

# COVID-19 HAUORA WELLBEING RESEARCH

of the tangata whenua, community  
and voluntary sector

**Research Findings 2021**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Representatives from the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector who shared their mahi

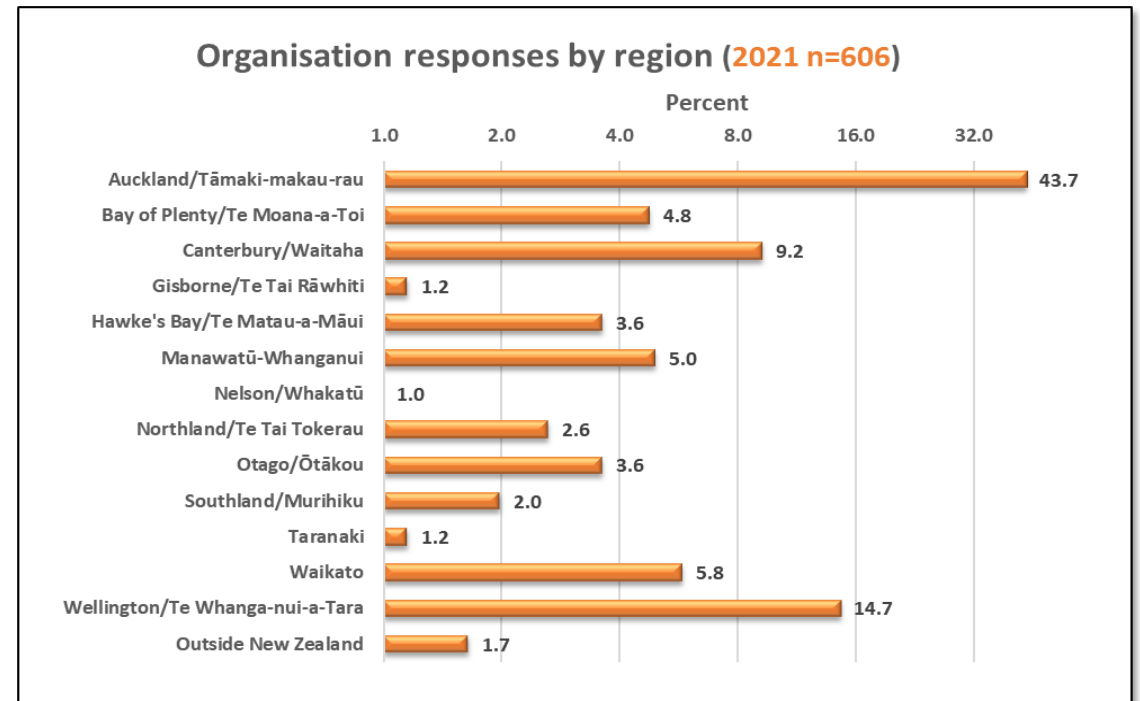
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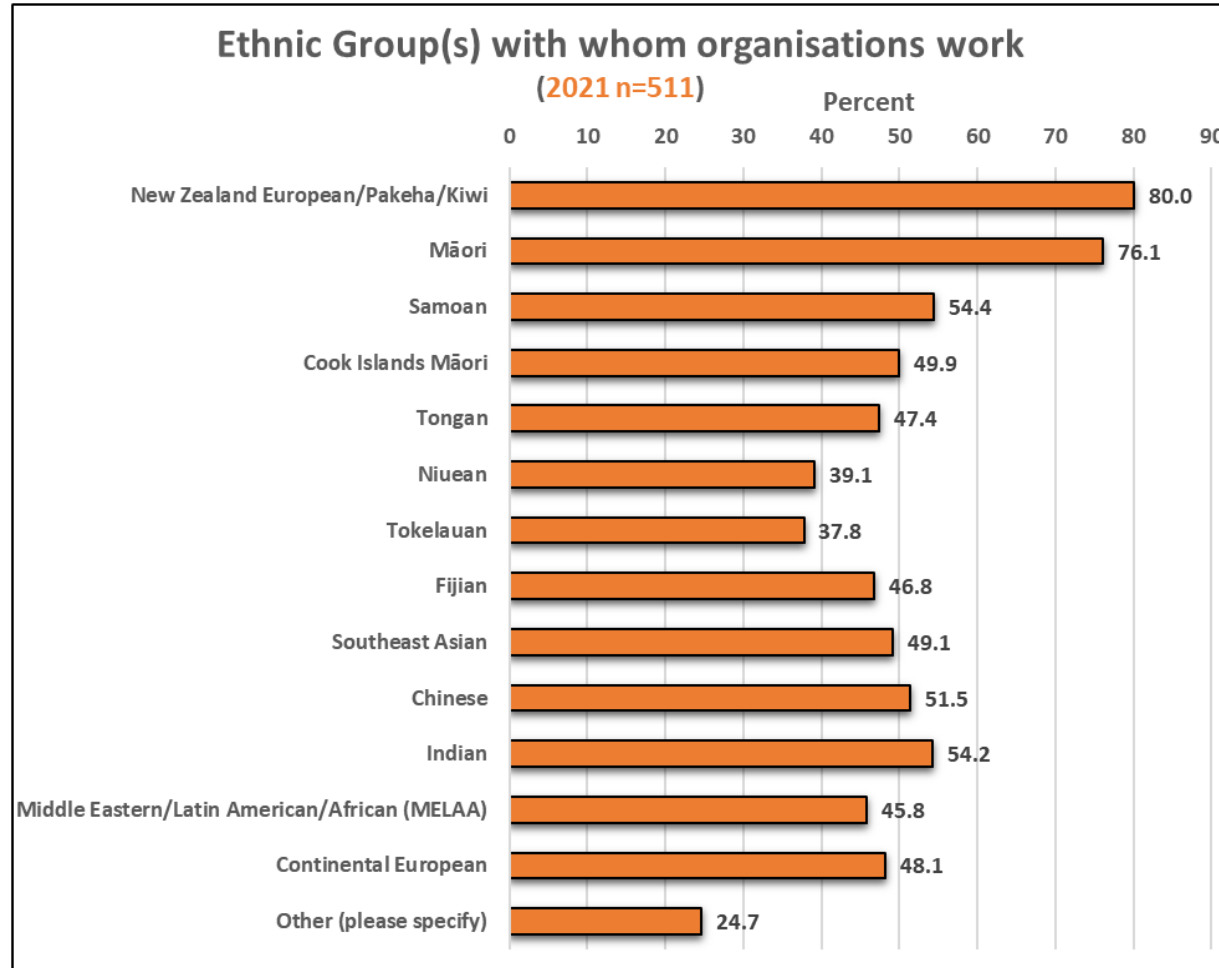
# DATA COLLECTION



