

# Steps To Success:

INTEGRATING IMMIGRANT PROFESSIONALS IN THE U.S.

By Amanda Bergson-Shilcock & James Witte, Ph.D.  
with editorial assistance from Sylvia Rusin



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## Abstract

Using both an online written survey and an interactive voice response audio survey, World Education Services (WES), IMPRINT, and the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University gathered detailed data from college-educated immigrants in the United States. The survey focused on the metropolitan areas of Boston, Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia, San Jose, and Seattle. The study analyzed factors that have influenced immigrants' professional success, finding that English skills, social capital, and U.S. workplace acculturation, as well as where one's higher education was obtained, were all strongly correlated with economic and professional achievement.

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## Preface

The challenge of skilled immigrant integration is a complex one, with numerous individual, systemic and policy barriers that must be addressed if we are to unlock the full talents of the more than 7.2 million college-educated immigrants in the U.S.

In recent years, through the efforts of IMPRINT's five founding members (World Education Services (WES), Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE), Upwardly Global, Welcome Back Initiative, and Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians) immigrant professional integration and the challenges associated with brain waste have slowly emerged as an important concern for service providers, funders and policymakers.

We are proud and excited to release this groundbreaking report representing the culmination of months of careful research and analysis of the career paths of college-educated immigrants in order to determine the key factors that lead to their success.

Thanks to a generous grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, several Knight cities and other communities now have reliable, new data enabling them to craft plans for action and identify ways to integrate their skilled workers into the fabric of the community.

Here at WES, our mission is to advance the global mobility and integration of people into academic and professional settings by evaluating and advocating for recognition of international educational qualifications, and enabling individuals to fully utilize their education. In recognition that it takes many partners to help make this mission a reality, we gratefully acknowledge the following:

- The dedicated core team who devoted far more time than any of us envisioned at the outset; namely Amanda Bergson-Shilcock (guiding spirit and co-author), Jim Witte (researcher and co-author), and Sylvia Rusin (editor) whose tireless efforts helped to shape the final report.
- The Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University (our lead research partner) and AudioNow, who share our commitment to telling the story.
- The fellow leaders of IMPRINT (Eva Millona, José Ramón Fernández-Peña, Nikki Cicerani, Peter Gonzales and Teresita Wisell) as well as dozens of colleagues at other partner organizations in the six communities we studied. Without their help, we could not have reached the thousands of college-educated immigrants who graciously took the time to respond to this important survey.

Paul Feltman



Director, WES Global Talent Bridge

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## I. Executive Summary

**I**MPRINT and its home organization World Education Services (WES) received funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to conduct a study to better understand how college-educated immigrant professionals integrate into the U.S. workforce. Focusing our research in the four Knight communities of Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia, and San Jose — and the additional metropolitan areas of Boston and Seattle — we collected information from what is typically a hard-to-reach population to determine the factors that have influenced their success in the workforce.

The online study surveyed 4,002 respondents, producing exciting new findings which shed light — for the first time — on the essential role that social capital, English skills, workplace acculturation and other factors play in helping immigrant professionals succeed. These thought-provoking results provide an opportunity for service providers, funders, and policymakers to think in new ways about how to facilitate immigrant professionals' abilities to contribute to and participate in American communities. The findings are summarized below, and described in more detail in our full report at [imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess](http://imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess)

### Key Findings

Our study examined immigrant achievement using three definitions of success (*see text box*). Using these definitions, we analyzed factors that correlated with the economic success and professional integration of college-educated immigrants at two income thresholds: \$30,000 and \$50,000 per year. Our reasons for selecting these thresholds can be found in the “Findings” section of our full report.

### How We Defined Success

The three definitions can be viewed as incremental levels of success, each one building upon the last:

**Earnings success** refers to immigrants who were currently employed and making at least \$50,000 per year.

**Skills success** refers to immigrants who were employed, making at least \$50,000 **and** making at least “some use” of their higher education in their current job.

**Professional success** refers to immigrants who were employed, making at least \$50,000, making at least “some use” of their higher education on the job, **and** employed in managerial or professional occupations.

We also analyzed the three definitions explained above at a lower income threshold of \$30,000 in annual income. Immigrants who fit these definitions were categorized as having *emerging* earnings, skills, or professional success.

**Findings across all of our definitions of success were robust, statistically significant, and mutually reinforcing**, which strengthened our belief that they shed important light on the process of immigrant professional integration. Overall, approximately one-third of respondents (31%) in our study had achieved earnings success, 28% had achieved skills success, and 22% had attained professional success. It is important to note that these numbers represent increasingly stringent analyses of the same pool of respondents — they are *not* mutually exclusive categories.

More specifically, we learned quite a bit about what actually increases employment for immigrant professionals, and how members of this community are living and working in the U.S. In particular:

- **Social Capital is Powerful:** There was a remarkably powerful correlation between the size of an immigrant’s self-reported social network and his or her likelihood of achieving success. Nearly half of respondents (44%) who reported currently having “many” friends and family in the U.S. to rely on had achieved earnings success, compared to 30% of those with “a few” and just 25% of respondents with “no” friends and family to rely on in the U.S.
- **English Really Matters:** Across the board, stronger English language skills were correlated with virtually every possible measure of immigrant economic success. Nearly half of respondents (40%) who reported speaking English as their primary language had achieved earnings success.
- **Immigrants Take An Enterprising Approach:** Immigrants demonstrated an enterprising, multi-pronged approach to establishing their American careers. A majority of respondents had applied for foreign academic credential evaluation. Self-improvement strategies – such as enrolling in English language classes or pursuing additional U.S. higher education – were also commonly pursued.
- **“Made in America” Boosts Employability:** Immigrants who had invested in additional U.S. education were more likely to be employed and successful than those who had only received education abroad.
- **Time + Acculturation Help Drive Success:** The virtuous cycle of acculturation, social capital and time combined to foster greater success among respondents who had lived in the U.S. for at least six years. In particular, these respondents had on average significantly higher incomes, lower rates of unemployment, and better English skills.

They were also more likely to have volunteered in their communities, and were twice as likely to say they had “many” friends and family compared to respondents who arrived in the U.S. more recently.

- **Newshounds Are Also Volunteers:** Intriguingly, there was a strong, statistically significant relationship between the number of news sources that a respondent reported using, and his or her likelihood of serving as a volunteer. These indicators of *civic* integration may also help to improve the understanding of *economic* integration among immigrant professionals.

## Moving Forward

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Our findings provided crucial data to inform recommendations not only for our own work at IMPRINT, but also for practitioners, funders, and policymakers in the field. Among these are:

- **Recommendations for Service Providers:** Our findings provide powerful evidence about the importance of social capital, English skills, self-improvement, civic engagement and additional U.S. education in achieving economic success. Service providers must ensure that the college-educated immigrants they serve have a full understanding of how these qualities can help them get a leg up in the competitive job arena. We hope our research will be reviewed carefully and in concert with other findings to inform new program development, and that service providers will actively work to build connections between so-called “mainstream” career programs and those designed specifically for immigrant professionals.
- **Recommendations for Funders:** We hope these findings will spark grants for new education, training, and employment programs for college-educated immigrant professionals, and that additional funding will be used to help

supplement existing streams of public funding that are restricted in their ability to support this work. We also hope that foundations will support follow-up research to help practitioners design more effective programs, enabling the success rate to climb higher.

- **Recommendations for Policymakers:** After a decade of budget cuts, we urge the restoration of funding to existing public workforce and adult education programs that serve college-educated immigrant professionals, and that public agencies better utilize data from existing resources in order to improve services and information. Finally, we encourage public agencies to look within government to identify potential opportunities for immigrant professionals to acquire valuable American work experience.

**Read the full report at:**

[imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess](http://imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess)



## II. Introduction

The U.S. is home to approximately 3.7 million college-educated immigrants who received their degrees abroad. However, 26% of these skilled workers, or just under one million people, are unemployed or under-employed in low-wage jobs, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

This so-called “brain waste” has significant repercussions for individual workers, their families, and our wider society. When an engineer is working as a janitor, or a nurse is employed as a cashier, their artificially limited income reduces their ability to provide for their families while also capping contributions to the tax base. At the same time, employers who need to access talent in high-demand fields such as science, information technology (IT), engineering and finance may be unaware of how to connect with the many qualified, skilled immigrants already in the country.

This report provides:

- A deeper and more detailed understanding of the college-educated immigrant talent pool in four Knight communities (Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia and San Jose) and two other metro areas (Boston and Seattle);
- A first-of-its-kind analysis of the specific factors that have helped accomplished immigrant professionals achieve professional success in the United States; and
- A systematic cataloguing of self-reported barriers and obstacles faced by college-educated immigrants who have not yet achieved professional-level employment.

We anticipate that the findings will be used to improve existing programs for immigrant profes-

sionals, provide guidance for those who are designing and funding new programs for this population; and inform policy and funding conversations not only in the six target communities, but also nationally.

IMPRINT brings a strong practitioner focus to the analysis, helping to ensure that this report will be as relevant as possible to the interests of service providers, funders and policymakers. In a stroke of luck, the release of this study coincides with the work of the White House Task Force on New Americans, which is lifting up efforts to more effectively integrate immigrants across the nation. We anticipate that this synergistic timing will boost the ability of our study to inform the national discussion about immigrant professional integration.

It is important to note that, to the best of our knowledge, all previous studies conducted on immigrant professionals in the United States used existing national datasets. None conducted original data collection. None compared the trajectories of successful versus still-struggling immigrant professionals. None attempted to document the opportunities that helped individual respondents succeed or the specific barriers that held them back.

This study documents factors that have helped successful immigrant professionals avoid the trap of under-employment and overcome the barriers they face. We collected previously unseen data from a hard-to-reach population, drew on our extensive practitioner experience in analyzing the data, and now offer practical recommendations for action.

From the beginning, IMPRINT’s deep expertise in immigrant communities informed our survey design. Guided by an academic research team, we were able to delve more deeply and accurately into community members’ stories.

The project was carried out by IMPRINT and its host organization, World Education Services (WES). We worked closely with researchers at the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University on survey design and analysis, and each of IMPRINT's five core member organizations called on their networks in the relevant cities to help disseminate the survey to potential respondents. In addition to WES Global Talent Bridge, IMPRINT members include the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE), Upwardly Global, the Welcome Back Initiative and the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians.

Along with this report, we have simultaneously released a case study spotlighting the project's innovative use of AudioNow's call-to-listen technology to survey hard-to-reach immigrant populations.

We look forward to engaging multiple stakeholders in the nonprofit, business, and public arenas to help spur further discussion and inquiry as well as targeted action on the ground, and invite all readers to contact the authors with questions or comments.

*A Note about Region of Origin: Before delving into the details, it is vital to note that many of the differences across various variables according to the region of the world may be due to pipeline effects of immigration policy rather than any factor intrinsic to a world region or group of individuals. For example, Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants are disproportionately likely to immigrate to the U.S. via employment-based visas. This immigration pathway naturally correlates with higher rates of employment (because individuals on work visas often need to leave the U.S. if they lose their jobs). Similarly, African immigrants may be more likely to arrive through student visas, thus making it more likely that they have completed U.S.-based higher education.*

*These policy-driven pipeline effects should be kept in mind when reviewing the report's detailed findings.*

## Online vs. Audio Survey Respondents: What's the Difference?

Our research project included a lengthy online survey, available in four languages, which gathered information from a total of 4,002 college-educated immigrants in the United States. The survey focused in particular on six metropolitan areas: Boston, Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia, San Jose, and Seattle. Respondents from other parts of the U.S. were included only in the national-level analysis.

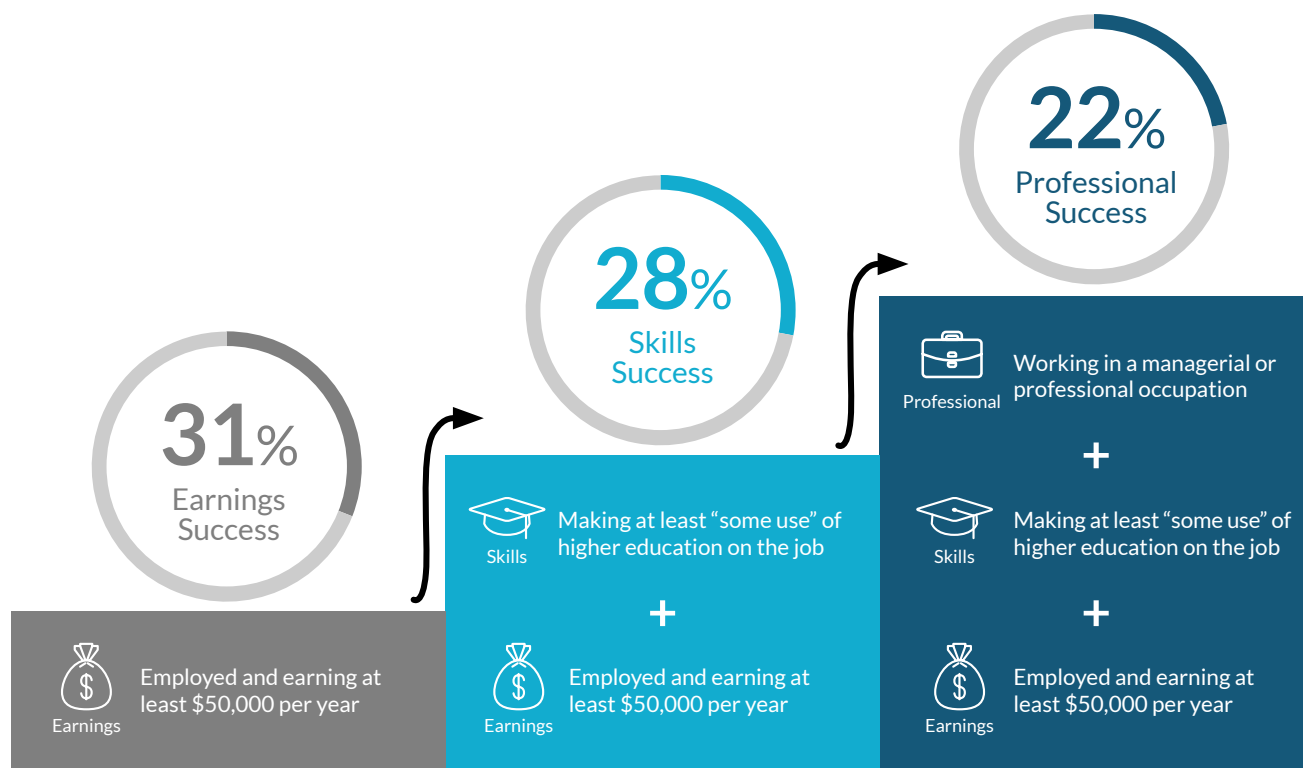
Simultaneously, we also engaged over 5,500 respondents in an audio survey of immigrant radio listeners. This significantly briefer survey was conducted in five languages, in collaboration with AudioNow, the leading provider of this "radio-by-phone" technology.

Unlike the online survey, the audio survey included both college-educated immigrants and those with lower levels of education. Again, the survey focused on the six metro areas. Respondents from other parts of the U.S. were included in the national-level analysis.

Learn more about the audio component of our survey in **Surveying Immigrant Radio Listeners: A Case Study**, available at

[imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess](https://imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess)

### III. Steps to Success: Key Findings



Measures of success reflect increasingly-stringent analysis of the same data pool.

**Figure 1.** Definitions of Success

This study's new findings have documented for the first time the vital role of social capital, English skills, and workplace acculturation in helping immigrant professionals succeed in the U.S. workforce. The results emphasize the need for purposeful integration strategies, ones that build on immigrants' technical skills, international credentials, and professional experience but do not solely rely on them.

In addition, findings showed meaningful differences in outcomes depending on where – in the U.S. versus abroad – individuals received their higher education. These results suggest that different strategies may be needed for individuals whose education was entirely international versus those who received at least some higher education in the United States.

To answer the study's central question of what factors affect the trajectory of college-educated immigrants, we analyzed our dataset using three increasingly stringent definitions of success. **Findings across all three were robust, statistically significant, and mutually reinforcing**, which strengthened our belief that they shed important light on the process of immigrant professional integration.

