-off although acceptability was not overwhelmingly positive in any one specific area.
- Higher taxes were acceptable to only 22%
- Higher out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure was acceptable to only 21%

Figure 1: Acceptability of specific trade-offs to provide improved subsidised healthcare to migrant workers⁴



Respondents also reported a willingness to pay a premium to hire a company that provided better treatment of its migrant workers compared to one that did not.

Our survey presented respondents with 2 construction firms for a renovation project: Firm A and Firm B. Both provide the same quality of work, but Firm A treats its migrants worker better than Firm B. The respondents were then asked how much more they were willing to pay to hire Firm A over Firm B.

⁴ Q15) Suppose that the government aims to provide migrants with subsidized healthcare to ensure access to healthcare services. Which of the following do you think would be an acceptable consequence of this? Please select all that apply. (n=1,000)

Most respondents chose to pay a premium of some kind:

- 69% were willing to pay more for a firm that provides better living conditions;
- 66% were willing to pay more for a firm that provides better salary and benefits;
- 75% were willing to pay more for a firm that provides better workplace safety and health standards.

Respondents also indicated how much more they were willing to pay. The breakdown is given in Figure 2A below:

Figure 2A: Willingness to pay a premium for better treatment of migrant workers

For the same quality of work, how much more would respondents pay for a firm that –

	provides better living conditions to migrant workers?	provides better salary and benefits to migrant workers?	has stronger workplace safety and health record for migrant workers?
Pay over 20% more	6.5%	6.3%	6.9%
Pay between 10-20% more	23.5%	19.3%	19.7%
Between 5-10% more	24.1%	25.3%	28.3%
Up to 5% more	14.9%	15.3%	19.9%
Would not pay any additional premium	31.0%	33.8%	25.2%

We also presented respondents with another hypothetical pair of firms. Firm A and B now differ by whether the extent to which they hire Singaporeans. Firm A employs only Singaporean workers, while Firm B employs migrant workers. Respondents then chose how much more they would be willing to pay for Firm A, compared to Firm B.

64% of respondents were willing to pay a premium for a firm that hired only Singaporeans. Respondents also indicated how much more they were willing to pay. The breakdown is given in Figure 2B below:

Figure 2B: Willingness to pay a premium for all-Singaporean workers

For the same quality of work, how much more would respondents pay for a firm that hired only Singaporeans?

Pay over 20% more	5.6%
Pay between 10-20% more	17.6%
Between 5-10% more	21.9%
Up to 5% more	18.6%
Would not pay any additional premium	36.3%