- Online survey, key informant interviews, focus groups and fono
- Collected June-July 2021
- Distributed nationally across our partners and networks
- Particular focus on capturing Māori, Pasifika, Ethnic & Disability community voices
- 606 organisations responded to the survey
- 8 focus groups held with 35 participants
- 50 Pasifika peoples attended a fono



# ETHNIC GROUPS WORKED WITH



# FINDINGS OVERVIEW



- **Our sector has rallied to continue its mahi tahi - labours of love**

Most remain optimistic; maintained energy & commitment; received greater appreciation for their work

- **Pandemic pressures are taking their toll**

Pressures continue on budgets, staffing, service delivery and personal wellbeing

- **The sector found a source of wellness in whakawhanaungatanga**

Kin and non-kin networks have been key to wellbeing & service provision

- **Our people continue to go the extra mile**

Wellspring of effective leadership, energy, tenacity, skill, knowledge, wisdom, love & respect

# WELLBEING

- **Wellbeing of communities being served**

Remain optimistic; maintained energy & commitment; received greater appreciation for their work

- **Stress factors**

Salaries low & prices rising; uncertainty & fear around COVID; working with vulnerable communities

- **Fatigue and workload**

Struggle to balance self care with community care; reports of stress, burnout, depression

- **Additional pressure on chief executives/managers**

Not sustainable to deliver more with less; not same mentoring & support mechanisms offered for business CEs

- **Funding and service pressures**

Competitive, complex & inflexible funding models; long-winded applications; generating unnecessary strain

# Wellbeing solutions

- **Support collaborative partnerships**

Resource ongoing partnerships; requests for shift in power sharing; full and equal partnerships

- **Remove competitive funding models**

More focus on collaboration; less focus on one-off project or short-term funding

- **Address inequities**

Most funding decisions made under Pākeha funding models; include representation

- **Better support staff, particularly Chief Executives**

Better access to counselling services; prioritising staff wellbeing; specific wellbeing funding for CEs

- **Whakawhanaungatanga**

Better recognition of power of grassroots networks; increasing role of kin and non-kin networks

# FUNDING

- **Complex and rigid funding processes**

Hard to fund grant opportunities; difficult to apply; forms too long & complex; “a game”

- **Competitive process**

Breeds competition within sector; large organisations more successful; bound by top-down processes

- **Short term funding**

One year funding adds additional pressures; difficult to retain staff; generates churn

- **Salaries and overheads not funded**

“You are all working flat out, but there’s actually no funding to support those [support staff, GM] roles. But if those roles aren’t there, then nothing’s going to happen.” [Multi-ethnic focus group participant]

- **Continual changes to criteria**

“I had to go back like 10 times because we needed some little information that you didn’t think of. And then how do you translate [into English] what we know we can do?” [Pasifika focus group participant]