#### How We Defined "Success"

Across all three definitions of success, we used a common universe of respondents: those who were in the labor force. Whether or not respondents had found employment, we viewed *the decision to enter the labor force* as the strongest available

signal that respondents were actively seeking economic advancement.<sup>1</sup>

Our first working definition of success, earnings success, refers to the percentage of respondents who were currently employed, and making at least \$50,000 per year.

Of course, an income of \$50,000 substantially exceeds the median U.S. individual income of approximately \$28,000. However, we are comparing our respondents not to the general public, but to *those with higher education*. Given that restriction, U.S. median individual income ranges from approximately \$40,000 (for individuals with some college or an associate's degree) to \$62,000 (for those with a bachelor's degree or higher).<sup>2</sup> Selecting \$50,000 as our threshold thus seemed a natural midpoint.<sup>3</sup>

Our second and third definitions of success focused not only on income but also on respondents' ability to apply their education and training.

Skills success refers to respondents who were employed, making at least \$50,000, *and* making at least "some use" of their higher education (whether obtained in the U.S. or outside the U.S.) in their current job.

Finally, professional success refers to respondents who were employed, making at least \$50,000 per year, making "some use" of their higher education on the job, *and* employed in a managerial or professional occupation.

**Overall, 31% of IMPRINT respondents had achieved earnings success, 28% had achieved skills success, and 22% had attained professional success.** It is important to note that these numbers represent progressively more stringent analyses of the same pool of respondents—they are *not* mutually exclusive categories.

## Analyzing the Earlier Rungs of Success

We also analyzed our data using a lower financial threshold for success: \$30,000. While this income level might seem modest, it slightly exceeds the United States median per capita income, as noted above.

Applying this new financial threshold to the three definitions of success described at the beginning of this chapter, we found that approximately half of respondents (47%) had attained the first tier of success, which we term *emerging* earnings success.

Slightly fewer (40%) exhibited *emerging* skills success, and just under one-third (30%) showed *emerging* professional success.

We also analyzed each of the individual variables associated with success using the \$30,000 "*emerging*" threshold. Findings were overwhelmingly consistent with the \$50,000 threshold findings described in this chapter, though of course relatively more respondents had attained this lower level of financial stability.

**Table 1** shows the percentage of respondents who achieved these three definitions of success, as well as those who achieved these definitions under a lower financial threshold of \$30,000 and may potentially be on the pathway to the \$50,000 threshold.<sup>4</sup> *See text box for more details. Below, we detail key factors associated with respondents' achievements.*

## The Power of Social Capital

There was a remarkably powerful correlation between the size of an immigrant's self-reported social network and their likelihood of achieving success across any of the three measures.

For example, nearly half of respondents (44%) who reported currently having “many” friends and family in the U.S. to rely on had achieved earnings success. In comparison, 30% of those with “a few” and just 25% of respondents with “no” friends and family to rely on in the U.S. had achieved earnings success.

Similarly, 41% of respondents with “many” friends and family in the U.S. had achieved skills success, compared to 28% of those with “a few” and just 20% of respondents who had “no” friends and family to rely on.

Findings on professional success also affirmed the primacy of social capital. Respondents who reported having “many” friends and family in the U.S. were more than twice as likely to have achieved professional success as those with “no” friends and family (34% to 15%). Those with “a few” friends or family fell in the middle at 22%.

## A Key Role for English

Numerous findings affirm the central role of English language skills in facilitating immigrants’ integration, especially in improving their prospects for white-collar employment. Across the board in our study, stronger English language skills were correlated with virtually every possible measure of immigrant economic success.

**Across the board in our study, stronger English language skills were correlated with virtually every possible measure of immigrant economic success.**

Respondents themselves were keenly aware of the importance of English skills. Significantly, they were just as likely to have invested in *fee-based* English classes as they were to have attended *free* ones: exactly 31% of respondents reported having pursued free classes, and 29% attended fee-based classes.<sup>5</sup>

Notably, respondents who had taken an English language class had *lower* self-reported English skills. Our survey does not permit us to disentangle the factors at work here, though it is likely that immigrants who perceive themselves to have limited English skills were more likely to have pursued classes to improve their linguistic capacity.

Similarly, our survey did not inquire about the duration or intensity of the classes taken by respondents, and it is not possible in our data to assess the efficacy of respondents’ English language instruction in terms of labor market outcomes. These issues are discussed further in our Policy Recommendations section.

## English Skills and Success

Among the subset of respondents who were non-native speakers of English, better English skills were strongly correlated with achieving earnings success. A full third (34%) of those who speak<sup>6</sup> English “very

**Table 1.** Percentage of Respondents Achieving Success

\$30,000 INCOME THRESHOLD			\$50,000 INCOME THRESHOLD		
EMERGING EARNINGS SUCCESS	EMERGING SKILLS SUCCESS	EMERGING PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS	EARNINGS SUCCESS	SKILLS SUCCESS	PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS
47%	40%	30%	31%	28%	22%

well” had achieved earnings success, compared to 17% of those who speak English “well” and just 10% of those who speak English “not well.”

There was a similarly strong correlation between self-reported English skills and achievement of skills success. Those who speak English “very well” were far more likely (32%) to have achieved skills success, compared to those who speak English “well” (13%) or “not well” (8%).

Finally, among respondents who did not speak English as a primary language, those with strong English skills were dramatically more likely to have achieved professional success. Those who spoke English “very well” were three times more likely (27%) to have attained professional success than those who spoke English “well” (9%). Just 3% of English “not well” speakers had achieved professional success.

## English as Primary Language and Success

Unsurprisingly, immigrants who spoke English as their *primary* language were more likely to have achieved earnings success, at 40% compared to 28% of those with another primary language.

Individuals who spoke English as a primary language were also more likely to have achieved skills success (37%) compared to non-native speakers (26%). Finally, the trend continues for professional success, where respondents for whom English is a primary language were more likely to have achieved it (30%) to those with other primary languages (21%).

## ESOL Classes and Success

Respondents who did not speak English as their primary language and who had taken an English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) class (free or

fee-based) were slightly *less* likely to have achieved earnings success, at 25% compared to 35% of those who had not taken a class.

Those who had taken an ESOL class (free or fee-based) were also slightly *less* likely to have achieved skills success, at 22% compared to 32% of those who had not taken a class.

Finally, those who had taken an ESOL class were also slightly *less* likely to have achieved professional success, at 17% compared to 26% of those who had not taken a class.

Again, as noted above, there were myriad factors that may have affected this finding. We would caution against making any assumptions about the efficacy or value of English language instruction based on this data. Future research on English language instruction and immigrant economic success is needed for further analysis.

## An Enterprising Approach

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Our findings suggest that college-educated immigrants take an enterprising, multi-pronged approach to establishing their American careers.

Many seek to translate their foreign credentials into U.S. terms, with nearly two-thirds (63%) reporting that they applied for a formal credential evaluation.

Self-improvement tactics—such as taking English language classes or pursuing additional U.S. higher education—were also common. Half (50%) of respondents who had received higher education abroad had *also* pursued higher education in the United States, and 43% of respondents had taken an English language class.

In addition, half of overall respondents (49%) said they were interested in doing more to improve

their skills, including 24% who plan to be or are currently in training.

A more modest percentage (34%) of overall respondents had applied for U.S. professional licensure. This smaller number is not surprising, as only a minority of professional-class jobs in the U.S. even require such licensure. Among the subset who had applied, 69% had been granted licensure, 24% were waiting for a response and 7% were denied licensure.

Looking at some of the above variables in terms of our definitions of success, several key themes emerge:

## Credential Evaluation

Interestingly, there was little difference between whether a respondent's foreign credentials had been "fully recognized" or "partially recognized" when it came to success. Those whose credentials were "not at all recognized," on the other hand, suffered significantly poorer outcomes on average.

Among individuals who had applied for credential evaluations, the difference in earnings success between respondents whose credentials were "fully recognized" (33%) was almost indistinguishable from those who had been "partially recognized" (35%). The number then fell sharply to 14% for those who said their credentials were "not recognized."

The pattern was similar for skills success. Among individuals who had applied for credential evaluations, 31% of those who said their credentials had been "fully recognized" had achieved skills success, as well as 34% of those whose credentials were "partially recognized." Again, the number fell

sharply to 12% for those who said their credentials were "not recognized."

Finally, the number of respondents achieving professional success was identical (25%) among those whose credentials were "fully" or "partially" recognized. In contrast, just 10% of those whose credentials were "not recognized" had achieved professional success.

## Licensure

While only a minority (34%) of overall respondents had applied for U.S. professional licensure, those who *had* successfully attained it were far more likely to be successful than those who

had applied and had been denied. This pattern held true across every measure of success we calculated.

## Location of Higher Education

As noted above, the signaling value of "Made in America" higher education was significant. Immigrants who received some or all of their higher education in the U.S. were more likely to succeed under each of our three definitions.

However, differences were almost indistinguishable between immigrants who had received "blended" education and those who were educated exclusively in the U.S., suggesting that even partial American education is sufficient to add value in the labor market.

Approximately 22% of immigrants who had completed all of their higher education abroad had achieved earnings success, compared to 37% of those who had received higher education both in the U.S. and abroad, and 40% of those who had received higher education only in the U.S.

**There was little difference between whether a respondent's foreign credentials had been "fully recognized" or "partially recognized" when it came to success.**

Similarly, 19% of respondents who completed all of their higher education abroad had achieved *skills success*, compared to 35% of immigrants who had received higher education both abroad and in the U.S., and an equal 35% of those who had received all of their higher education in the U.S.

Finally, immigrants who had received higher education only abroad were less likely to have achieved professional success, at 15%. In comparison, 28% of those who had received higher education both in the U.S. and abroad, and an equivalent 28% of those with U.S.-only higher education, had attained professional success.

**Differences were almost indistinguishable between immigrants who had received “blended” education and those who were educated exclusively in the U.S., suggesting that even partial American education is sufficient to add value in the labor market.**

Similarly, those who had lived in the U.S. for six years or more had significantly lower rates of unemployment, better English skills, and were more likely to have volunteered their time to a neighborhood or civic group, religious organization, or ethnic association.

Disentangling the cause and effect of these various factors is challenging, but it is clear that they often reinforce each other. For example, an individual’s better English skills may make it easier

for him or her to make friends in the neighborhood, leading to volunteer opportunities. Or the process of volunteering at a religious organization with English-speaking congregants may lead to improved language skills or stronger networks.

Below, we analyze two of these variables with regard to our definitions of success.

## Length of Time in the U.S.

Not surprisingly, immigrants who had been in the U.S. for at least six years were far more likely to have achieved earnings success — at 40%, compared to 15% of those who had been in the U.S. for five years or less.

## A Virtuous Cycle

Acculturation, social capital, and time came together in a virtuous combination for many respondents. Those who had lived in the U.S. for at least six years had significantly higher incomes on average, and were twice as likely to say they had “many” friends and family in the U.S. compared to respondents who had arrived in the past five years.

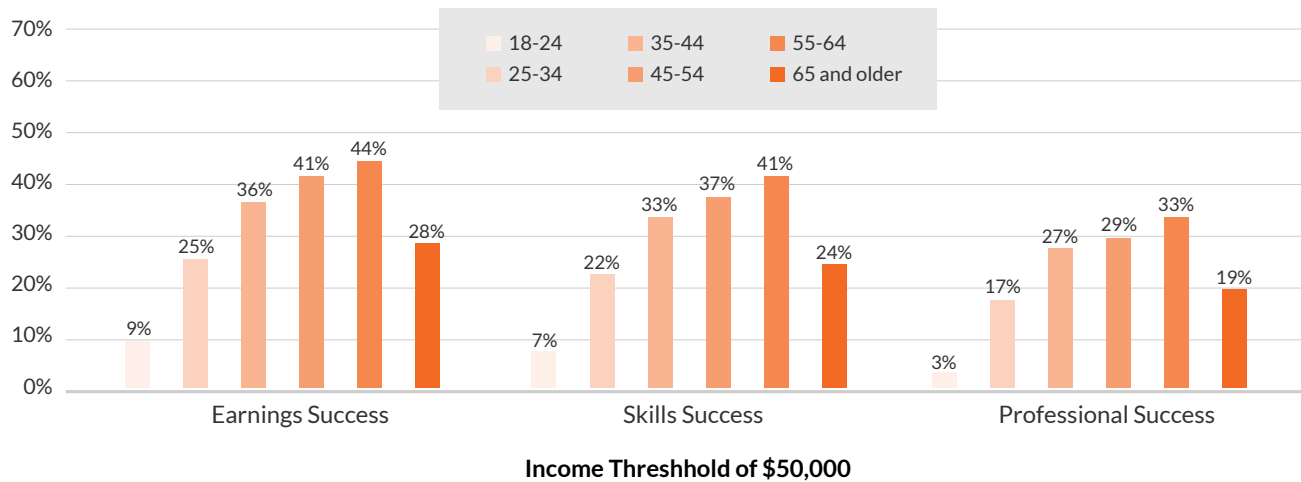
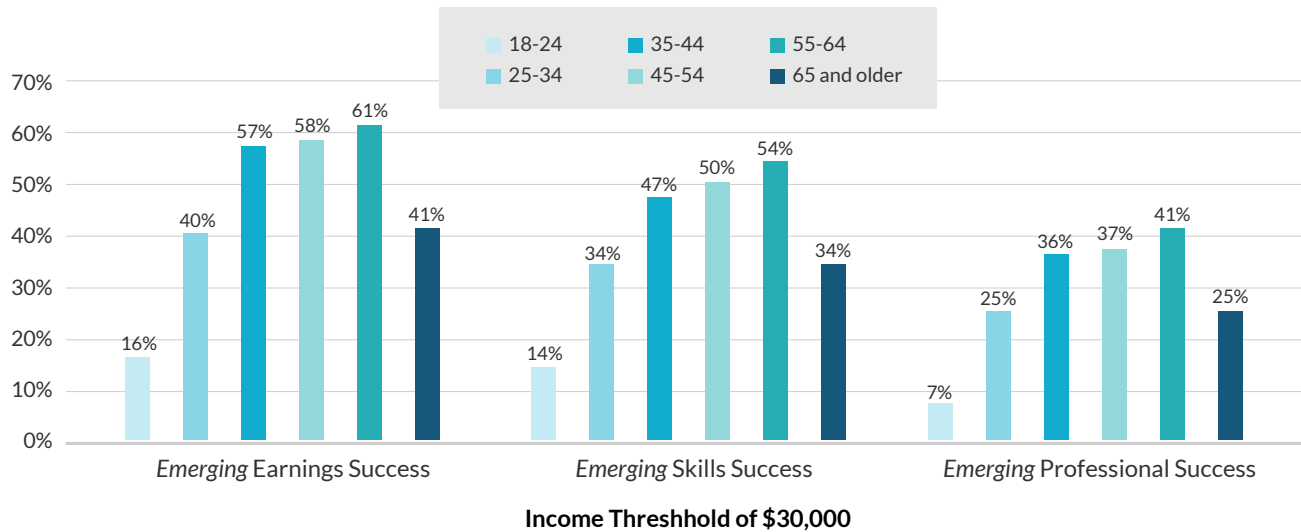
**Table 2.** Percentage of Licensure Applicants Who Achieved Success

	LICENSED TO PRACTICE & ACHIEVED SUCCESS	DENIED LICENSE & ACHIEVED SUCCESS
Earnings success*	46%	24%
Skills Success**	43%	20%
Professional Success**	36%	11%

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01



**Figure 2. Success by Age Group**



Similarly, individuals who had lived in the U.S. for at least six years were three times more likely to have achieved skills success (36% compared to 12% of newer arrivals).

On average, professional success also takes longer to achieve, with 29% of more-established individuals having achieved it compared to just 9% of respondents who had arrived in the past five years.

## Age

Unsurprisingly, individuals' likelihood of achieving success went up with age. Just 9% of those who were ages 18-24 had achieved earnings success, quite likely because many were still in school or recently graduated. In comparison, 25% of those aged 25-34 had achieved earnings success, 36% of those 35-44, 41% of those 45-54, 44% of those age 55-64, and 28% of those ages 65 and up.<sup>7</sup>

Older respondents were also more likely to have achieved skills success. Just 7% of immigrants age 18–24 had done so. The number tripled to 22% of those ages 25–34, and rose again to 33% of those 35–44. Rounding out the list, 37% of those 45–54, 41% of those 55–64 and 24% of respondents 65 and over had achieved skills success.