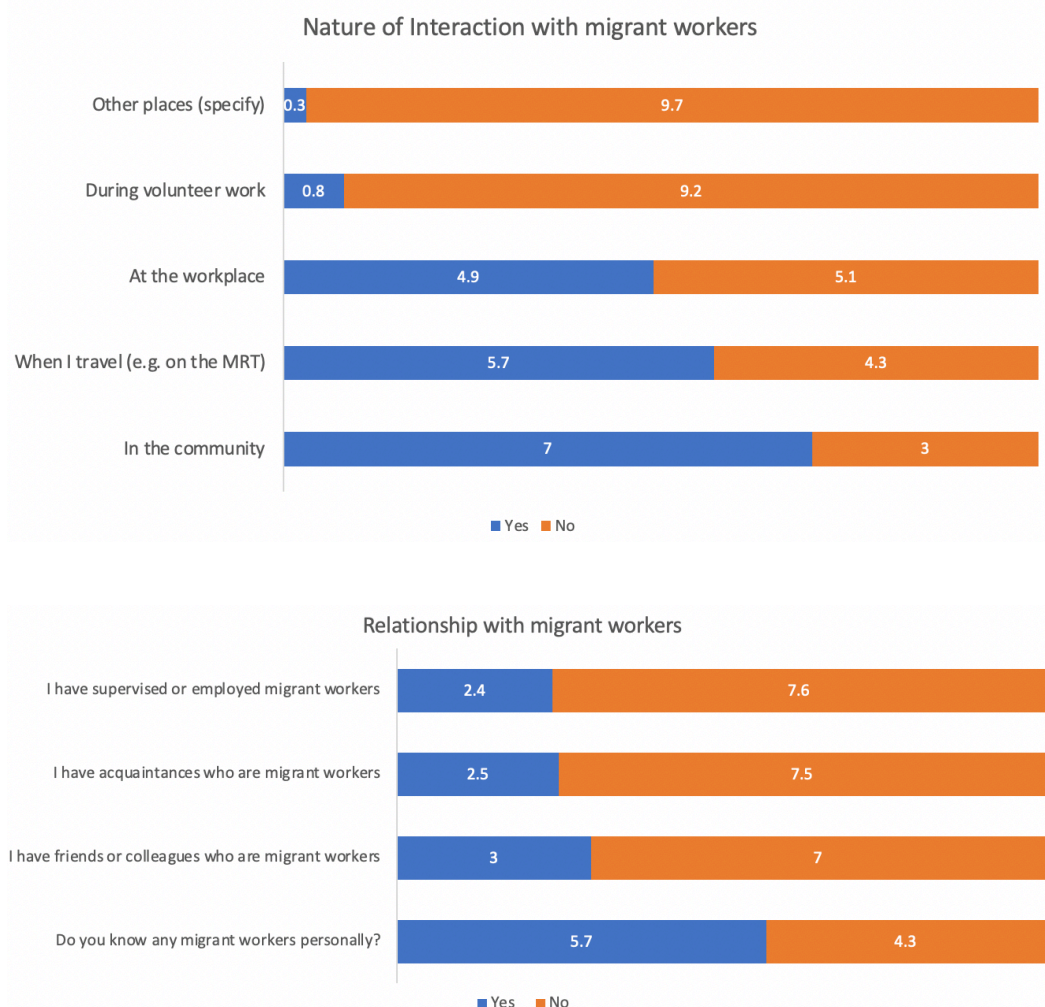


KEY FINDING 3

Stakeholders have varying views on social integration

There is limited interaction between low-wage migrant workers and the wider Singaporean population. Most Singaporeans in our survey (98%) reported encountering migrant workers primarily in the community (70%) or during public transport commutes (57%), but 43% indicated having no personal relationships with migrant workers. Among those who did, 30% reported knowing migrant workers as friends or colleagues (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Frequency of interaction with migrant workers⁵



⁵ Q2) Where do you most often encounter them? (n=976)

Q3) Do you know any migrant workers personally? (Tick all that apply) (n=976)

Stakeholders discussed two main barriers to integration of migrant workers into the wider Singaporean resident community:

- a. the distant housing locations of migrant workers away from residential estates; and
- b. the transient nature of these low-wage migrant workers.

There were differing, even opposite, perceptions on the scope for migrant workers to be integrated into Singapore society. Some said that integration was possible despite the geographical distance between dormitories and housing estates. Conversely, others believed that geographical proximity was needed for greater integration, which in turn would foster better understanding and community-building between migrant workers and locals.

From the stakeholder engagement data, different groups of stakeholders viewed integration differently:

- a. Employers saw integration within the construction sector in terms of skills (e.g. types of tasks that migrant workers could perform, their relevance to projects) and communication (e.g. language capabilities, cultural understanding). They perceived within-sector integration to be more crucial than integration with the wider community.
- b. SSA representatives tended to describe integration as migrant workers more fully living within broader Singapore society (e.g. openly mingling and interacting with locals).
- c. Academics and policy representatives described integration as a concept requiring more understanding and clarification within the specific Singapore context before ascertaining where and how the low-wage migrant workforce fit into it.

Striking a balance that benefits both populations will need help from many stakeholders including SSAs. There was a general perception that such activities might be best led and supported by funding specific community-based organisations. At a policy level, an academic suggested integrating dormitory into urban planning and development more generally and making this publicly known, which would help the public make informed decisions on housing or investment plans.

KEY FINDING 4

Public misinformation and lack of timely, quality statistics are growing risks

Most survey respondents rated their own knowledge and awareness of migrant worker-related issues as somewhat high (52%) or very high (13%), while 59% of respondents reported higher knowledge and awareness of migrant worker issues compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic. Survey respondents cited national newspapers and mainstream television as their top two information sources.

However, those self-reporting very high levels of knowledge of migrant worker issues were significantly more likely to get their information from Facebook compared to those self-reporting lower knowledge levels (see Figure 4).