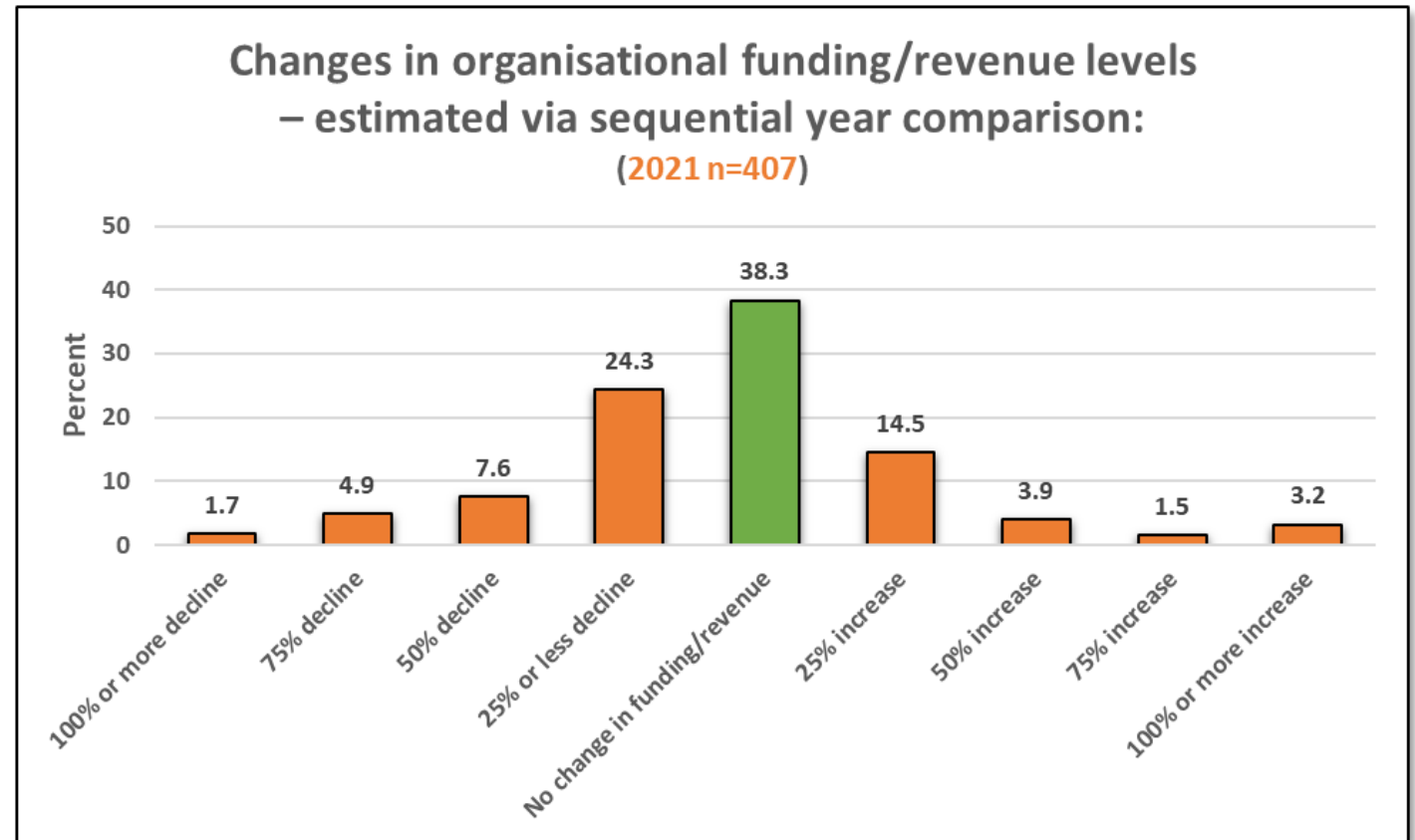
# Funding impacts on all organisations



38.3% reported no change in funding/revenue

23.1% reported an increase in funding/revenue

36.8% reported a series decline in funding/revenue



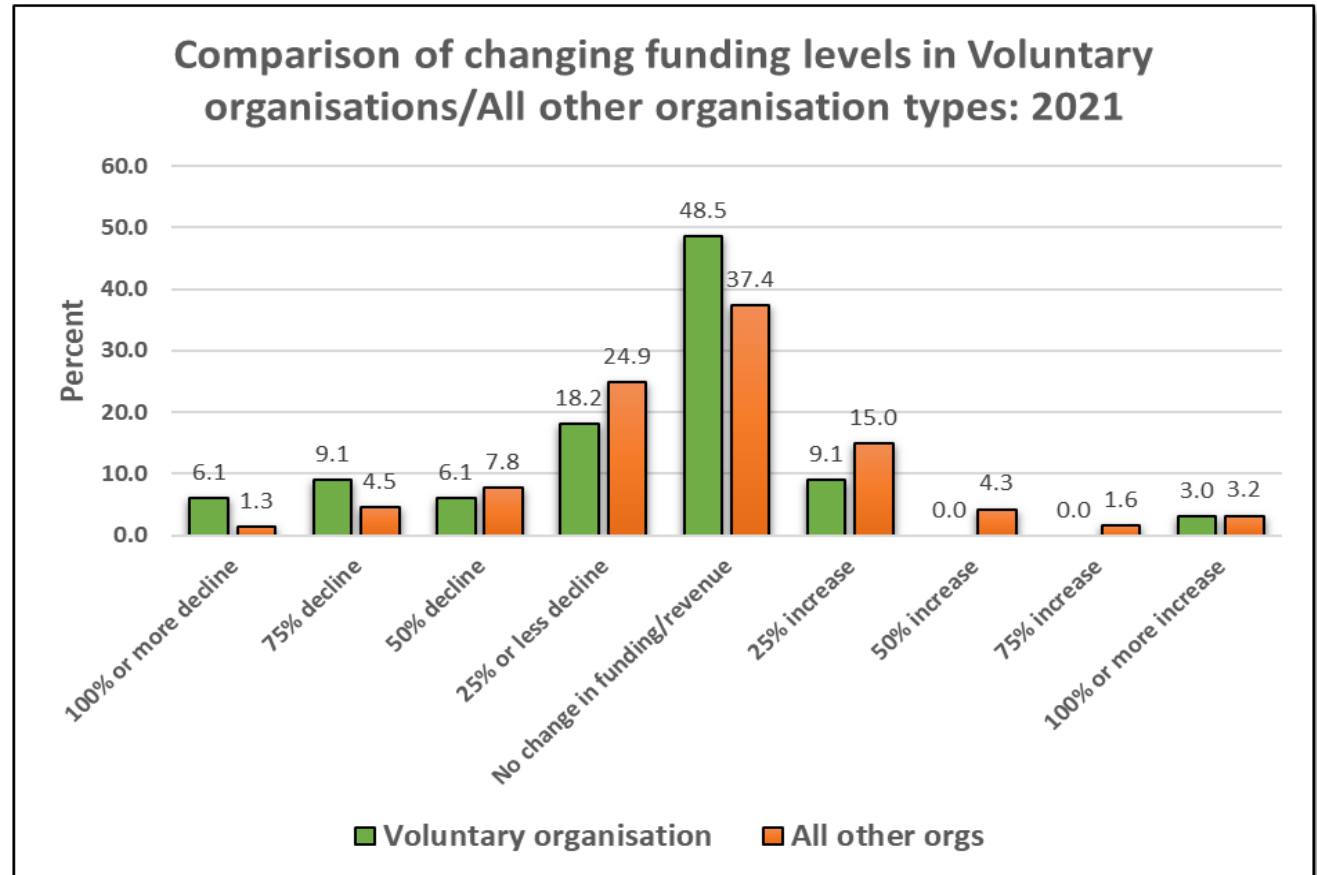
# Funding impacts on voluntary organisations