Finally, older respondents were far more likely to have accomplished professional success, again with the exception of the very oldest respondents. Just 3% of those in the youngest age category were professionally successful, compared to 17% of those ages 25–34, 27% of those 35–44, 29% of those 45–54, 33% of those 55–64, and 19% of those 65 and older.

## Embracing Opportunity and Overcoming Barriers

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As noted above, an overwhelming percentage (88%) of immigrants in our survey were in the labor force. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of overall respondents were currently employed, and 19% were unemployed and actively seeking work.<sup>8</sup>

While some of this is doubtless a reflection of the age cohort – the vast majority of respondents were between 18 and 65 – it bears noting nevertheless. In particular, the broad range of earnings reported by our respondents suggests that college-educated immigrants embrace employment first, even if the wages may not reflect their level of education and training. Only a relative few can afford to bide their time waiting for exactly the right employment opportunity.

With regard to seeking work, respondents pursued a variety of tactics, with an average of 3.1 job-hunting techniques reported among overall respondents.

**The broad range of earnings reported by our respondents suggests that college-educated immigrants embrace employment first, even if the wages may not reflect their level of education and training.**

Respondents also strove to overcome barriers—such as lack of U.S. work experience, difficulties with English, or personal or financial constraints—in their search for employment. Perhaps unsurprisingly, immigrants who reported facing few or no barriers in their search were far more likely to have achieved earnings success.

It is difficult to say whether this finding is a cause or effect, however, as respondents may have been more likely to remember or to list barriers in their survey responses if they were experiencing labor market frustration.

Nearly half (47%) of respondents who reported facing “no barriers” had achieved earnings success. In contrast, 33% of those who reported one barrier, 26% of those facing two barriers, 24% facing three barriers, and 18% of respondents facing four or more barriers had done so.

Similarly, 44% of those who reported facing “no barriers” had attained skills success, compared to 29% of those who faced one barrier, 23% of those facing two barriers, and 20% of those facing three barriers. Finally, approximately 15% of those facing four or more barriers had achieved skills success.

Lastly, those who faced “no barriers” were again most likely to have achieved professional success (36%). The number dropped notably among those facing even one barrier (23%), and continued to drop for those facing two barriers (18%), three barriers (16%), and four or more barriers (approximately 10%).

## Becoming Voters Over Time

Across numerous variables, our data confirms that respondents were more likely to be registered voters if they were older, have lived in the U.S. for a longer period of time, if they received at least some higher education in the U.S., if they were currently employed, and if their income was at least \$30,000 per year.

These factors were consistent with overall U.S. voter registration patterns. It is important to note that our data do not establish a causal effect – that is, we cannot say (for example) that the mere fact of being employed causes a person to decide to register as a voter.

However, the sheer consistency of the data across numerous variables does suggest that immigrant civic integration is typically the product of multiple simultaneous factors: Longer tenure in the U.S. means a greater likelihood of becoming eligible for citizenship (and thus voting) while also increasing the chance of finding employment and advancing in the workforce to higher-paying jobs.

## More Friends, More Voting

Across the board, respondents who report having more friends and family in the U.S. were more likely to be registered to vote. This pattern holds true even when we limit our analysis to the subset of respondents who were eligible to vote *and* have lived in the U.S. for more than five years. In that case, nearly four out of five (77%) respondents who say they have “many” friends and family in the U.S. that they can rely on were registered to vote, compared to 65% of those who have “a few,” and 63% of those who have “no” friends and family.

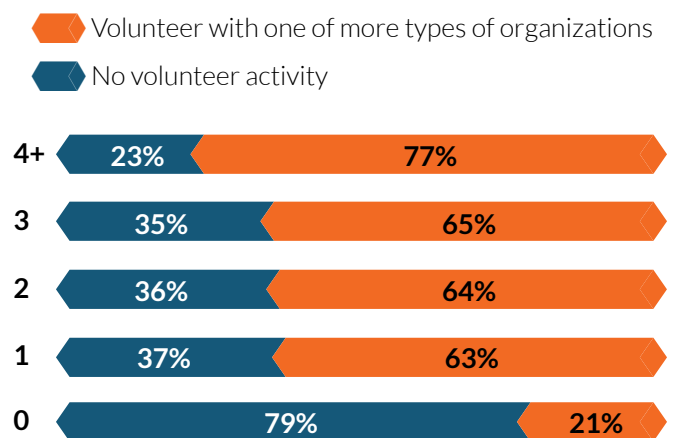
**Across the board, respondents who report having more friends and family in the U.S. were more likely to be registered to vote.**

## Newshounds Are Also Volunteers

There was a strong, statistically significant relationship between the number of news sources that a respondent reported using and the likelihood of volunteering. Our data asked respondents whether they had accessed any one of a number of potential news sources on the previous day. We also asked whether the respondent had volunteered with any one of a number of types of organizations in the previous year.

The overwhelming majority (79%) of respondents who reported zero access to news sources also reported no volunteer activity. The pattern changed abruptly among respondents who reported even one source of news, with a majority (63%) now reporting they *had* volunteered. The likelihood of volunteering continued to increase with each additional news source. **Figure 3** displays these details.

**Figure 3. Volunteer Participation by Number of News Sources Used**



## A. BOSTON: Newcomers Continue To Call A Historic Port City Home

**A**s one of the oldest cities in the United States, Boston has been a major destination for immigrants since at least the nineteenth century.

Today, more than one in seven residents of the Boston metro area are immigrants (18%). The influx of immigrants into the state has compensated for its otherwise sluggish population growth due to an aging population and low birth rate. Indeed, immigrants are driving population growth in Massachusetts: Without immigration, the state's population would instead have dropped by more than 2% between 2000 and 2010.<sup>9</sup>

Boston is home to many world-class hospitals and universities, a fact reflected in its economy: The largest super-sector is Education and Health Services. The sub-sectors of Health Care and Social Assistance increased employment even during the Great Recession, when most other sectors saw job losses. The health industry is expected to continue to grow state-wide, with a projected 22% growth in demand for clinical professionals by 2020. Other major super-sectors in Boston include Professional and Business Services, Trade and Transportation, and Financial Activities.<sup>10</sup>

In 2011, foreign-born workers accounted for 21% of the labor force in the Boston metro area. This amounted to approximately 475,000 foreign-born workers.<sup>11</sup>

### IMPRINT Respondent Characteristics and Findings

Our survey respondents represent a slice of Boston's modern-day immigrant community, though more representative in some respects than others. Our 436 Boston-area online survey respondents were more likely to be female than the region's immigrants in general, while our 576 audio-survey respondents were far more likely to be male. Additionally, a much higher percentage of our online survey respondents were African compared to Boston-area immigrants as a whole (22% compared to 5%).<sup>14</sup>

Overall, Boston-area respondents achieved each of our study's measures of success at relatively similar rates compared to respondents in the other five cities. It is important to note there may be factors external to our respondents that underlie these results.

**Figure 4** displays the percentage of Boston-area respondents versus respondents in the other five cities who achieved each measure of success.<sup>15</sup> Note that these are progressively more stringent analyses of the same pool of respondents, *not* mutually exclusive groups.

### History

The historic port city of Boston has been a major destination for immigrants to the US since the nineteenth century, starting with Irish Catholic immigrants, followed by German and Polish Jews in the middle of the nineteenth century. Between the 1860s and the 1920s, Boston's population nearly tripled due to Eastern European and Italian immigration, as well as domestic migration of African Americans from the U.S. South.<sup>12</sup>

Strict federal restrictions on immigration in the 1920s reversed this trend and led to a steep decline in immigration nationwide, including in primary immigrant destinations like Boston. Even as late as the 1970s, Boston's foreign-born population growth was slow, increasing by only 4% between 1970-1980, which pales in comparison to the growth that occurred in the following decades.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 4. Success Among Boston-area Respondents**



Note: Differences are not statistically significant.

A majority of Boston-area respondents (53%) had achieved *emerging* earnings success, compared to 52% of respondents in the other five cities. This level of success had the least stringent criteria.

Perhaps not surprisingly, our *most* stringent definition, professional success, was attained by the fewest respondents. Boston-area respondents were slightly less likely (23%) to have attained professional success compared to respondents in the other five cities (25%).

Our other findings on college-educated immigrants in Boston generally mirrored those for all other respondents.<sup>16</sup> For example, as **Table 3** shows, Boston-area respondents were registered to vote at exactly the same rate (39%) as all other respondents, and were almost equally likely to report having “many” friends and family to currently rely on for support: 26% in Boston, compared to 25% for all other respondents.

However, **Table 3** also shows a few notable differences. In particular, Boston-area respondents were more likely to have applied for U.S. professional licensure (37%) than all other respondents (28%). In other words, they were 1.3 times more likely to have applied for U.S. professional licensure than all other

**Table 3. How Boston-area Respondents Compare to All Other Respondents**

Key Success Criteria	Boston Respondents	All Other Respondents
Speak English as Primary Language	26%	25%
Speak English "Very Well"	61%	66%
Pursued Additional Higher Education in the U.S.*	61%	56%
Applied for Credential Evaluation	62%	59%
Applied for U.S. Licensure**	37%	28%
Have Lived in the U.S. Six Years or More	65%	63%
Have "Many" Friends and Family Currently in the U.S. to Rely on for Support	26%	25%
Feel Like Current Training/Education is "Good Enough" to Meet Career Goals	43%	48%
Registered to Vote	39%	39%

\* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, no asterisk denotes lack of statistical significance

\*\* "All Other Respondents" includes respondents in the survey's other five cities as well as those who chose "other" as the place they currently lived.

respondents. Since there is limited data on differences in U.S. licensing procedures across states, it is unclear what may be causing this finding. Additional research could explore geographic differences in licensure processes.

Interestingly, despite Boston respondents' relatively higher rate of licensure applications, they were somewhat *less* likely to feel like their education was “good enough” to meet their career goals (43% for Bostonians compared to 48% for all other respondents). Additionally, Boston-area respondents were more likely to say that they are currently enrolled in training or plan to be (28% compared to 24% of all other respondents).

When asked about barriers in finding employment, Boston-area respondents were substantially more likely to report “Personal or financial constraints” (28%, compared to 18% overall).

Finally, although Boston-area respondents reported speaking English as their primary language at almost the same rate (26%) as all other respondents (25%), they were marginally less likely to speak English “very well” (61% in Boston, compared to 66% among all other respondents).

## **Additional Findings: Audio Survey**

The audio component of our survey allowed us to gain additional perspective on immigration in the Boston metropolitan area. The 576 respondents were primarily speakers of Haitian Kreyol (51%) or Punjabi (25%), with smaller proportions of Amharic (14%), Swahili (4%) and English (6%) language speakers.

While the majority of Boston-area respondents reached in the audio survey had not obtained higher education, the percentage that had (41%) was still higher than any of the other cities included in the audio survey. Among Boston-area audio survey respondents with higher education, two-thirds had attended college both in the U.S. and abroad, 23% only in the U.S., and 11% only abroad.

A substantial majority (77%) of overall Boston-area respondents to the audio survey were male, in contrast to the female majority seen in the online survey. Almost all respondents were in the labor force (87%), including 67% who were currently working and 20% who were actively seeking work.

A robust 42% of Boston-area respondents who had sought work in the United States said that U.S. employers had not recognized their foreign credentials, and an equal number said their foreign experience had not been recognized. More than a quarter (27%) said they had faced discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, or some other reason. This number was notably higher than for any other city in the audio survey except Detroit.

Approximately 35% of audio survey respondents were registered to vote, and another 34% were eligible but not registered. Compared to audio respondents nationally, Boston-area audio respondents were more likely to be eligible to vote but less likely to be registered.

## **Conclusion**

Our findings in the Boston region affirm the importance of English language skills and social capital in fostering immigrant professional integration. In addition, Boston respondents' high rates of participation in U.S. education and training suggest the potential influence of residing in a region with numerous well-known educational institutions. It is difficult to say what might be driving respondents' relatively greater experience of personal and financial barriers (such as childcare or transportation) in seeking employment, as well as the higher rates of discrimination reported in the audio survey. In both cases, the factors at work may be specific to Boston (for example, a higher cost of living leading to higher costs for childcare) or may be an artifact of demographic differences in our sample.

## **Acknowledgements**

We thank the staff of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) and the Immigrant Learning Center for their sustained engagement in this project, particularly in recruiting the broadest possible array of potential respondents.

## B. DETROIT: A Rustbelt City Reinvents Itself through Foreign-Born Workers

The landscape of Detroit is changing. Once a bustling metropolis, Detroit is now struggling to emerge from a post-industrial population decline. The city itself is inching its way back from bankruptcy, and has a population that has dropped from 1.8 million in 1950 to fewer than 700,000 in 2012.<sup>17</sup> Although Detroit is the eighteenth-largest city in the US by population, the city ranks 135th in terms of its foreign-born population.<sup>18</sup>

From 2000 to 2010 metropolitan Detroit has seen an increase in its foreign born population from over 7% to more than 8%.<sup>19</sup> The region boasts a significant Middle Eastern community, in addition to Latino and Asian communities.<sup>20</sup>

Seen as a critical resource that is integral to improving the state's economy and revitalization efforts, foreign-born workers accounted for 10% of the labor force in the Detroit metro area in 2010.<sup>21</sup>

The public-private Global Detroit initiative seeks to rebuild the region by attracting more immigrant professionals, and harnessing their skills and innovation in key areas such as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).<sup>22</sup>

### IMPRINT Respondent Characteristics and Findings

Our survey respondents represent a slice of this multifaceted picture, albeit more representative in some respects than others. Our 391 Detroit-area online survey respondents are more likely to be of African origin than the region's college-educated immigrants in general, as reflected in 2012 American Community Survey data.

Looking only within the pool of IMPRINT respondents, Detroit-area respondents were significantly more likely to be from Asia and the Middle East (42%) compared to all other respondents<sup>28</sup> (32%).

### History

Founded by the French in 1701 as a colonial trading post,<sup>23</sup> with the first major wave of immigrants arriving in the 1820s, Detroit's economy was built on a foundation of immigrant labor and entrepreneurship.<sup>24</sup>

During the nineteenth century, English and German immigrants worked in a variety of industries and the founding of the Ford Motor Company in 1903 led to a surge of Middle Eastern immigrants. The Lebanese were one of the first such communities to come to Detroit to work in the auto industry.<sup>25</sup>

During World War I, the economic depression in the US South combined with Jim Crow laws and other forms of oppression affecting African Americans led to the first Great Migration. Previously accounting for 1% of Detroit's population, the first major period of population growth among black residents in the city occurred from 1910 to 1930.<sup>26</sup> While discriminatory employment practices existed in most industries where African Americans were employed, the **emerging** automobile industry, especially Ford Motor Company, began employing African Americans in increasingly larger numbers.

More immigrants settled in Detroit between 1900 and 1920 than any other US city except Chicago and New York. By the start of the 1930s, the foreign born accounted for almost 30% of Detroit's population— a stark contrast to today's picture.<sup>27</sup>

Detroit's legacy of immigration and migration has contributed to the city's dynamic culture and past growth, and continues to be seen as a means of creating new economic opportunities and a more robust city in the future.

**Figure 5. Success Among Detroit-area Respondents**



Note: Differences are not statistically significant.

Given the area’s substantial Middle Eastern population, as noted above, this is unsurprising.

In addition, Detroit-area respondents were more likely to work in manufacturing (13% compared to 4% of all other respondents). They were also more likely to be making at least “some use” of their higher education at their current job (60% compared to 54% of all other respondents).

Compared to respondents in the other five cities, there was no statistically significant difference in Detroit-area respondents’ achievement of success. The majority of Detroit-area respondents achieved *emerging* earnings success (54%), compared to 52% of respondents in the other five cities. **Table 4** displays compares the percentages of Detroit area respondents and percentages of respondents in the other five cities achieving the three measures of success.