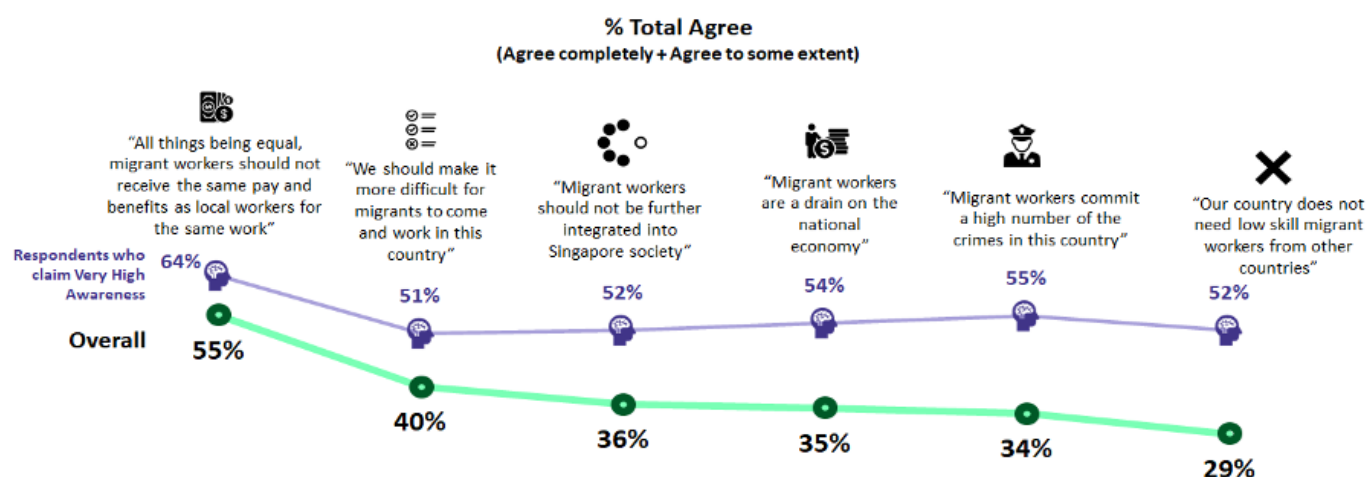
At the same time, respondents who claimed to have a 'very high' level of awareness were also more likely to agree with negative sentiments around migrant workers (Figure 5).

Stakeholders generally expressed views that the level and quality of information on migrant worker issues was not enough – a situation made still worse in a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, data on migrant worker demographics, medical conditions, and financial status were often limited or unavailable. This scarcity of data is a barrier to appropriate, adequate, and timely assistance to workers, and hinders a common understanding of the challenges faced by low-wage migrant workers.

Figure 4: Common sources of information among all respondents and by respondents' self-perceived knowledge levels (as indicated in Q4)⁶

Media Sources	Overall	Very High	Somewhat High	Somewhat Low	Very Low
National newspapers (print / online)	74%	77%	76%	73%	51%
Mainstream television news	62%	65%	64%	60%	33%
Facebook	50%	69%	51%	41%	33%
Other social media sites	34%	28%	40%	27%	21%
YouTube	28%	46%	34%	13%	8%
Mainstream radio	22%	38%	25%	13%	3%
Blogs and e-forums	10%	20%	11%	5%	0%

Figure 5: Overall level of support to migrant workers and their presence in Singapore and among respondents who claimed "very high" awareness of migrant worker issues.⁷



⁶ Q6) Which of the following are your common sources of information on migrant workers in Singapore? (Multiple Choice) (n=1,000). Very High, n=127. Somewhat high, n=517. Somewhat low, n=317. Very low, n=39

⁷ Q7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Select one answer per row) (n=1,000)

KEY FINDING 5

Low-wage migrant workers have fewer rights and less access to social services than locals everywhere, though this may not be as obvious in places with high-productivity construction sectors.

We conducted a rapid scoping review of policies governing employment and living conditions for construction migrant workers in six places: Kuwait, Thailand, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, and New Zealand.