48.5% reported no change in funding/revenue

12.1% reported an increase in funding/revenue

39.4% reported a series decline in funding/revenue



# Funding solutions



- **Provide multi-year funding contracts**
- **Remove competitive funding models**
- **Invest in people and their professional development**
- **Fund staff and operational costs**
- **Call for solidarity across sector and to increase trust & knowledge sharing**

*“The paradigm that we exist in has just become so economically driven, especially in the community development sector. We’re just constantly put under pressure to deliver KPIs, and we are still in a competitive funding regime.” [Multi-ethnic focus group participant]*

# IMPACTS OF COVID



*“But this pushed us to a different place. And so, we undertook a major restructuring as a consequence of COVID-19, which was implemented at the end of last year, and is now working well, and has resulted in a reduction of the costs that we were facing last year and moving into a less loss area. So, that was a positive outcome of all that.” (Speaker 4)*

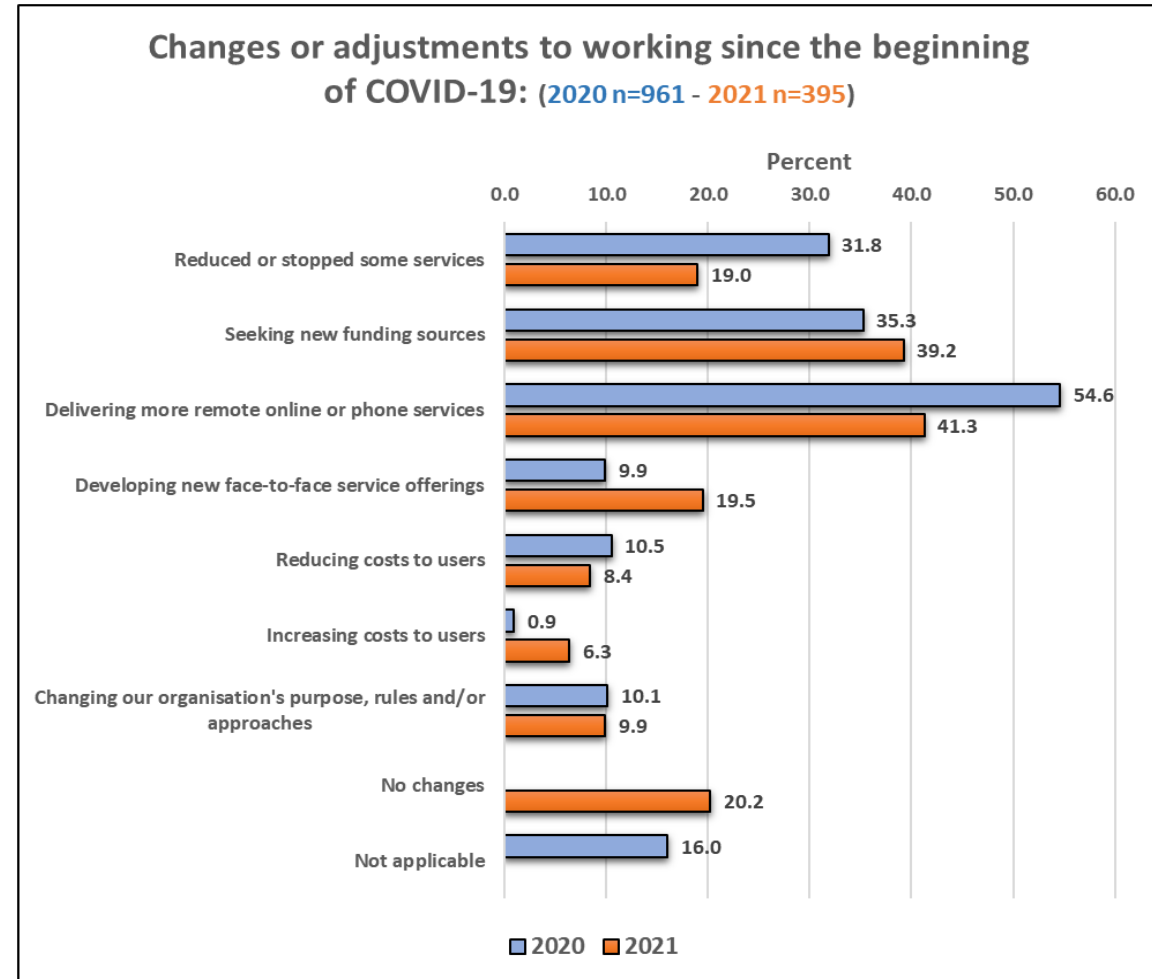
# Impacts on operations



41.3% said delivering more online or by phone

39.2% said seeking new funding sources

20.2% said they had made no changes operationally

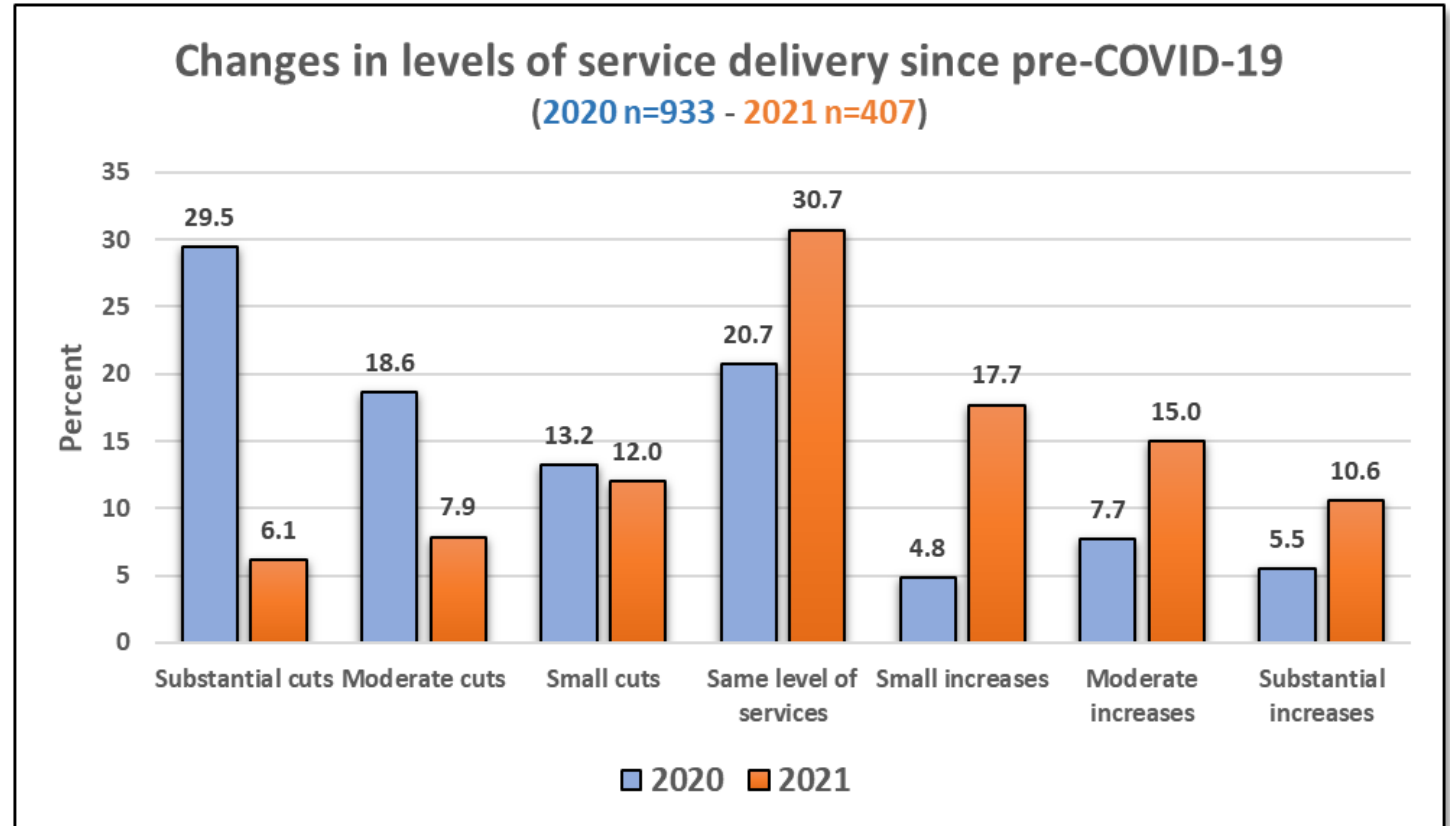


# Impacts on service delivery



84.0% have maintained or increased level of services (38.7% in 2020)