In general, our other findings on college-educated immigrants in Detroit are very similar to those in other cities. However, there were a few other notable differences. **Table 4** compares percentages of respondents who meet success-related criteria in Detroit and all other areas.

**Table 4. How Detroit-area Respondents Compare to All Other Respondents**

Key Success Criteria	Detroit Respondents	All Other Respondents
Speak English as Primary Language	21%	26%
Speak English "Very Well"***	71%	65%
Pursued Additional Higher Education in the U.S.**	63%	55%
Applied for Credential Evaluation*	68%	59%
Applied for U.S. Licensure**	22%	30%
Have Lived in the U.S. Six Years or More	67%	63%
Have "Many" Friends and Family in the U.S. to Rely on for Support	26%	25%
Feel Like Current Training/Education is "Good Enough" to Meet Career Goals	50%	47%
Registered to Vote*	45%	39%

\* p<.05, \*\* p < .01, no asterisk denotes lack of statistical significance

^All Other Respondents" includes respondents in the survey's other five cities as well as those who chose "other" as the place they currently lived.

As **Table 4** shows, Detroit-area respondents were more likely to speak English “Very well” (71% compared to 65% of all other respondents). They were also more likely to have pursued additional higher education in the U.S. (63% compared to 55%



of all other respondents), and more likely to have applied for credential evaluation (68% compared to 59% of all other respondents).

Even though Detroit-area respondents were more likely to have applied for credential evaluation than all other respondents, they were actually *less* likely to have applied for U.S. professional licensure (22% compared to 30% of all other respondents). Further research on U.S. professional licensure procedures could explore this difference further.

Additionally, Detroit-area respondents were found to be civically engaged in their community. They were registered to vote at a higher rate (45%) than all other respondents in our survey (39%).

## Additional Findings: Audio Survey

The audio component of our survey allowed us an important window into another aspect of Detroit immigrant life. In total, we surveyed 340 Detroit-area radio listeners. More than half (62%) of audio survey respondents were Punjabi speakers, followed by Haitian Kreyol (20%), Amharic 14%, English 4% and Swahili 1%.

Detroit-area respondents to the audio survey were:

- Equally likely to be in the labor market (90% of respondents) but notably more likely to be currently employed (74%) than audio respondents in any other city but San Jose.
- Significantly more likely to report that they had experienced discrimination in their search for employment (36% compared to 16–28% of respondents in other cities, and 22% of respondents overall)

- Less likely to be eligible to vote than residents of the other cities we surveyed (41% not eligible, compared to 34% not eligible among audio respondents overall)
- Far more likely to say they had “no friends or family” to rely on for support when they first arrived in the U.S. (44% compared to 34% of audio respondents overall)

## Conclusion

Overall, findings from the Detroit-area respondents in both the audio and online surveys paint a picture of employed workers who reflect many of the assets and barriers faced by other respondents in our survey. However, lower rates of social capital (both upon arrival in the U.S. and today) and greater experience of discrimination suggest that at least a subset of Detroit-area respondents are still struggling to feel at home.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the staff of Global Detroit and Welcome Mat Detroit for their sustained engagement in this project, particularly in recruiting the broadest possible array of potential respondents.

## C. MIAMI: A ‘Latin American Capital’ in the United States

**M**iami has long been informally known as the US capital of Latin America.<sup>29</sup> It boasts the largest Latin American population outside of Latin America, and its immigration history has shaped its current landscape.<sup>30</sup> With more than half of its 2.4 million residents foreign-born, the Miami region is unofficially bilingual, multicultural, and in the midst of a burgeoning economic transformation – of which the migration of skilled immigrants is a critical component.<sup>31</sup>

Miami has become a mix of cultural influences, in part, through its history of immigration. In 2000, the US Census Bureau identified Miami as one of the first “majority-minority” cities in the nation.

### IMPRINT Respondent Characteristics and Findings

Of our 388 Miami-area survey respondents, a slightly lower proportion were of Latin American/Caribbean origin (70%) compared to Miami-area immigrants as a whole (80%).

Looking specifically at the pool of IMPRINT survey respondents, Miami-area respondents were somewhat older (less likely to be in the 25–34 age category; more likely to be in the 55–64 category). In addition, as noted above, more than two-thirds were from Latin America and the Caribbean, far outstripping the proportion among our respondents overall (27%).

### History

Incorporated in 1896, Miami has grown from a city with a population of just over 300 to well over two million residents. Immigration has played a significant role in the population growth of Miami and its surrounding metro region.<sup>32</sup>

Over the last 50 years, Miami has seen an increase in its population in part due to an influx of refugees from Cuba. The first Cuban refugee contingent consisted mostly of well-educated professionals, and supporters of the Batista government, who left behind successful careers and businesses when they fled the Castro regime in 1959.<sup>33</sup> Despite the skills that these arrivals brought with them, many had to take jobs beneath their skill level, working as gas station attendants and maids.<sup>34</sup>

Between the years 1965–1974, another wave of Cuban immigrants entered the U.S. following the Freedom Flights program.<sup>35</sup> Many Cuban arrivals during this period were skilled laborers – members of the middle and lower-middle classes. The Cuban Adjustment Act, passed by Congress in 1966, revised Cubans’ immigration status to “parolees” and offered a unique route to permanent residency.<sup>36</sup> Most settled into the Riverside neighborhood, which became known as “Little Havana.” Towards the end of this period, more than 400,000 Cuban refugees were living in Miami-Dade County.

In 1970s, many Haitian professionals, the middle class, and students sought political asylum in the U.S. Around 60,000 Haitians landed in South Florida,<sup>37</sup> many settling in an area of Miami referred to as “Little Haiti.”<sup>38</sup> While the sources of immigration to Miami have shifted somewhat since 1960, the flow has remained largely Hispanic. Nicaraguan refugees and permanent residents also began to arrive in Miami. Today, 90% of Nicaraguans living in Florida reside in the Miami metropolitan area.

During the 1980s and 1990s, large numbers of foreign-born residents came from Colombia, Peru, and the Dominican Republic, as well as Jamaica and Haiti.<sup>39</sup> Haitians have continued to immigrate, most recently after the country’s devastating 2010 earthquake. The Haitian community in the Miami area has grown to be one of the largest in the United States.<sup>40</sup>

Today, the Miami area continues to represent a focal point for immigration to Florida.

**Figure 6. Success Among Miami-area Respondents**

Note: Differences are not statistically significant.

Of those who were in the labor force, Miami-area respondents were more likely to say that their current job makes use of their most recent higher education (61% compared to 54% of overall respondents).

Miami area respondents achieved our study's measures of success at rates comparable to respondents in the other five cities, with no statistically significant differences. As portrayed in [Table 5](#), nearly half of Miami area respondents (48%) have achieved *emerging* earnings success, compared to 53% of respondents in the other five cities.

Our other findings on college-educated immigrants in the Miami area largely echo our findings in other cities. [Table 5](#) compares the percentages of Miami-area respondents meeting success-related criteria with all other respondents.

There were a few additional differences between Miami respondents and all other respondents. Perhaps most notably, as [Table 5](#) shows, Miami-area respondents were considerably more likely to be registered to vote (52%) compared to all other respondents (38%).

Miami-area respondents were also more likely to have lived in the U.S. six years or more (74%)

**Table 5. How Miami-area Respondents Compare to All Other Respondents**

Key Success Criteria	Miami Respondents	All Other Respondents
Speak English as Primary Language	21%	26%
Speak English "Very Well"	64%	65%
Pursued Additional Higher Education in the U.S.	60%	56%
Applied for Credential Evaluation	63%	59%
Applied for U.S. Licensure	31%	29%
Have Lived in the U.S. Six Years or More**	74%	62%
Have "Many" Friends and Family in the U.S. to Rely on for Support	29%	25%
Feel Like Current Training/Education is "Good Enough" to Meet Career Goals	54%	46%
Registered to Vote**	52%	38%

\* p<.05, \*\* p < .01, no asterisk denotes lack of statistical significance

\*\* "All Other Respondents" includes respondents in the survey's other five cities as well as those who chose "other" as the place they currently lived.

compared to all other respondents (62%). Our study found that living in the U.S. for six years or more is strongly correlated with better English skills, significantly higher incomes on average, lower rates of unemployment, and higher rates of volunteering

as immigrants adapt culturally, linguistically, and socially to their environment.

Finally, Miami-area respondents were more likely to feel like their current training/education was “good enough” to meet their career goals (54%) compared to all other respondents (46%).

## Audio Survey Findings

In addition to affirming many of our online survey results, the audio component of our survey provided key perspective on Miami’s Haitian community in particular. The 770 respondents we surveyed were overwhelmingly speakers of Haitian Kreyol (83%), followed by much smaller numbers of Punjabi (11%), Amharic (5%), English (1%) and Swahili (1%) speakers.

While a high number of Miami audio respondents were in the labor force (88%), a full 26% were unemployed and currently seeking work. It is difficult to know whether this finding reflects a relatively weaker labor market in comparison to other cities, or other environmental or demographic factors specific to Miami.

Perhaps reflecting the density of connections and support available in Miami, respondents reported greater levels of civic integration than in other cities. In particular, compared to our other audio survey respondents, Miami-area audio respondents were:

- More likely to be registered to vote (44%)
- Far less likely to say they had “no” family or friends to rely on when they first arrived in the U.S. (28%, compared to between 35–44% of audio respondents in the five other cities we studied).
- Less likely to report having experienced discrimination during their job search (16%, compared to 22% of audio respondents overall).

## Conclusion

Miami is perhaps unusual among the cities we studied for its deep concentration of immigrants from a single region of the world. Our findings suggest that college-educated immigrants in the Miami area may benefit from myriad opportunities to build social capital, as reflected in higher voter registration rates, greater numbers of friends and family, and lesser experience of discrimination.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the staff of Florida Immigrant Coalition and Miami Dade College for their sustained engagement in this project, particularly in recruiting the broadest possible array of potential respondents.

## D. PHILADELPHIA: An Historic City Draws Educated Newcomers

**A**fter decades of steady decline, Philadelphia's population has been growing since 2007, thanks to the city's flourishing foreign-born community. While many are employed in the region's bustling "eds and meds" economy of universities and hospitals, others are still struggling to make their way. Philadelphia's immigrants tend to be older, more ethnically diverse, and better educated than the nation's average, but our analysis shows local immigrant professionals have more in common with their national peers than it might initially appear.<sup>41</sup>

Philadelphia is once again the nation's fifth-largest city, and immigrants have had a lot to do with the city's population rebound.<sup>42</sup> U.S. Census Bureau data shows eight consecutive years of population growth in Philadelphia, while the proportion of the city's population that is foreign-born has also increased.<sup>43</sup>

Today, the city is home to 1.5 million residents, 175,000 (12%) of whom are foreign-born.<sup>44</sup> The wider metro region boasts 5.8 million, of whom more than 600,000 (9%) are foreign-born.<sup>45</sup>

Though the city's recovery from the Great Recession has been slower than some, with new jobs not keeping pace with population growth, its higher education, medical, tourism and hospitality sectors are thriving.

### IMPRINT Respondent Characteristics and Findings

Our survey respondents represent a slice of this multifaceted picture. Our 518 Philadelphia-area online survey respondents were more likely to be female than the region's immigrants in general, though our audio-survey respondents were far more likely to be male. Similar to our online respondents overall, Philadelphia-area respondents in our online survey were overwhelmingly likely (92%) to be in the labor force.

Over half (53%) of Philadelphia area respondents had achieved *emerging* earnings success, compared to 52% of respondents in the other five cities. As displayed in **Figure 7**, Philadelphia-area respondents achieved our study's measures of success at rates that roughly matched respondents in the other five cities, with no statistically significant differences.

The percentages in Table 2-4 reveal that in many respects, college-educated immigrants in Philadelphia have characteristics that mirror those of all other respondents.<sup>50</sup> Yet there are a few notable differences.

First, the majority of Philadelphia respondents (75%) have lived in the U.S. for six years or more. Our study

### History

In the early 1900s Philadelphia was a major immigrant destination, but its popularity waned as newcomers chose more convenient ports, and then new federal restrictions slowed national immigration to a trickle.<sup>46</sup> A robust Puerto Rican community expanded beginning in the 1950s, but international migration did not begin to surge again until the end of the twentieth century, with Southeast Asian refugees arriving after the end of the Vietnam War, Korean entrepreneurs following in the later 1980s, and Jewish refugees arriving during the immediate post-Soviet era of the 1990s.<sup>47</sup>

In the twenty-first century, Philadelphia has seen significant growth in Indian, Chinese, Mexican, Dominican, and West African immigration.<sup>48</sup> The city's historic identity as a place of religious tolerance endures today, with thriving communities of immigrant Muslims, Jews, Christians, and others living alongside native-born Americans of all faiths.<sup>49</sup>

**Figure 7. Success Among Philadelphia-area Respondents**



Note: Differences are not statistically significant.

found that living in the U.S. for six years or more is strongly correlated with significantly higher average income, lower rates of unemployment, higher rates of volunteering, and better English skills, as immigrants adapt culturally, linguistically, and socially to their new environment.

Furthermore, Philadelphia-area respondents were 1.3 times more likely to have applied for credential evaluation than all other respondents. Additionally, the unemployment rate<sup>51</sup> among Philadelphia respondents is significantly lower (16%) than it is on average in all other areas (23%). These findings suggest not only that there may be more employment prospects for college-educated immigrants in Philadelphia than in other areas, but also that college-educated immigrants may be making more effort in Philadelphia to get their credentials evaluated in order to transition into higher-skilled positions.

Nevertheless, even though they may be making a greater effort in terms of credential evaluation, only a fifth (21%) of respondents in Philadelphia have applied for U.S. licensure compared to 30% of all other respondents. We do not have sufficient information to hypothesize about why this percentage is lower among Philadelphia-area respondents.

**Table 6. How Philadelphia-area Respondents Compare to All Other Respondents**

Key Success Criteria	Philadelphia Respondents	All Other Respondents
Speak English as Primary Language**	34%	24%
Speak English "Very Well"	67%	65%
Pursued Additional Higher Education in the U.S.**	66%	55%
Applied for Credential Evaluation**	73%	58%
Applied for U.S. Licensure**	21%	30%
Have Lived in the U.S Six Years or More**	75%	61%
Have "Many" Friends and Family in the U.S. to Rely on for Support*	30%	25%
Feel Like Current Training/Education is "Good Enough" to Meet Career Goals	46%	47%
Registered to Vote*	46%	38%

\* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, no asterisk denotes lack of statistical significance

^ "All Other Respondents" includes respondents in the survey's other five cities as well as those who chose "other" as the place they currently lived.

Our study also found that nearly half (55%) of all respondents pursued additional higher education in the United States. This trend was even stronger in Philadelphia, with an even greater proportion (66%) reporting having done so. Respondents in Philadel-

phia were thus 1.3 times more likely than all other respondents to pursue additional higher education in the U.S.

Finally, respondents in Philadelphia were civically engaged in their communities. Compared to all other respondents, Philadelphia respondents were more likely to have volunteered in the past year for a religious organization (29% of Philadelphia-area respondents), neighborhood or civic group (27%), or ethnic association (20%).

Additionally, respondents in Philadelphia were 1.2 times more likely to be registered to vote than all other respondents. Our study found that all respondents were more likely to be registered voters if they had abundant social capital, longer tenure (six years or more), and at least some higher education in the U.S. These factors are consistent with respondent demographics in Philadelphia.

## Additional Findings: Audio Survey

The audio component of our survey allowed us an important window into another aspect of Philadelphia immigrant life. The 285 respondents we surveyed were primarily speakers of Haitian Kreyol (41%) or Punjabi (39%), with smaller proportions of Amharic (12%), English (6%) and Swahili (2%) language speakers.

The majority of Philadelphia-area respondents reached in the audio survey had *not* received higher education. Among respondents with higher education, about half had attended college both in the US and abroad, while the remainder were more likely to have attended college only overseas.

A substantial majority (79%) of overall Philadelphia-area respondents to the audio survey were male, in contrast to the female majority seen in the online survey. Almost all respondents were in the labor force (89%), including 65% who were currently

working and 24% who were actively seeking work. Approximately one-third had lived in the US for less than five years.