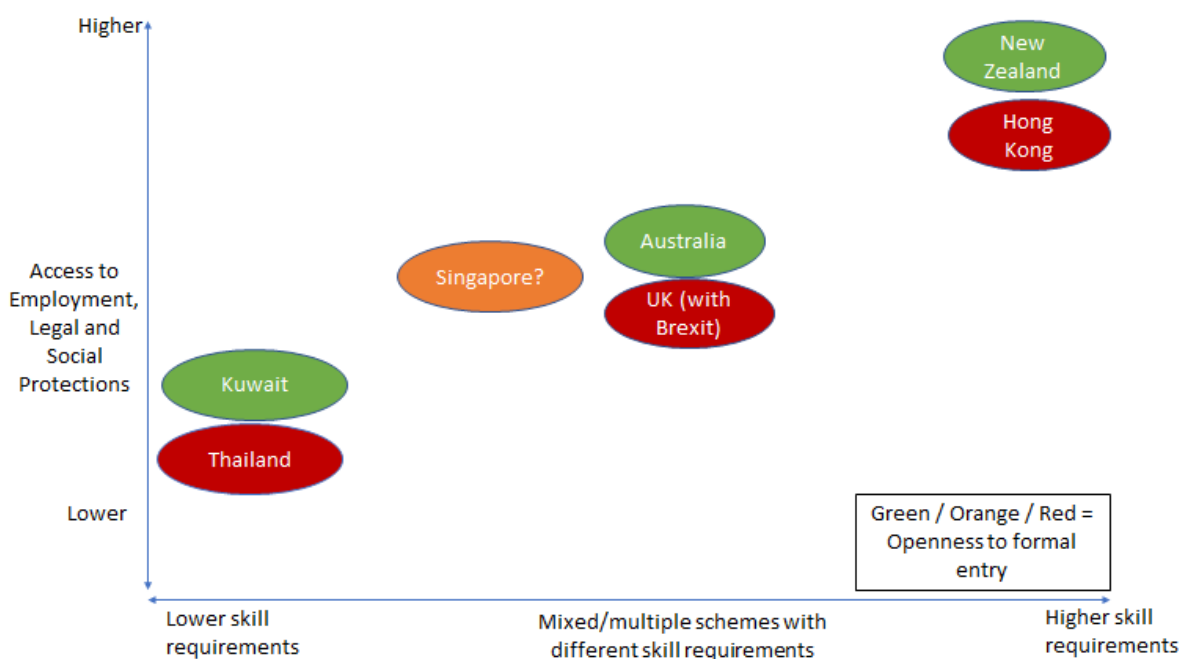
Each place has a population of migrant workers employed in construction, but the macroeconomic conditions, living and employment circumstances for these vary considerably.

Based on our review, it is not clear that low-wage migrant workers in Singapore have worse living and working conditions than comparable countries. In select areas, Singapore may even be marginally better.

In all 6 cases, low-wage migrant workers generally have fewer protections and access to social services like healthcare, in comparison to locals.

Where there are better legal and social protections for migrant workers, these are inextricably linked to higher skill levels – and higher wages (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Matrix of case studies of varying worker skill levels and employment, legal and social protections



This is distinct from construction sector productivity. In the 6 cases we reviewed, we observe a polarisation between relatively high-skilled – thus high-wage – local or permanent resident labour, and low-skilled – thus low wage – temporary migrant labour.

Across the 6 cases, skilled workers in high-demand occupations such as engineering may be employed under programs that offer pathways to longer-term employment, capacity-building, and permanent residency. However, migrants that form part of the pool of low-skill labour are often covered by circular or temporary labour migration programs (TLMPs), in circumstances under which employers have little incentive beyond maximising their short-term productivity (see Figure 7).

Figure 7:

Differences in aspects of employment based on skill sets

At the high end of skills, <i>opportunity migrants</i> seeking upward mobility and career development not available in their home countries	At the low end of skills, <i>necessity migrants</i> seeking 'survival' work (ILO) especially for male migrants who cannot find other work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent/long-term migration or professional/skills-based visas (greater bargaining power and options once within country even if employer-based) • HK Supplementary Labor Scheme • NZ Skilled Migrant or Essential Skills Visa • SG Employment Pass • Upskilling through practical experience and expertise, or professional training and certification in destination country • May be eligible for professional union membership • Higher wage growth than average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary or circular schemes sponsored by employers with strong activity restrictions • Kuwaiti Sponsored Work Visa • AUS 457 Temporary Work Visa • SG Work Permit • TH Work Visa • De-skilling, including those who have home country certifications but cannot use them in their destination country • Excluded from local unions • Wage stagnation or lower growth

In places with high-productivity construction sectors, highly-paid locals formed the majority of the construction workforce. As low-wage migrant workers form a “minority in a minority” in those economies, their problems may appear less obvious. For example New Zealand’s productivity per construction worker is higher than the national average, but substandard employment and living conditions also persist on the ground there for low-wage migrant labour e.g. acceptance of excessively low wages, pre-existing debt-burdens to agents or overcrowding on site camps/ accommodations provided by companies.

A few country practices resonated with Singaporeans' views

While our cross-country analysis showed that actual conditions and policy responses vary based on the social, economic, and political environment of each country, there are practices that can inspire and inform policies in our context.

A few practices appear consistent with comments by Singaporean stakeholders and the survey results, and thus seem promising for further study and discussion. For example:

- a. New Zealand's regulatory system also regulates recruitment agents, to prevent migrant workers from being levied unfairly by unscrupulous agents. This resonates with Singaporean stakeholders' views (in our stakeholder engagements) that there is a need to protect low-wage migrant workers from this kind of exploitative behaviour.
- b. Expanded healthcare and insurance. We found examples of include expanding access to both primary care and more comprehensive insurance coverage. Our survey and stakeholder consultations revealed that the recent experience of COVID-19 has sharply increased attention to the welfare of the migrant worker population as a public health concern.