26% have made cuts (61.3% in 2020)



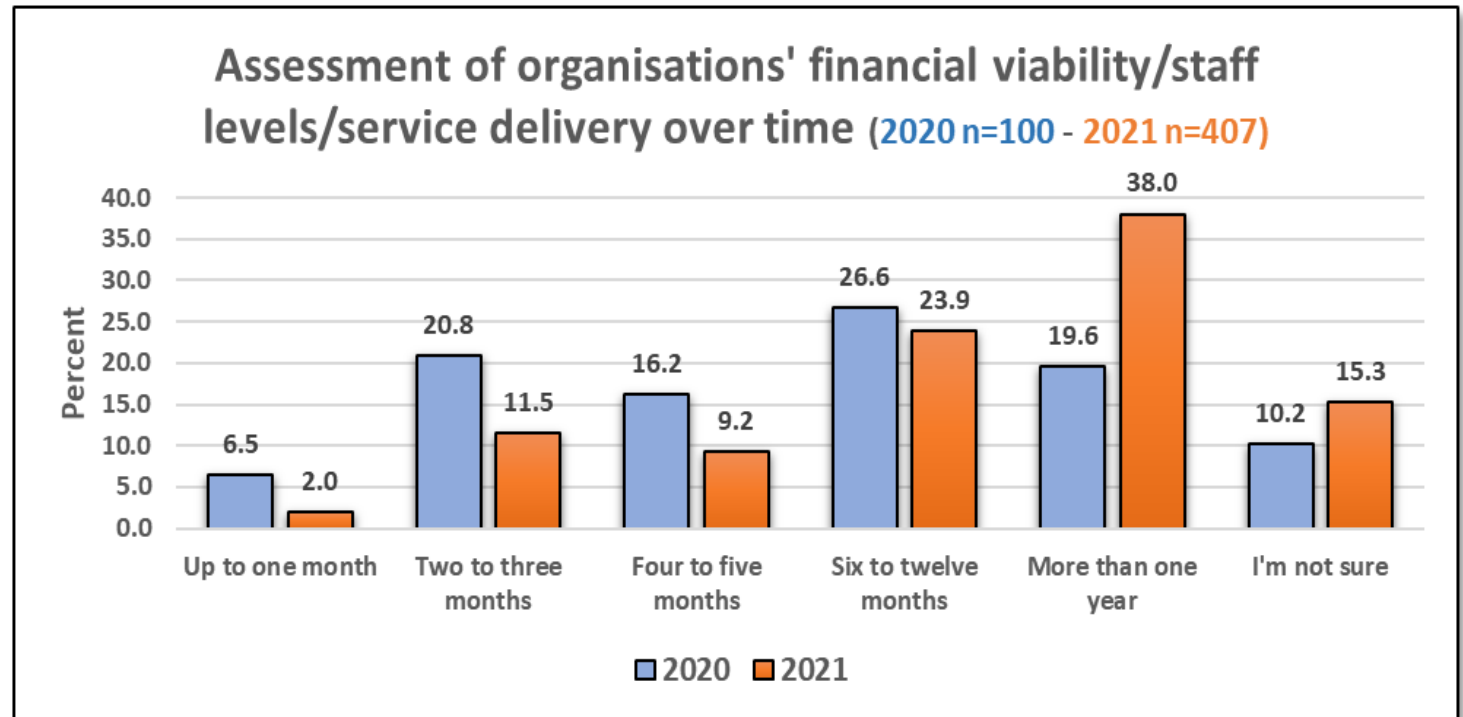
# Impacts on financial viability



53.3% said more than 12 months financial viability (29.8% in 2020)

23.9% said 6-12 months viability (26.6% in 2020)

22.7% said less than 6 months viability (43.5% in 2020)



# Impacts on volunteering



Volunteers remained extremely resilient, despite increased workloads and shift to online delivery

By majority, during COVID volunteers maintained fierce loyalty to organisations and communities they serve

Some organisations reported few volunteers and older volunteers needing support with online technology

Others reported younger volunteers stepping up

Migrant volunteers especially reported additional stressors with family overseas in high-risk areas

*"I think a lot of people ... have that real sense of fatigue, emotionally and mentally and physically. So, the more we can do and supporting their well-being ... is probably ... up the top of the priority list really now." (Speaker 7)*