More than one in three (35%) of overall Philadelphia audio respondents said that U.S. employers had not recognized their foreign credentials, and an even higher number (42%) said their foreign *experience* had not been recognized. One in five (20%) said they had faced discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, or some other reason.

## Conclusion

Our findings in the Philadelphia region affirm the importance of English language skills and social capital in fostering immigrant integration. In particular, the greater likelihood of Philadelphia-area immigrants to participate in volunteer activities is particularly notable. In addition, the audio survey findings bolster overall findings suggesting that the biggest barriers for immigrants in the labor market are communicating their foreign expertise and experience to American employers, with discrimination a less-frequent but still notable barrier.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the staff of the nonprofit Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians and Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society of Pennsylvania for their sustained engagement in this project, particularly in recruiting the broadest possible array of potential respondents.

## E. SAN JOSE: From Small Farming Community to the Capital of Silicon Valley

**K**nown as the “Capital of Silicon Valley,”<sup>52</sup> San Jose is the largest and most populous city in the Bay Area, surpassing even its better-known neighbor, San Francisco.<sup>53</sup> The professional, scientific, and technical service sector is the economic engine for San Jose, which is home to the headquarters of fourteen Fortune 500 firms.<sup>54</sup> A 2013 Gallup survey ranked the city tenth for job growth nationwide and job-growth prospects.<sup>54</sup>

Immigrants have been a driving force behind the innovation that the hub is known for: In 2007, researchers from Stanford Law School and U.C. Berkeley found that 25% of the nation’s startups and 52% of those in Silicon Valley had at least one immigrant co-founder.<sup>56</sup>

Of all US metropolitan areas, the San Jose metro area has the second-highest proportion of immigrants after Miami.<sup>57</sup> More than one-third of people in the San Jose metro area (37%) are foreign-born, significantly higher than the proportion of foreign-born

residents in the state of California (27%) and nearly three times the national figure (13%).<sup>58</sup>

The top countries of origin for San Jose’s foreign-born residents include Mexico, Vietnam, China, the Philippines, and India.<sup>59</sup> Vietnamese immigrants have been coming to the US since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. The San Jose metro area has the second-largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam.<sup>60</sup>

### IMPRINT Respondent Characteristics and Findings

Our 341 San Jose online survey respondents are broadly representative of college-educated immigrants in the San Jose area. While Latin American immigrants overall are more numerous in the Valley, Asian immigrants are more numerous among the subset of San Jose immigrants with a college education. Thus our relatively high (56%) portion of online respondents from Asia is still lower than the

### History

Originally a small farming community established to support the Spanish military installations in San Francisco and Monterey, San Jose has undergone a dramatic transition in its 238-year history.<sup>61</sup>

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Mexican and Chilean migrants mined for cinnabar (a form of mercury). The Gold Rush, along with the mining industry and the establishment of the railroad linking San Jose and San Francisco, led to a population explosion, which peaked just before the turn of the twentieth century. Mexican, Chinese, and later Japanese immigrant populations provided the necessary people-power to grow San Jose’s mining, agricultural and manufacturing industries.<sup>62</sup>

The passage of federal restrictions on immigration in the 1920s led to a significant drop in immigration to San Jose. Since passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, immigration has increased steadily.<sup>63</sup> In 1980, the percentage of the population that was foreign born was 14%, a figure which more than doubled by 2014.<sup>64</sup>

The rise of Silicon Valley attracted new generations of immigrants whose contributions helped the Valley become the global hub that it is today. Immigration to San Jose saw a dramatic upswing in the 1990s coinciding with the technology boom. Although the burst of the tech bubble in 2000 and the financial crisis of 2007-08 led to reduced immigration for several years, the foreign-born population in San Jose continues to grow today.



**Figure 8. Success Among San Jose-area Respondents**



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

percentage of college-educated immigrants who are Asian in the Valley as a whole (74%).

There were some differences among San Jose respondents compared to the other five cities in our study. For example, the gender ratio of online respondents was closer to parity than in any other city we studied, though still only 43% male. San Jose also had a higher number of participants out of the labor force (19%) compared to respondents as a whole (12%). Not surprisingly, San Jose respondents were twice as likely to be working in the Information Technology/Communications sector (13% compared to 6% of respondents as a whole).

In comparison with respondents in the other five cities, San Jose area respondents achieved our study’s measures of success at higher rates. As displayed in **Figure 8**, nearly half (45%) of San Jose area respondents achieved earnings success, compared to 33% of respondents in the other five cities. Similarly, 35% of San Jose area respondents achieved professional success, compared to 23% of respondents in the other five cities.

However, these results should be interpreted with caution. A key element of our definition of success was annual earnings, and the cost of living in San Jose significantly exceeds that of the country as a whole as well as most of the other metro areas in our study.

**Table 7. How San Jose -area Respondents Compare to All Other Respondents**

Key Success Criteria	San Jose Respondents	All Other Respondents
Speak English as Primary Language	30%	25%
Speak English "Very Well"	69%	65%
Pursued Additional Higher Education in the U.S.**	65%	55%
Applied for Credential Evaluation	56%	60%
Applied for U.S. Licensure	29%	29%
Have Lived in the U.S. Six Years or More**	73%	62%
Have "Many" Friends and Family in the U.S. to Rely on for Support**	34%	25%
Feel Like Current Training/Education is "Good Enough" to Meet Career Goals	52%	47%
Registered to Vote*	46%	39%

\* p<.05, \*\* p < .01, no asterisk denotes lack of statistical significance

\*\* "All Other Respondents" includes respondents in the survey’s other five cities as well as those who chose "other" as the place they currently lived.

Our study found a variety of factors that were correlated with achieving the measures of success. **Table 7** compares the percentage of respondents meeting various success criteria among San Jose respondents versus all other respondents.<sup>65</sup> Although

the two groups are fairly similar, there are a few important differences. San Jose respondents were significantly more likely to have pursued additional higher education in the U.S. (65%), compared to all other respondents (55%).

Similarly, San Jose respondents were significantly more likely to have lived in the U.S. for six years or more (73%), than all other respondents (62%). Finally, San Jose respondents were more likely to report currently having “many” friends and family to rely on for support in the U.S. (34%) than all other respondents (25%).

## Audio Survey Findings

The audio component of our survey provided an opportunity to look more deeply at the experiences of a subset of San Jose immigrants. The 681 respondents to the audio survey were overwhelmingly (91%) Punjabi speakers, with only a sprinkling of Amharic (6%), Haitian Kreyol (2%), Swahili (1%), and English (1%) language speakers.

Respondents from San Jose were more likely to say that their preferred news source was radio (58% compared to 47% of overall audio respondents). While this might seem unsurprising given that the survey was administered to radio listeners, the 11-percentage-point difference suggests that Punjabi-speaking San Jose immigrants value radio more highly than audio respondents as a whole.

In contrast to the San Jose online respondents, audio respondents were more socially isolated. A full 32% reported that they currently have “no” friends and family to rely on in the United States. Nevertheless, San Jose respondents were found to be civically engaged. San Jose audio respondents were more likely to be registered to vote (51% compared to 41% of audio respondents overall). Reinforcing this trend, fewer San Jose respondents said they were not eligible to register (27% compared to 34% of overall audio respondents).

Finally, among audio respondents with higher education, San Jose respondents were more likely to have received their education exclusively abroad (35% compared to 22% of overall respondents).

## Conclusion

San Jose provides an interesting counterpoint to other U.S. cities in its distinct demographics, industry clusters, and level of overall affluence. Among our respondents, interesting patterns in civic integration suggest that San Jose respondents are more English-dominant, better-established, and more likely to have built up a network of friends and family than most other respondents we studied. A notable exception is the data on Punjabi radio listeners, which suggests that a subset of immigrants in the Valley may be experiencing substantial social isolation, and turning to radio as a key lifeline to news and culture.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the staff of San Jose Public Library, Silicon Valley Community Foundation and Upwardly Global for their sustained engagement in this project, particularly in recruiting the broadest possible array of potential respondents.

## F. SEATTLE: A Re-Emerging Immigrant Gateway

Once a struggling industrial city, Seattle is now recognized as home to software and aviation giants such as Microsoft, Boeing, and Amazon.<sup>66</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 17% of the 3.6 million people living in the metro Seattle area are foreign born,<sup>67</sup> and half of Seattle's immigrants come from Asia.<sup>68</sup> Identified as having one of the most highly educated workforces in the country, it's reported that 38% of Seattle's foreign-born population hold at least a bachelor's degree.<sup>69</sup>

Seattle's economy has grown throughout its evolution from a gold rush gateway to a major logging and timber center, to one of the world's most innovative hubs for technology. With unprecedented growth in the foreign-born population since the 1980s, Seattle is an increasingly multi-cultural city, rich in diversity and economic opportunity.<sup>70</sup>

### IMPRINT Respondent Characteristics and Findings

Our survey respondents represent a piece of the Seattle mosaic, albeit more representative in some respects than others. For example, our 375 Seattle-area online survey respondents were more likely to be African than the region's immigrants in general.

Looking at the pool of IMPRINT respondents, Seattle-area online respondents were equally likely to be in the labor force, but slightly more likely to be employed (72% compared to 69% of respondents overall). Additionally, Seattle-area respondents were twice as likely to work in the Information Technology/Communications sector (12% compared to 6% of overall respondents).

### History

Founded in 1851 as a logging town,<sup>71</sup> Seattle quickly became a major port city after the discovery of coal deposits nearby. The mining industry was the first in the Northwest to utilize the skills of Chinese migrant workers, starting in the 1880s.<sup>72</sup> Their labor was also instrumental in building the Western railroads. Despite their contributions, growing bias and discrimination led to the creation of the first law ever implemented to prevent a specific ethnic group from immigrating to the United States: the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.<sup>73</sup>

The effects of this legislation created demand for new labor sources. Japanese immigrants began arriving in the Seattle area in the 1890s to fill this void.<sup>74</sup> They began working in the railroad, logging, and construction industries. During the early 1900s, Seattle began to experience strong growth, thanks in part to the transcontinental railroads. The city's population diversified through an influx of Scandinavians, who worked as fishermen, loggers, farmers, miners, and boat builders.<sup>75</sup> Additional communities of Italians and Filipinos also arrived seeking increased economic opportunities.

As Seattle grew increasingly prosperous, racial tensions at the national level intensified and resulted in strict immigration restrictions. Federal legislation imposed discriminatory national origin quotas in the early 1920s, targeting Asian workers among others.<sup>76</sup> These quotas were not abolished until the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.<sup>77</sup>

Seattle is now re-emerging as an immigrant gateway. It is attracting high-skilled, highly educated immigrants, predominately as a result of the high-tech boom. Seattle has the second-highest ratio of high-skilled to low-skilled immigrants among the six cities studied in this report (after San Jose), according to a report from the Brookings Institution.<sup>78</sup>

**Figure 9. Success Among Seattle-area Respondents**



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

Compared to respondents in the other five cities, Seattle area respondents achieved our study’s measures of success at slightly lower rates. As displayed in **Figure 9**, 24% of Seattle area respondents achieved *emerging* professional success, compared to 35% of respondents in the other five cities. Similarly, 18% of Seattle area respondents achieved professional success, compared to 26% of respondents in the other five cities.

Our study found a variety of factors that were correlated with achieving the measures of success. **Table 8** shows that perhaps the most notable difference between respondents in Seattle and all other respondents is the rate at which they reported applying for credential evaluation. Respondents in Seattle were significantly *less* likely to have applied for credential evaluation (50%) than overall respondents (61%). In addition, respondents in Seattle were less likely to have lived in the U.S. for at least six years (57%) than overall respondents (64%).

Respondents in Seattle were also slightly less likely to speak English “Very Well” (61%) compared to overall respondents (66%). Our study found that strong English language skills play an important role in achieving economic success.

**Table 8. How Seattle-area Respondents Compare to All Other Respondents**

Key Success Criteria	Seattle Respondents	All Other Respondents
Speak English as Primary Language	27%	25%
Speak English "Very Well"	61%	66%
Pursued Additional Higher Education in the U.S.	58%	56%
Applied for Credential Evaluation**	50%	61%
Applied for U.S. Licensure	29%	29%
Have Lived in the U.S. Six Years or More*	57%	64%
Have "Many" Friends and Family in the U.S. to Rely on for Support*	26%	25%
Feel Like Current Training/Education is "Good Enough" to Meet Career Goals	47%	47%
Registered to Vote	42%	39%

\* p<.05, \*\* p < .01, no asterisk denotes lack of statistical significance  
 ^"All Other Respondents" includes respondents in the survey's other five cities as well as those who chose "other" as the place they currently lived.

## Audio Survey Findings

The audio component of our survey helped to shed light on a portion of Seattle’s Asian and African immigrant communities. The 309 respondents we

surveyed were comprised primarily of Punjabi (65%) and Amharic (27%) language speakers, as well as small numbers of Haitian Kreyol (4%), Swahili (3%) and English (1%) speakers. Respondents were overwhelmingly (85%) male. Other key characteristics of Seattle respondents:

- A higher percentage of individuals eligible but not registered to vote (29%, compared to 25% of overall audio respondents)
- More likely to say that U.S. employers had not recognized their foreign credentials (44% to 38%)

Our study found that immigrants' social capital was an important element of their civic engagement. Notably, there were stark differences *within* our Seattle-area respondent pool, between online and audio survey respondents, on this issue.

In particular, audio survey respondents were dramatically more likely to say they had “no” friends and family to rely on when they first came to the U.S. (43% compared to 34% of overall audio respondents), and also more likely to say that is currently the case today (40% to 36% of overall audio respondents).

In contrast, the percentage of Seattle online survey respondents reporting that they currently have “no” friends and family in the U.S. to rely on is far lower than for audio respondents, and is in line with our online survey results overall, at approximately 13%.

## Conclusion

Our Seattle-area findings present a complex picture with some contradictions. Seattle respondents are newer arrivals, with fewer English skills, yet are more likely to be employed. Distinctions between audio and online survey respondents serve to emphasize the reality that immigrant integration in the Seattle area is an uneven process that may vary substantially among community or demographic groups.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the staff of OneAmerica for their sustained engagement in this project, particularly in recruiting the broadest possible array of potential respondents.

## IV. Recommendations

**O**ur findings provide crucial data to inform recommendations for service providers, funders, and policymakers who are seeking to tap the talents of underutilized skilled immigrants.

### For Service Providers

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There is powerful evidence of the importance of social capital, English skills, self-improvement, and additional U.S. education in achieving economic success. We hope our study will inform the development of new programs that help immigrant jobseekers understand and develop the competencies that will help them succeed in the U.S. labor market, and that providers will actively connect services designed specifically for immigrant professionals with so-called “mainstream” programs. Our specific recommendations include:

**The message is clear: For limited English proficient immigrant professionals, investing in English language training is likely the single most powerful step an individual can take toward his or her future employability.**

1. **Ensure that direct-service staff, and the immigrant professionals they serve, fully understand the importance of English skills in achieving economic success.** Ours is far from the first study to show strong correlations between English language fluency and economic success. However, our specific focus on immigrant professionals amplifies the importance of this finding for this specific population. The message is clear: For limited English proficient immigrant professionals, investing in English language training is likely the single most powerful step an individual can take toward his or her future employability.
2. **Communicate to immigrant jobseekers the vital role of networking and the strength of “weak ties” in the U.S. employment search.** Among U.S.-born jobseekers, these job-search techniques are widely known and are a key factor in gaining referrals to hidden job opportunities, yet a relatively low percentage of our respondents reported using these approaches. Given the strong correlation between possessing strong social capital and reporting better economic outcomes, it is imperative that immigrant professionals be not only informed about, but prepared to actively exercise, networking skills in their independent job searches. Practitioners should actively assess how immigrant professionals are currently building and utilizing social capital, and — having done so — help jobseekers develop the networking skills required to conduct white-collar job searches in the U.S.
3. **Educate immigrant professionals on the potential value of obtaining short-term “Made in America” supplements to their international education and experience.** Numerous findings in our report point to U.S. employers’ strong preference for American experience and training. Immigrant professionals often acquire this asset the expensive way — by investing additional years and thousands of dollars in U.S. higher education, in many cases repeating an unnecessary course of study already mastered in their home country. More cost-effective ways of acquiring the “Made in America” stamp include facilitating immigrants’ exploration of other opportunities (e.g. short-term

certificates, training programs, workplace internships, volunteer experience).