Recommendations

Overall our findings suggest that although all parties have varying ideas about what can or should be done, there is a level of common understanding towards ensuring improved basic living and employment conditions. This is a promising start.

While consensus on “optimal” policy action in other areas is likely to remain challenging by the very nature of fundamental migrant worker-related issues, we recommend 4 specific steps to help Singaporeans continue to develop our policies and practices:

1. **Invest in better monitoring and communication of low-wage migrant workers’ living and working conditions here.**

Objective data routinely captured and reported would be strong prerequisites to establishing the basis for better forward planning, and prevent misinformation from spreading. For example, an annual survey with different groups of migrant workers.

2. **Provide consistent and reliable information about migrant worker communities, including their contributions to Singaporean society, to counter misinformation and stigmatisation.**

Journalists and editors should continue to be regularly engaged, to maintain a good understanding of migrant worker issues.

3. **Establish a platform for building trust and consensus among different stakeholders**, so as to reach agreement on future measures to improve the working and living conditions of low-wage migrant workers. Stakeholders currently have very different views on what, as a society, we can and should do. However, our study shows that there are some areas of common agreement, that can form a basis for further constructive dialogues.

Such a platform would also benefit from regular surveys of Singaporeans’ sentiments towards migrant workers, so as to capture changes in public sentiment over time, or gauge acceptance of different tradeoffs.

4. **Continue studying specific practices that improve low-wage migrant worker welfare, and that resonate with Singaporeans' views.**

There is no one “best” case to emulate, and low-wage migrant workers everywhere enjoy less access to services and fewer protections than locals.

At the same time, most Singaporeans regard protecting the safety and well-being of migrant workers as a moral obligation upon their entry into Singapore, though they differ on specifics. Singaporeans also were more willing to pay for better welfare, than to accept higher taxes or cuts to services they are entitled to.

Within these broad boundaries, there are specific country practices to improve low-wage migrant worker welfare that may also be more feasible here. For example, the New Zealand government’s enforcement and regulation of recruitment agents seems worth studying. Another area is in improving access to healthcare.



Study Limitations

This study has several strengths relative to the existing literature but like all research has some limitations.

Rapid Country Review

We were able to effectively capture evidence from a number of different publicly available and accessible sources, albeit only in English and Chinese. However, differences in countries' immigration and labour policies, categorisation, and ground implementation mean that comparison across countries are largely indicative only, and should be treated with some caution. Country-specific data may be inconsistent and incomplete, especially in construction, due to challenges related to undocumented labour, transient "casual" or "contract" workers, and other forms of "hidden workforces". Finally the review largely reflects facts, figures, and policies of the pre-COVID-19 era; the implications for extrapolation to the future remain uncertain.

Public perception survey and incentive experiment

Our survey effort included a series of novel questions fielded to a nationally representative population sample. The design also allowed us to compare stated preferences with revealed preferences. However, as with all surveys, findings must be interpreted in context. The survey was conducted in September 2020, following the circuit breaker in Singapore and widely publicised migrant worker dorm outbreaks. This was also at the beginning of 'Phase 2' in Singapore's re-opening policy, where there were relatively low levels of community transmission. These specific factors may have impacted on how survey respondents understood and perceived the role and issues of migrant workers in Singapore.

Stakeholder Consultations

The Chatham House rule was in force for all stakeholder consultations, allowing for more candid discussions. All views are unattributed, which may affect the specificity of some insights.

For more details, please see the Technical Annex.



About The Majority Trust

The Majority Trust is a philanthropic organisation that seeks to work with partners to build a thriving and sustainable community for all in Singapore. Learn more about us at <https://www.majority.sg/>



About LEAP201

LEAP201 is a Singapore-based venture philanthropy organisation. We support and invest in social enterprises in Southeast Asia, lifting low-income rural households above the poverty line in a sustainable way. Learn more about us at <https://leap201.org/>



About HealthServe

HealthServe seeks to meet the needs of the migrant workers in our community through the provision of medical care, counselling, case work, social assistance, and other support services. Over the years, they have developed partnerships with regulatory authorities, agencies, schools and corporate organisations to initiate public health awareness programs and research projects. Their website is at <https://www.healthserve.org.sg/>



About Research For Impact

Research for Impact is a Singapore-based social enterprise which aims to make behavioural and social science research and evaluation accessible, inclusive, and transformative for policy and practice in Asia. RFI combines world-class expertise and global experience with a collaborative, ground-up approach and a commitment to representation and equity among stakeholders. Their website is at <https://www.rforimpact.com>