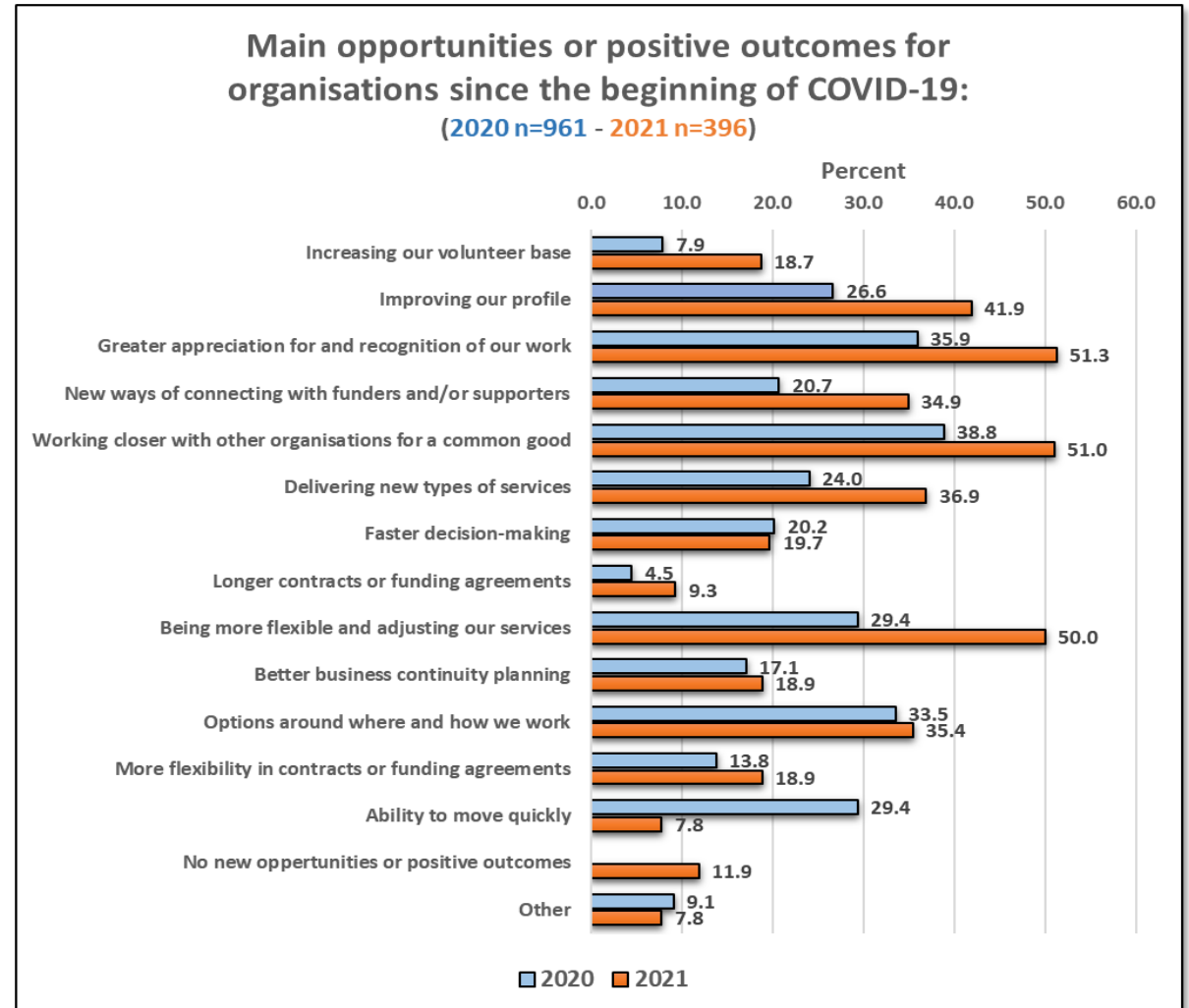
# Opportunities COVID has brought



51.3% said greater appreciation for & recognition of our work

51.0% said greater collaboration

50% said being more flexible



*"I think COVID has shaken us at both the macro and micro area. I think the greatest challenge that any organisation faces in the near future is 'how do we remain connected and guided in all of our decisions and the direction of our organisations to what is our vision and our mission?'" (Speaker 2)*

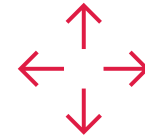
*"The lockdown sort of re-instituted some of the vision and some of the values that are part of our lives but have been subjected or subsumed under the sort of need for all the fiscal requirements that government has put on us." (Speaker 4)*

*"... when a crisis happens, it's usually the voices of difference that chime out, it's like an opportunity for people who are on the fringes of society to ... use this as an opportunity to push for change." (Speaker 3)*