4. **Work to build connections between mainstream career pathways programs and services designed specifically for immigrant professionals.** As the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is implemented, new opportunities are *emerging* to design “career pathways” that carry participants through multiple stages of education and training. Some short-term credentials available through these pathways may be appropriate for immigrant professionals who are seeking alternative careers or intermediate steps before re-licensing in their original profession.
5. **Provide actionable information on gaps and opportunities to funders and policymakers.** Addressing the needs of immigrant professionals is a highly specialized field. Practitioners in this arena are well-positioned to identify cross-cutting issues affecting the communities they serve, and to develop and iterate potential solutions. Communicating the results of these efforts to elected officials and funders is vital in facilitating their ability to support the expansion and replication of programs that work.

## For Funders

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We hope these findings will spark grants for new education, training, and employment programs for college-educated immigrants, and that additional funding will be used to help bridge existing streams of public funding that are restricted in their ability to support this work. We also hope that foundations will support additional research to help providers design more effective programs. Our specific recommendations include:

1. **Ensure that support is targeted toward interventions that work.** In particular, programs serving immigrant professionals should include connections to English language learning opportunities at all levels, mechanisms to acquire U.S. workplace experience, and assistance in building and utilizing social capital.
2. **Use philanthropic dollars as a bridge between other funding streams.** Restrictions on public funding often hamper the ability of practitioners to provide services across the full range of supports or length of time necessary to effectively serve immigrant professionals. For example, immigrant professionals are often eligible for entry-level English language classes through the state and federally funded adult education system. However, there are often few resources to support intermediate programs once these participants test out of publicly funded classes and before they qualify for college-level instruction. Philanthropic dollars can provide vital resources to sustain participants’ learning momentum between programs.
3. **Support additional practical research on the efficacy of different types of English language training.** Immigrant professionals are faced with a plethora of options: free and fee-based, college- and community-based, varied degrees of duration, intensity, and quality. Funding rigorous research to identify common factors in positive outcomes would help immigrant professionals become more informed consumers, and help practitioners to develop better designed programs.
4. **Consider sponsoring opportunities for immigrant professionals to build social capital and gain U.S. experience.** Given the importance of social capital in facilitating positive outcomes, funders should consider creative ways to improve immigrant professionals’ ability to acquire and exercise it. Programs such as one-day job shadowing, or even coffee meetings between U.S.-born and immigrant professionals can help to widen newcomers’ local networks. Likewise, given

U.S. employers' strong preference for American experience and training, funders should consider sponsoring "mid-ternships"<sup>79</sup> or other short-term on-the-job experiences to help immigrant professionals gain American seasoning.

5. **Document and publicize successes.** Across the workforce and adult education fields, the program models that have been most widely adapted are those whose impact has been carefully documented by external evaluators, and well publicized. Programs such as Washington State's I-BEST model spread rapidly across the country thanks in part to a study by Columbia University's Teachers College. Evaluating and lifting up successful programs for skilled immigrants in these ways would be a powerful influence in advancing the field.

## For Policymakers

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We urge that after a decade of budget cuts, funding be restored to existing public workforce and adult education programs, whose participants include immigrant professionals, and that public agencies better utilize data from existing resources to improve services and information about this population. Finally, we encourage public agencies to look within government to identify potential opportunities for immigrant professionals to acquire valuable American work experience. In particular, we recommend that policymakers:

1. **Fully fund existing public programs in adult education, training, and employment.** At the federal level, such programs have suffered significant cuts over the past decade, and immigrant participation has likewise declined. Funding programs at their fully authorized levels can help to restore the capacity lost to the system, and ensure that eligible immigrant professionals get what they need to succeed.

2. **Improve data collection on immigrant professionals.** Identify opportunities in existing federal programs to collect data on nativity, English language proficiency, and foreign education or credentials, or analyze existing datasets for such information. In order to develop appropriate responses to constituent and community needs, policymakers need high-quality data illustrating the capacity of public programs to serve immigrant professionals.
3. **Use existing infrastructure to improve the quality of service provision.** For example, professional development activities for adult educators and refugee resettlement workers are both provided with federal funds. Policymakers should encourage the use of these existing pathways to improve the knowledge and ability of program staff to serve immigrant professionals.
4. **Similarly, use existing processes to disseminate information to immigrant professionals.** Websites and resources such as WelcometoUSA.gov and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' handbook for new lawful permanent residents are just two examples of mechanisms by which more and better information could be provided to immigrant professionals.
5. **Identify opportunities within government for immigrant professionals to acquire American experience.** Job shadowing, mentoring, internships or "mid-ternships," and other short-term workplace experiences can provide a valuable launching pad for immigrant professionals. Policymakers should consider whether there are opportunities — in the context of existing civil-service structures or otherwise — to facilitate newcomers' acquisition of U.S. experience within public agencies.

For further information visit  
[imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess](http://imprintproject.org/stepstosuccess)



## V. Methodology and Notes

The study gathered data from foreign-born individuals in six targeted U.S. metro areas (Boston, Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia, San Jose and Seattle) using two methodologies: an online written survey in four languages (English, French, Spanish and Vietnamese), and an interactive voice response (telephonic) survey in five languages (Amharic, Haitian Kreyol, English, Punjabi and Swahili).

Recruitment strategies for the online survey included emails to IMPRINT member organizations' immigrant clients and nonprofit partner networks, social media postings, traditional press releases, paid advertising, flyers and word of mouth.

To further grow the sample in the six target cities a nationwide vendor of telephone and email contacts for surveys, Survey Sampling International (SSI), was engaged. Approximately 250 SSI respondents were recruited to round out the sample, with a particular focus on Detroit, Miami, San Jose and Seattle.

A total of 4,002 individuals participated in the online survey, including 2,449 who obtained some higher education either inside or outside of the US and lived in one of the six target communities.

A total of 5,660 individuals participated in the telephonic survey, of whom 677 had obtained some higher education and lived in one of the six target metro areas.

A target sample size of 400 respondents was selected based on the fact that with a sample of at least 385 respondents we would have a + 5% margin of error for each city. The realized sample statistics provided above indicate that for the online survey we failed to meet that target in San Jose, and for the AudioNow survey the samples in Miami, Philadelphia and San Jose fell short of 385. Moreover, there were some questions that respondents failed to answer, partic-

ularly toward the end of the online survey. However, because the estimated margin of error is not in a linear relationship with sample size, the margin of error would only increase to + 6% with a sample size of 267.

In speaking about the margin of error for the IMPRINT survey—and any other survey for that matter—readers may recall the distinction between probability and non-probability samples. Probability samples occur when there is a known probability of all members of a population (in this instance, college educated immigrants) being included in the sample. Comparisons between the IMPRINT and AudioNow surveys and other more traditional sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, suggest that the results presented here should not be considered a true probability sample.

However, there probably is no such thing as a true probability of a broad range of opinions, attitudes and behaviors in today's survey environment. In this context, margins of error indicate how sampling may

**Table 9.** Sample Demographics

City	Number of Online Respondents	Number of AudioNow Respondents
Boston	436	576
Detroit	391	770
Miami	388	340
Philadelphia	518	285
San Jose	341	309
Seattle	375	681
Other location	1553	2699
<b>Total</b>	<b>4002</b>	<b>5660</b>

influence survey results, but with most wide-ranging surveys *other* sources of survey error—in particular, nonresponse—should lead us to view the margin of error as a lower bound on the uncertainty of survey findings. Andrew Gelman, Columbia University professor of statistics and political science, likens the margin of error to the “frictionless puck” in classical physics: “... a simplifying assumption that allows us to make some calculations that, in a low-friction world, can be reasonable approximations.”<sup>80</sup>

A purely statistical approach to the potential limitations of non-probability samples is to compare a given survey to benchmark data such as the American Community Survey. However, if *all* surveys are to some extent non-probability samples, then the benchmark, too, may be built on shifting sands. An alternative—originally proposed by this report’s co-author—is to use non-probability samples, such as opt-in, online survey to make “relational inferences”: “... to be mindful of the characteristics of the sample obtained, and how the sample differs from the general population.... to make tempered generalizations about the attributes of a larger population.”<sup>81</sup>

Applying the principle of relational inference to the IMPRINT and AudioNow surveys we may see the non-probabilistic nature of these samples as actual strengths of the study. With election polling it is commonplace to emphasize the responses of likely voters, those who are interested in the election outcome. In this case, the data collected comes from immigrant respondents who are particularly interested in issues related to employment and educational credentials. Indeed, the initial sample source for the IMPRINT online survey was mailing lists of individuals who had been in contact with WES for the evaluation of their foreign education credentials. If the goal of the study is to consider the causes of brain waste and maximize the use of foreign credentials and licenses, what better group of individuals to consult than those who have actively sought to put those resources to play in the U.S. labor market?

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Detailed Findings

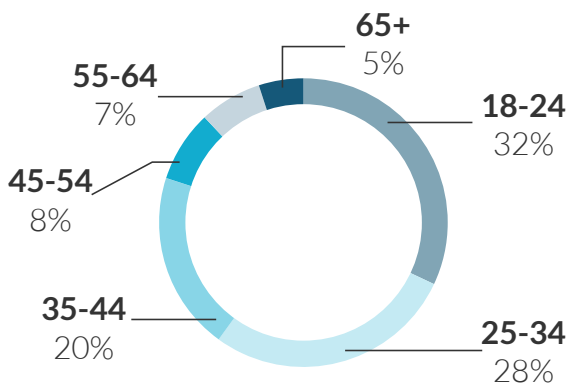
For readers who are interested in the story behind the story, this section provides further detail on the key findings.

### Age and Gender

The majority of our survey respondents were in their prime working years. Approximately 80% were between ages 25-54. Specifically, just 5% of the respondents were between 18-24, compared to a robust 32% in the 25-34 age group. Another 28% of respondents were ages 35-44, and 20% were between the ages of 45-54. A modest 8% were aged 55-64, and just 7% were age 65 or older. [Appendix A -1](#) displays the percentage of IMPRINT survey respondents according to their age group.

IMPRINT’s respondents are somewhat more likely to be of prime working age than the national pool of immigrants with at least some college education. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) indicates that approximately two thirds of all immigrants in the United States with at least some college education are between 25 and 54 years old.

**Appendix A - 1. Percentage of IMPRINT Survey Respondents by Age Group**



There were a few statistically significant differences within our sample between the six cities. For example, Miami had the smallest percentage of respondents in the 25-34 age group (25%). However, this percentage was still notably higher than the 16% share for this age group as estimated by the ACS.

Moreover, our survey included relatively more female than male respondents, with approximately 60% women and 40% men. This trend was particularly pronounced among Boston respondents, where the proportion of women reached nearly 70%. Comparing our data to the national picture, ACS data also indicates that there are more immigrant women than men with at least some college; however, in the ACS the difference is considerably smaller (53% men and 47% women). For this reason, some of our findings may reflect the experiences of immigrant women with higher education more than those of immigrant men with higher education.

### Region of Origin

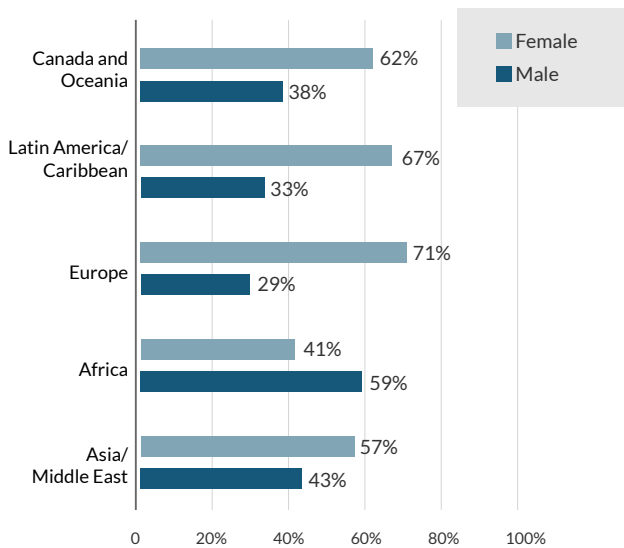
There were considerable differences in region of origin between immigrant respondents with higher education both between the six target cities and respondents who live outside these six areas, as well as between IMPRINT and ACS samples in the six cities.<sup>82</sup> The ACS sample in Boston estimates that the immigrant population of the city is 39% Asian and 9% African. Similarly, in Detroit the IMPRINT sample is 42% Asian and 10% African, while the ACS estimates that the city’s college-educated immigrant population is 54% Asian and 5% African.

Additionally, in Miami both the IMPRINT and ACS samples find the college-educated immigrant population to be 7% Asian; however, the IMPRINT sample is 70% Latin American/Caribbean and the ACS is 80% Latin American/Caribbean.

Overall, college-educated immigrants from Africa are overrepresented in the IMPRINT sample (15%) compared to the ACS (4%), while such immigrants from Latin America/Caribbean are underrepresented in the IMPRINT sample (27%) compared to the ACS estimate in these six cities (39%).

IMPRINT respondents from Europe were substantially *more* likely to be female, at 71% of respondents, compared to 67% of those from Latin American and the Caribbean, 62% of those from Canada and Oceania, 57% of Asian and Middle Eastern respondents, and just 41% of African respondents. [Appendix A - 2](#) displays the percentages of IMPRINT survey respondents by their region of origin and gender.

**Appendix A - 2. IMPRINT Respondents by Gender and Region of Origin**



There were very modest, though statistically significant, differences in age by region of origin. One element worth noting: Asian and Middle Eastern respondents, as well as those from Canada and Oceania, tended to be younger, including slightly more likely to be college-age.<sup>83</sup>

**Length of Time in the U.S.**

**Overall, 37% of our respondents had arrived in the U.S. within the last five years, while 63% had lived here for six years or more.**

Among the six cities, Seattle and Boston had the highest proportions of IMPRINT survey respondents who were newer immigrants (those who have been in the U.S. for five years or less): with Seattle at 43% and Boston at 35%. However, the very highest proportion of immigrants who have been in the U.S. for five or fewer years was actually among respondents who came from *outside* the six target cities (47%).

ACS data reveals that the IMPRINT data oversamples recent arrivals. With the exception of Miami, the ACS reports between 17% and 20% of college-educated immigrants have been in the U.S. for five years or less. [Appendix A - 3](#) compares the percentages of recently arrived ACS immigrants in the six target cities of our study with recently arrived IMPRINT survey respondents in the six target cities.

Newer arrivals were substantially more likely to be ages 25-34, while those who had lived in the U.S. for six years or longer were more concentrated in the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups.

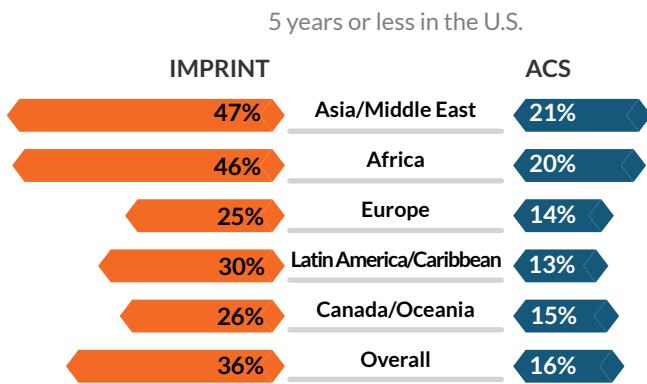
**Appendix A - 3. Comparison of ACS Data and IMPRINT the Percentages of Recent Arrivals in Six Target Cities**

	Boston	Detroit	Miami	Philadelphia	San Jose	Seattle
ACS* immigrants in U.S. 5 years or less	20%	19%	13%	19%	17%	19%
IMPRINT survey immigrants in U.S. 5 years or less	35%	33%	26%	25%	27%	43%

\* 2012 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Among IMPRINT respondents, there were notable differences in length of time in the U.S. among immigrants from different corners of the world. Individuals from Asia/Middle East and Africa were more likely to have arrived in the past five years (47% and 46%, respectively). In contrast, just 30% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents had arrived recently, as well as 26% of those from Canada and Oceania and 25% of those from Europe. [Appendix A - 4](#) displays the region of birth for respondents living in the U.S. for five years or less among IMPRINT respondents as compared to ACS data for college-educated immigrants in the six cities.