# SHAPING THE FUTURE

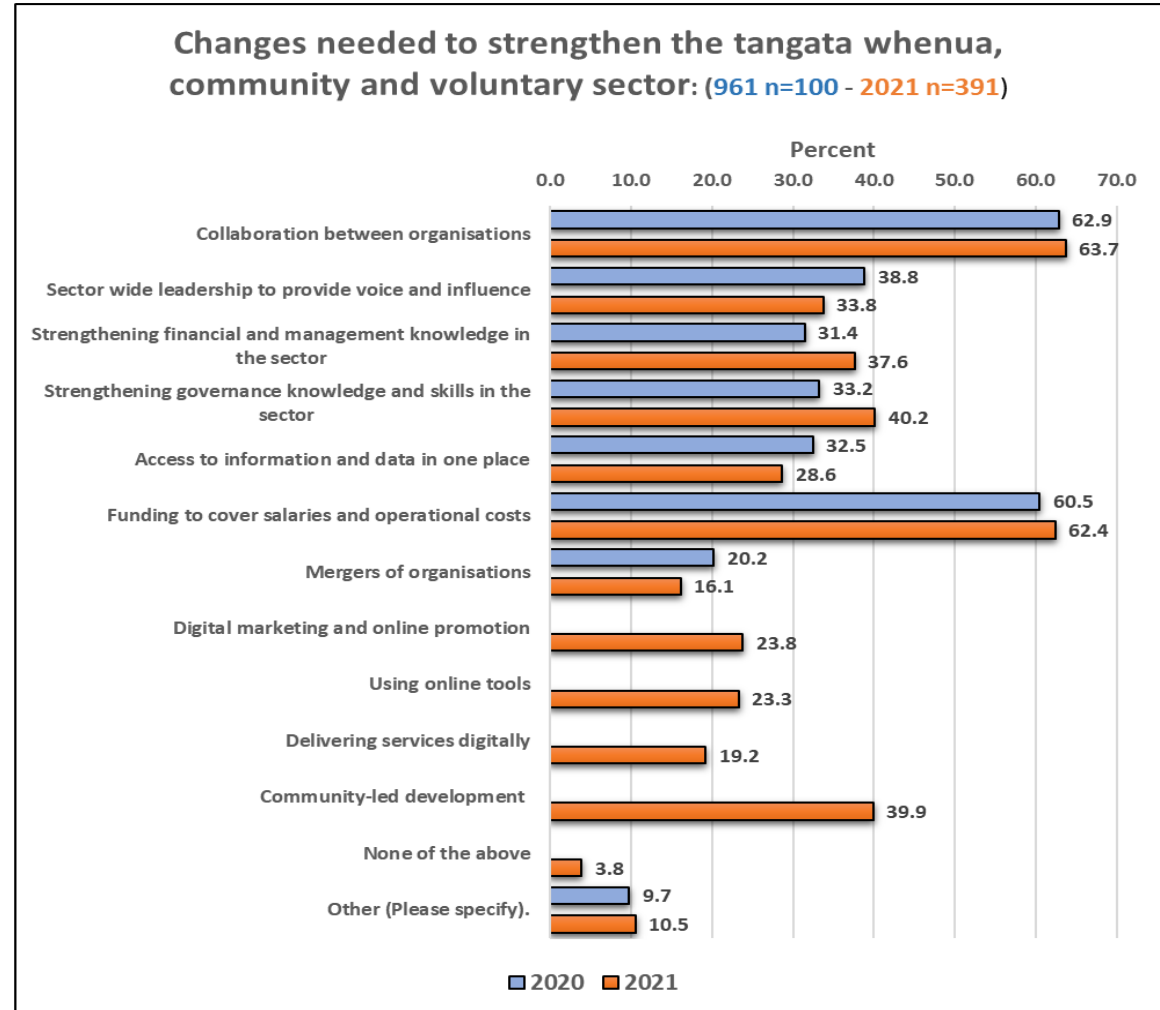
*“The lockdown sort of re-instituted some of the vision and some of the values that are part of our lives but have been subjected or subsumed under the sort of need for all the fiscal requirements that government has put on us. And I think there’s a lot to have been learned through what we’re doing.” (Speaker 4)*

# Changes needed to strengthen the sector

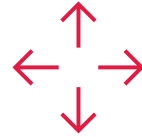


63.7% said collaboration was most important change

62.4% reported funding for salaries and operational costs was second most important



# Strategies for change



- **Collaboration rather than competition**
- **Finding solutions to address systemic inequities**

“There is an absolute disconnect between the conversation around equity and values ... And that comes down to a value decision about what's important in the scheme of things.” (Speaker 3)
- **Using COVID as an opportunity to reset**

“I think that’s a really, really important opportunity for us to start reframing our future, and re-evaluating what we do and re-evaluating the values that we operate under and reviewing the paradigm.” (Speaker 4)
- **Recognising us as a nationwide, inter-connected community**
- **Prioritising self-care and taking responsibility for others**

# Strategies for change 2

- **Changing our view of leadership**

“...now we need a Māori, indigenous and Pasifik[a] all in these lead roles, where they should have had ages ago ... they need them because they understand what it means when you’re working with mana whenua.” (Maori KI)

- **Improving funding applications processes**

- **Understanding the lived experiences of service users**

“Where ordinary people just, you know, give up, we’ll just keep ringing and talking until we get what we need. Because what the key driver for me was, just the injustice in the access to services that we know affects our Pasifika and Māori.” (Pasifika KI)

- **Communications available in multiple languages**

- **Increased availability of counselling services**

# Three things to implement immediately



- **Recognise kin and non-kin relationships are vital**

Provide incentives for collaboration; support availability of places and spaces to support this

- **Remove competitive funding models**

Build trust-based funding models that respond to local need; respect hapū, iwi and local communities to lead; support locally-led planning and resourcing

- **Resource wellbeing and salaries**

Fund wellbeing, particularly for Chief Executives; enable funding applications to include up to 40% salary and operational costs

*“[W]e don't see competition as the way forward ... [this future sustainability] grows out of collaboration and relationship.” (KI 2)*

*“And COVID-19 really challenges us to think about ‘how can we create a different way of being community?’ ‘How can we be an intentional community not a competitive community?’ ... The value of the alternative relationships, the value of whakapapa, the value of the environment, the value of the land really becomes challenged, and be prepared to just sit back and nurture those around you.” (Speaker 5)*