**Appendix A - 4. Recency of Arrival to the U.S. by Region of Origin for IMPRINT Respondents vs. ACS Respondents**



**Higher Education**

Our survey examined three categories of respondents: those who had completed all of their higher education abroad; those who had participated in higher education *both* abroad and in the United States; and those who had attended college exclusively in the United States.<sup>84</sup>

**We found that receiving at least some U.S. higher education was a protective factor that helped to buffer respondents from experiencing some of the more challenging economic outcomes faced by**

**respondents who only had foreign education.** In this section, we explore these findings in more detail.

The overwhelming majority (90%) of online survey respondents reported obtaining at least some of their higher education outside the United States.<sup>85</sup> This percentage varied only slightly by region of origin, with the highest (95%) among respondents from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, followed by 94% of Europeans, 88% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, and 83% of immigrants from Canada and Oceania.

Specifically, of the 90% of respondents who reported at least some higher education abroad, 91% of respondents completed their first degree abroad.

On the other hand, only a minority of respondents – 34% – had completed an advanced degree abroad.<sup>86</sup> An even smaller amount of respondents (23%) had completed an advanced degree in the United States.<sup>87</sup>

In addition to examining where respondents studied, our survey also assessed whether or not respondents felt that their current level of education and training was enough. Overall, 47% of respondents felt their current level was “good enough,” while 26% said they needed more training and were currently in training or planned to be, and 13% said they needed more training but couldn’t do it now. Another 10% of respondents said they did not know, and 2% gave another answer.

There were differences by English fluency. More than half of those who speak English “Very well” (51%) said their current level of education and training was good enough, compared to 39% of those who speak English “Well” and just 23% of those who speak it “Not well.” However, this data does not indicate whether or not respondents perceive themselves to need more *English language* training in particular, or another type of education or training.

There were also notable differences by region of birth. Just 40% of Africans felt that their current level of education was enough, compared to a robust 56% of Europeans at the high end. In between these respondents were those from Canada and Oceania (55%), Asia and the Middle East (48%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (43%).

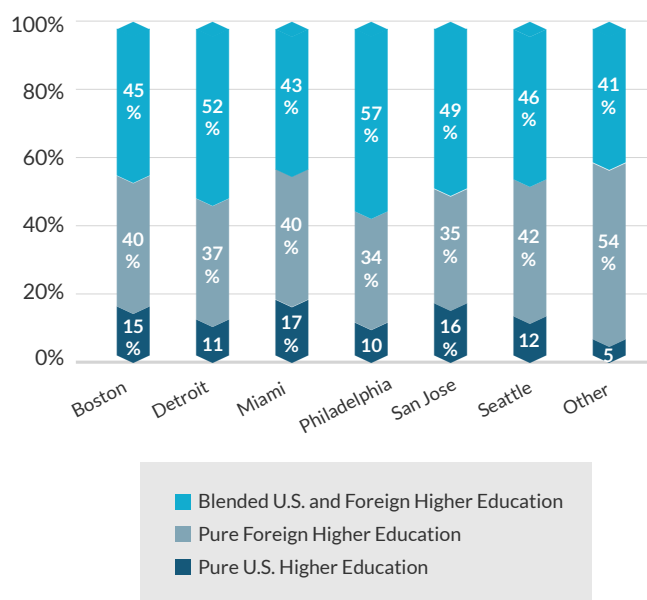
When it came to those *currently enrolled in training or planning to be*, the numbers (unsurprisingly) ran in the opposite direction, ranging from 18% of Europeans to 28% of Africans. In between were 19% of respondents from Canada and Oceania, 23% of Asians and Middle Easterners, and 26% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents. Among those who felt they had insufficient training but couldn't do it right now, immigrants from Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean tied for the highest level (22%), compared to 18% of Asian and Middle Eastern and European respondents and those from Canada and Oceania. Generally low numbers of respondents from each world region answered "Don't know" or "Other."

Of the six cities surveyed in this study, respondents in San Jose (55%) and Seattle (56%) were the least likely to use their higher education on their current job (where in each of the other four cities, at least 60% said they are using their education and training on their current job). The lowest proportion (46%), however, was found among the other respondents not living in one of the six target cities. [Appendix A - 4](#) displays the location of higher education by respondents' current city of residence (either purely from abroad, purely from the U.S., or some in the U.S. and some abroad).

The following sections<sup>89</sup> examine correlations between higher education and other factors contributing to economic success. The first section, "U.S.-Educated Immigrants," focuses on respondents who pursued *either some or their entire* higher education in the United States. The next section,

"Foreign-Educated Immigrants," focuses on respondents who pursued *either some or their entire* education abroad.

#### Appendix A - 5. Location of Higher Education by Imprint Respondents<sup>88</sup> Current City of Residence



#### U.S.-Educated Immigrants

(Respondents who acquired some or all of their higher education in the United States)

**Overall, 14% of respondents had received a U.S. bachelor's degree**, and an additional 7% of respondents had partially completed such a degree.

There were substantial differences by region of birth. Individuals from Canada and Oceania were the most likely to have completed a U.S. bachelor's degree (25%), followed by 17% of those from Latin America and the Caribbean, 16% of Europeans, 11% of Africans, and 9% of Asians and Middle Easterners. Patterns were similar among those who had studied for but not completed a degree, with 15% of respondents from Canada and Oceania, 9% of Latin

American and Caribbean respondents, 7% of Africans, 5% of Europeans, and 4% of Asians and Middle Easterners having attended a U.S. college but not completed a degree.

**Nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents received a graduate or professional degree in the U.S.,** and another 6% have been enrolled but did not yet complete their studies. There were no statistically significant differences by region of birth.

Among respondents who had U.S. education and were currently working, **nearly half (45%) said their job made “full use” of their most recent U.S. education.** Another 27% said it made “some use,” but nearly a quarter (23%) said their current job made no use of their U.S. education. (The remaining 5% said “Don’t know.”)

These numbers differ substantially by region of birth: 49% of Europeans said their job makes “full use” of their U.S. education, as well as 48% of Asians and Middle Easterners, 43% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, 41% of respondents from Canada and Oceania, and 36% of African respondents.

An additional 41% of respondents from Canada and Oceania said their job makes “some use” of their U.S. education, as well as 28% of African, Latin American and Caribbean respondents, and 26% of both European and Asian and Middle Eastern respondents.

Finally, more than a full quarter (29%) of African respondents said their job makes “no use” of their U.S. education, compared to 26% of those from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 20% for Asians and Middle Easterners, 18% of Europeans, and 16% of those from Canada and Oceania.

English fluency was also found to play a strong role in employment among the subset of respondents with U.S. higher education. Those who reported speaking English “Very well” were more likely to reported

being employed (82%) than those who speak English “Well” (72%) or “Not well” (66%).

Similarly, English fluency is also correlated with working in a job that makes use of respondents’ U.S. higher education. Among respondents who have U.S. higher education and are currently employed, those who speak English “Very well” are more likely to have said their job makes “full use” of their U.S. education (49%) compared to those who speak English “Well” (30%) or “Not well” (just 10%).

In the same vein, those who speak English “Not well” are the most likely to said their current job makes *no* use of their U.S. higher education (65%), compared to 34% of those who speak English “Well” and just 21% of those who speak English “Very well.”

### Foreign-Educated Immigrants

*(Respondents who acquired some or all of their higher education abroad)*

This section focuses on “Foreign-Educated Immigrants.” These include respondents who had obtained some or all of their higher education abroad. Thus, respondents who have “blended” U.S. and foreign education are also included in the following analysis.

Only 23% of the respondents from Canada and Oceania had a foreign graduate degree compared to 31% for respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean, and approximately 35% for other regions. Respondents in Boston (40%), Miami (40%) and Seattle (42%) were most likely to have only attended college or university only outside the U.S..

Among respondents who had received higher education abroad and were working, approximately 31% reported that their job made “full use” of their foreign education, 32% that it made “some use,” 33% that it did not make use and 4% said they did not



know. **African respondents were by far the most likely (47%) to say that their current job did not make any use of their foreign education**, compared to 34% of Latin American and Caribbean, 28% of European, and 29% of Asian and Middle Eastern respondents. Individuals from Canada and Oceania came in at 21%.

There were also notable differences by English fluency. **Those with stronger English skills were substantially more likely to be working at all**, and – among those who were employed – a higher percentage reported using their foreign education on the job.

Breaking it down: Almost three-fourths (71%) of those with foreign education who speak English “Very well” were currently employed, compared to 61% of English “Well” respondents and 45% of “Not well” respondents.

Among those who *were* employed, more than a third (34%) of English “Very well” respondents said their current job makes “full use” of their foreign education, compared to 24% of those who speak English “Well” and just 9% of those who speak English “Not well.”

At the other end of the scale, 29% of those who speak English very well said their current job makes “no use” of their foreign education, compared to 39% of those who speak English “Well” and an overwhelming 66% of those who speak English “Not well.”

Overall, among those who are employed, immigrants with at least some of their higher education from abroad are less likely to say that their current job makes “full use” of their education (31%) compared to those who have only U.S. education (45%).

**Our study also found that on average, immigrants who said they are using their higher education in their current job also reported higher earnings.**

For example, a full 20% of immigrants who said their current job does not make any use of their foreign education reported earnings of less than \$10,000, compared to just 8% of those who said their job makes full use of their education.

Further confirming this trend, a bare 4% of immigrants who said their current job makes no use of their foreign education are earning over \$100,000, compared to 15% of those who said their job makes full use of their foreign education. These trends are reflected even more strongly among individuals who received college education in the U.S.

## Language Skills

Due to the importance of English language skills for U.S. labor market outcomes, our survey analyzed these skills in several ways. First, we asked IMPRINT respondents if they considered English or some other language to be their primary language. Overall, 25% of them said English was their primary language, with the highest proportion found in Philadelphia at just over one-third (34%), and the lowest proportions (22%) in Miami and Detroit.

We also asked respondents if they spoke English or another language when they were at home. Overall, 79% of respondents reported speaking a language other than English at home. There was very little variation among the six target cities on this question.

The American Community Survey (ACS) also asks which language is spoken at home. Although there are differences between the IMPRINT and ACS estimates in individual cities, the overall proportion of ACS respondents who speak a language other than English at home is 80% — nearly identical to the IMPRINT number.

Our study also measured respondents’ degree of English fluency, via their self-reported ability to understand, read, write, and speak<sup>90</sup> English.

Interestingly, despite the fact that so many respondents speak a language other than English in the home, two-thirds (66%) indicated that they speak English “Very Well”, another 29% said “well,” only 6% said “not well,” and less than a half-percent “not at all.”<sup>91</sup>

Spoken English fluency varied dramatically by region of birth. An overwhelming 86% of respondents from Canada and Oceania reported speaking English “Very well,” with that number falling to 71% among Europeans, 70% among Africans, 67% for Asians and Middle Easterners and 57% among Latin American and Caribbean respondents.

While IMPRINT respondents’ English fluency is high compared to U.S. immigrants *as a whole*, it is only modestly different compared to the nation-wide subset of *college-educated* immigrants. When we compare IMPRINT data on spoken English to the American Community Survey results for similar respondents (foreign-born individuals with at least some higher education in the six target cities<sup>92</sup>), the numbers are quite similar. Approximately two-thirds of respondents (66% for IMPRINT and 71% for the ACS) say they speak English “very well.”

However, when these overall numbers are broken down by our target cities, greater differences emerge. For example, 61% of IMPRINT Boston respondents

say they speak English “Very Well” as compared to 75% of Boston immigrants in the ACS sample.

Appendix A - 6 illustrates the differences in English proficiency between IMPRINT respondents and ACS data for college-educated, foreign-born residents in the six target cities.

Unsurprisingly, IMPRINT respondents who had been living in the U.S. for a longer time were more likely to have good English skills. A full 73% of those who had been here for six years or longer said they spoke English “Very well,” compared to 53% of newer arrivals. The trends were similar for the other categories, with the most notable difference being the 11% of new arrivals (compared to 3% of longer-term residents) who speak English “not well.”

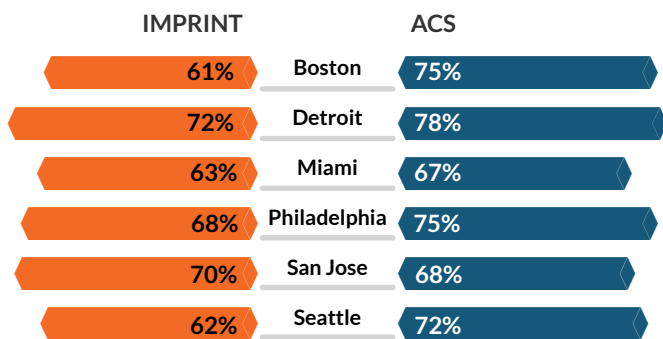
Findings for understanding, reading, and writing English were largely consistent with the findings on spoken English. There was modest variation between the six target cities. For example, while 83% of the respondents in Detroit said they *understood* English “very well,” only 73% of those in Seattle reported this level of language ability.

In reference to the ability to *read* English, over three-quarters (77%) reported “very well.” Though there were some differences between cities, these differences were not statistically significant.

Writing skills were the weakest of the four self-reported skills, with just under two-thirds (65%) of the respondents reporting that they could *write* English “very well.”<sup>93</sup> As was the case with speaking ability, the lowest levels of writing ability were found among respondents in Boston and Seattle.

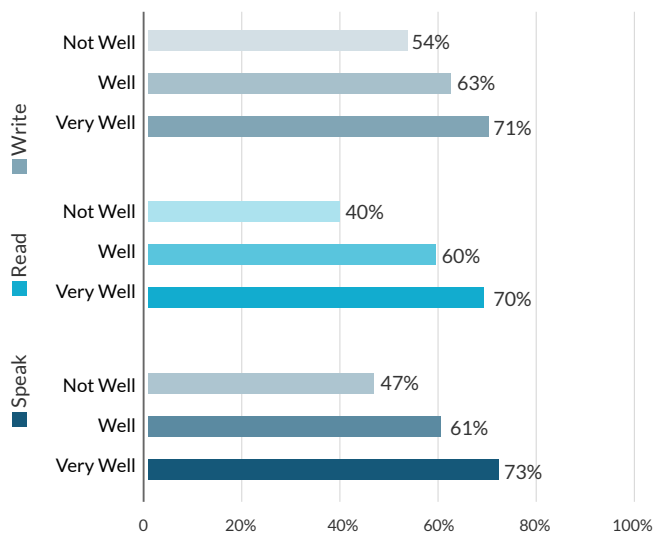
Our results also reveal that English language proficiency is correlated with employment. **Immigrants who say they speak English “Very Well” are more likely to be employed (73%)** than those who speak it “Well” (61%) or “Not well” (47%).<sup>94</sup>

**Appendix A - 6.** Percentage of IMPRINT and ACS Respondents Speaking English Very Well in Six Target Cities



Perhaps especially important for college-educated immigrants, ability to *read* English is also very strongly correlated with employment. A full 70% of IMPRINT respondents who say they read English “Very Well” are employed, compared to 60% of “Well” and just 40% of respondents who say they read English “Not well.” The same pattern holds for immigrants’ ability to *write* English, although to a lesser degree: 71% of “Very Well” respondents, 63% of “Well” and 54% of “Not well” respondents are employed. [Appendix A - 7](#) shows the percentage of employed respondents broken down by their ability to speak, read, and write English.

**Appendix A - 7. Percentage of IMPRINT Respondents Employed, by English Proficiency**



**In addition, respondents with limited English skills are more likely to have taken themselves out of the labor force entirely**, with 11% of “Very well,” 15% of “Well,” and 22% of “Not well” English speakers reporting that they are not in the labor force.

English skills are also strongly associated with income level. For example, only 16% of IMPRINT respondents who speak English “Very Well” earned

less than \$10,000, compared to a substantial 43% of those who speak English “Not well.” At the other end of the spectrum, 10% of English “Very Well” speakers earned over \$100,000, compared to just 1% of “Not well” speakers.

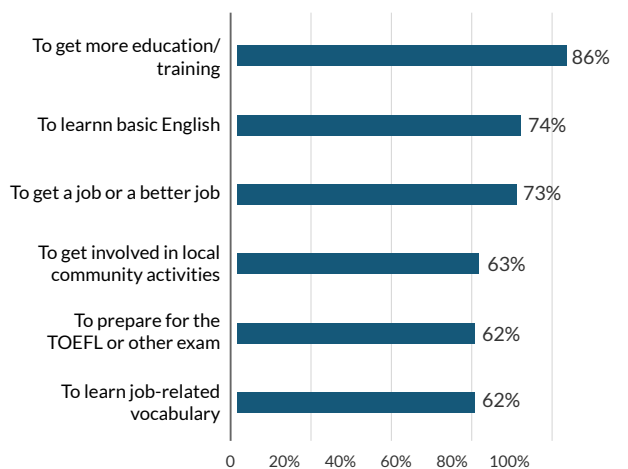
### Attend Any ESOL Class

Looking at the full universe of IMPRINT survey respondents, including those with native English skills,<sup>95</sup> fewer than half (43%) of overall respondents reported having taken an English language class. Unsurprisingly, individuals with good English skills were less likely to report having taken a class. Just 40% of those who spoke English “Very Well” say they have taken an English class, compared to 62% of those who spoke it “Well” and 83% of “Not well” speakers. This suggests that – as described above – English class participation functions more as a signal of respondents’ self-determined *need* for additional skills, rather than a *predictor* of increased English ability.

We asked respondents to explain why they had chosen to take an English class. Respondents were able to select as many answers as applied. The most-often cited reason for taking an ESOL class was “to get more education or training,” with 86% of respondents who had taken a class mentioning this answer.

Other reasons included: to learn basic English (74%), get a job or a better job (73%), get involved in local community activities (63%), prepare for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or another exam (62%) and learn job-related vocabulary (62%). [Appendix A - 8](#) shows respondents’ reasons for taking English classes.

### Appendix A - 8. Reasons for Taking an English Language Class (Either Free or Fee-based)



### Type of ESOL Classes

Our survey asked respondents if they had taken free or fee-based English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes.<sup>96</sup> Overall, 31% of respondents had taken a free ESOL class, compared to 70% who had not.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, 30% of respondents had taken a paid ESOL class. (Some respondents had taken both kinds of classes.)

It is quite notable that the percentage of respondents who reported paying for ESOL classes nearly mirrors the number who attended free classes. Without good national comparison data, it is difficult to say whether this willingness and ability to pay is specific to college-educated immigrants. What is clear is that respondents are evidently willing to invest in additional skill-building.

Of respondents taking free ESOL classes, the majority were from Latin American and Caribbean (45%), followed by 29% of Europeans, 23% of Asians and Middle Easterners, 18% of Africans, and 17% of respondents from Canada and Oceania. The numbers were very similar for fee-based classes, with 43% of

Latin American and Caribbean immigrants, 31% of Europeans, 23% of Asians and Middle Easterners, 21% of Africans, and 11% of those from Canada and Oceania reporting paying for ESOL classes.

## Re-Credentialing and U.S. Professional Licensure

Overall, 60% of respondents who had attended a college or university outside the U.S. had applied to have their most recent foreign education from abroad evaluated, 33% had not, 3% didn't know, and 5% chose "Not applicable" as their answer. The percentage who had applied for credential evaluation was virtually identical between those who had completed an undergraduate degree (67%) or graduate degree (65%) abroad.

There was a slight but statistically significant increase over time, with newer arrivals less likely (57%) to report having gotten an evaluation compared to those who had been here six years or more (69%).

Fully 67% of respondents from Canada and Oceania had applied for credential evaluation, compared to somewhat smaller percentages of Asian and Middle Eastern (64%) and Latin American and Caribbean (57%) respondents, and somewhat larger percentages of African (71%) and European (69%) respondents. It is somewhat surprising to see such a high percentage of respondents from Canada and Oceania requesting evaluations since higher education in these two parts of the world has more similarities to the U.S. education system than many other countries or regions. However, it is also possible that this very similarity is what encourages respondents to apply for evaluation – perhaps assuming that their foreign education will be more easily recognized.

There were also stark differences in credential evaluation by English fluency. Among those who

speak English “very well,” 69% had applied to have their foreign education evaluated, compared to 55% of those who speak English “well” and just 41% of those who speak it “Not well.” Without further data, it is difficult to discern the reasons for these differences. It may reflect a lack of overall integration among respondents with poorer English skills (and thus less confidence or ability to research and pursue credential evaluation options). It may also reflect a lack of disposable income with which to pay for an evaluation, or an individual’s sense that without English skills, even a good credential evaluation will be of little interest to employers.

**Among the minority of IMPRINT respondents who have not gotten their foreign education evaluated, 32% said they did not know how to do so, and another 31% reported that they did not need to do so.** These numbers were consistent regardless of the level of degree or whether it was completed. Smaller percentages said that it was too expensive (17%), too complicated (11%) or they did not have any relevant materials (9%)<sup>98</sup>. **Appendix A - 9** displays the various reasons for not applying for credential evaluation among those who did not have their transcripts evaluated.

### Whether Credentials Were Recognized

**Overall, 71% of respondents who had their foreign credentials evaluated reported that their credentials were “fully recognized,”** 18% reported them to be “partially recognized,” 3% “not recognized,” and 8% were still awaiting their credential evaluation reports. Among those who had not completed their undergraduate degree, the percentage of respondents reporting that their credentials were “fully recognized” was substantially lower (39%), compared to more than 70% among those who had completed an undergraduate degree, partially completed an advanced degree, or completed an advanced degree.

By region, respondents from Asia and the Middle East were most likely (77%) to have their credentials “fully recognized,” compared with 71% of respondents from Canada and Oceania, 72% of Africans, and 65% of both Europeans and respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean. Most of the remaining respondents indicated that their credentials were “partially recognized” (25% of Europeans, 23% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, 21% for Canada and Oceania, 15% of Africans, and 13% of Asians and Middle Easterners.) Negligible numbers (4% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents and less than 3% for each other region) reported that their credentials had not been recognized at all. The remaining respondents were still awaiting a response on their evaluation.

### Whether Credentials Helped Advance Career Goals

**The majority of respondents (72%) who had obtained credential evaluation said it had helped them advance their career goals,** while 28% said it had not. Interestingly, this was true *regardless* of whether the evaluation fully recognized their degrees or not.

There were no statistically significant differences by region of birth in response to this question. There were notable differences by English fluency. More than three-quarters (76%) of respondents who speak English “Very well” reported that credential evaluation had helped them advance their career goals. The number dropped to 67% among those who speak English “Well” and then dropped precipitously to just 45% of those who speak English “Not well.”

It is not possible to know for certain what caused these differences, but it suggests that respondents with lower English skills may have been chagrined to discover that their evaluation results did not open as many doors as they had hoped.

U.S. Professional Licensure

Only a minority of professions in the U.S. are even licensed, so we expected the percentage of immigrants who applied for U.S. licensure to be small, and indeed it was. **Compared to the 70% of immigrants who got their foreign education evaluated, a far smaller percentage (34%) reported that they have applied for U.S. professional licensure** based on their foreign education. Another 57% had not applied for licensure, 4% said they didn't know, and 11% said it was not applicable to them.

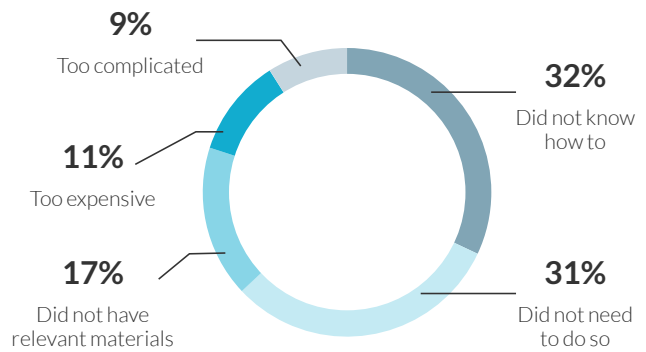
A majority of the licensure applicants (69%) reported being currently licensed to practice in the U.S., and another 24% said that they are still in the process. Just 7% reported that their license was denied.

There were modest but notable differences in licensure application rates by length of time in the U.S. and region of birth. Only 24% of respondents who had arrived in the last five years had applied for licensure, compared to 31% of those who had been in the U.S. for six years or more. Looking by region, individuals from Asia were the most likely to have pursued licensure, at 33%, followed by 30% of Africans, 29% of those from Canada and Oceania, and 25% each for Europeans and respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean.

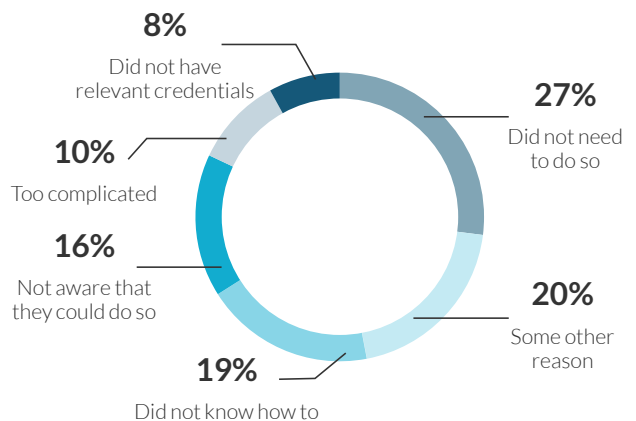
Those with stronger English skills were much more likely to have applied for professional licensure. Approximately one-third (32%) of those who speak English "Very well" had done so, compared to 24% of those who speak English "Well" and just 10% of those who speak it "Not well." This may be because those with fewer English skills are also less likely to know how to go about applying for licensure, or because potential applicants (correctly) assess that without strong English skills, they are unlikely to pass a licensing exam.

Immigrants who had *not* applied for licensure reported that the reason was that they did not need to (27%), they did not know how (19%), they were not aware that they could (16%), it was too complicated (10%), they did not have relevant credentials (8%) or some other reason (20%). **Appendix A - 9** and **Appendix A - 10** display the variety of reasons why respondents with foreign education chose not to apply for U.S. licensure and credential evaluation.<sup>99</sup>

**Appendix A - 9. Reasons that Respondents with Foreign Higher Education Chose Not to Apply for Credential Evaluation**



**Appendix A - 10. Reasons that Respondents with Foreign Education Chose Not to Apply for U.S. Professional Licensure**



As displayed in [Appendix A - 9](#) and [Appendix A - 10](#), the most common reasons among survey respondents for not applying for credential evaluation and/or U.S. professional licensure include a lack of knowledge on how to do so, and feeling that there is no need to do so.

## Social Capital

### Social Capital at Arrival in the U.S.

Given the significant role of peers in helping immigrant newcomers to settle in and acculturate, we asked respondents whether they had friends and family they could rely on for assistance when they first arrived in the U.S. Overall, **over half (55%) of respondents reported that they had “a few” friends or family to rely when they first arrived to the U.S.** Another 34% reported that they had had “no” friends or family to rely on upon arrival, and 11% said they had “many.”

Those who reported having “many” friends and family upon arrival included 28% of respondents from Canada and Oceania, followed by 12% of respondents from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, 9% of those from Africa, and just 6% of respondents from Europe. Although the largest percentage of these respondents were from Canada and Oceania, it is important to note that there were relatively few respondents in this category (N=110). Even though the difference is statistically significant, we would caution against reading too much into it.

African respondents were the most likely to report having “a few” friends and family upon arrival, with 59% of those from Africa selecting this category. They were followed closely by respondents from Latin American and the Caribbean (57%), Asia and the Middle East (55%), Canada and Oceania (52%) and finally Europe (49%).

European respondents were more likely (45%) than others to report having “no” friends or family upon arrival, followed by respondents from Asia and the Middle East (34%), Africa (32%), Latin America and the Caribbean (31%) and Canada and Oceania (21%).

These findings are likely to reflect several factors: First, college-educated immigrants are more likely to immigrate via pathways such as employment-based visas, which by definition are provided for individual workers, and sometimes nuclear family members. As a result, they may be less likely to arrive into a ready-made community of family and friends. Second, the size of specific ethnic communities varies dramatically around the country, and so the geographic locale in which an immigrant arrives is likely to have a strong effect on the size of his or her social circle.

Specifically, among the six cities in our survey, Detroit immigrants were somewhat more isolated and Miami somewhat less isolated. This is not surprising given that Miami has long been an immigrant gateway and Detroit less so. Overall, however, the relationship between respondents’ current city of residence and social capital *at arrival* is not statistically significant.

### Audio Survey Respondents

Respondents to our audio survey, which included a broader pool of individuals at all educational levels, were slightly more likely than online respondents to report having “many” friends and family upon arrival to the U.S. (18%). An additional 48% had “a few,” and 34% had “no” friends and family when they arrived.

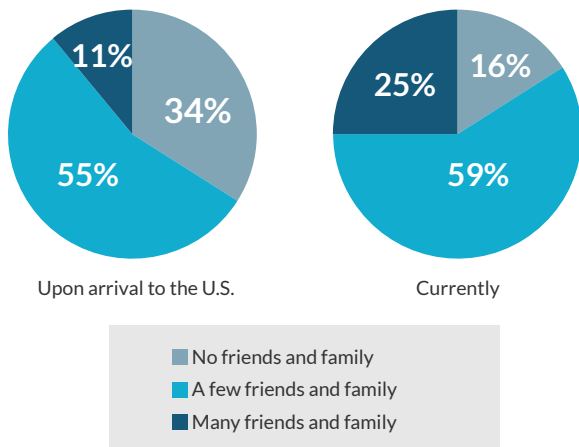
### Social Capital Now

Following up on our question about friends and family at arrival, we also asked respondents about how many friends and family they could rely on *today*.

There was a statistically significant relationship when respondents in our six cities considered how many friends and family they could rely on *today*. The same percentage of respondents (26%) reported currently having many friends and family they can rely on in Detroit, Boston, and Seattle. Meanwhile, a similar percentage of respondents followed in Miami (29%) and Philadelphia (30%), and the highest of all was in San Jose (34%).

**Overall, the percentage of respondents with “no” friends and family was cut in half, from 34% in our earlier question to 16% in this question, while those reporting “many” friends and family more than doubled, from 11% to 25%.** Similarly, the number of those reporting “a few” friends and family rose slightly from 55% to 59%. [Appendix A - 11](#) compares differences in respondents’ social capital upon arrival to the U.S. and currently.

**Appendix A - 11.** Respondents’ Social Capital Upon Arrival to the U.S. and Currently



These trends were further amplified when overall respondents were broken out by time in the U.S.. **Those who had lived here for six years or more were less likely to say they have “no” friends or family (14% compared to 18% of newer arrivals), and far**

more likely to say they have “many” (31% compared to 15% of newer arrivals).

Interestingly, though statistically significant differences by world region could still be noted among respondents *today*, the magnitude of the differences decreased considerably compared to the differences among respondents *at arrival*. For this reason, some of the country- or region-specific factors that exist at arrival may be smoothed over after years of living in the United States.

To find further evidence for this hypothesis, we also looked at *only* the subset of respondents who had been in the U.S. for at least six years. The patterns were remarkably consistent, both in the percentages of respondents in each answer category for the “at arrival” and “now” questions, and in the lack of statistically significant differences by world region for the “now” responses.

Among overall respondents, those who speak English “Very well” are more likely to report having “many” friends and family now (27%) compared to those who speak English “Well” (16%) or “Not well” (9%).

Similarly, those who speak English “Not well” are more likely to say that they have “no” friends or family members (25%), compared to “Well” (19%) or “Very well” (just 15%).

Audio Survey Respondents

Respondents to our audio survey, which included people at all educational levels, showed fewer differences between social capital at arrival and social capital today. Overall, 35% of audio respondents reported having “no” friends and family in the U.S. currently, 46% “a few” and 20% had “many.”



## Civic Engagement

### Volunteering

We asked respondents about whether they had volunteered in their community at any point in the previous year. Respondents could choose as many answers as applied from a list of options, and/or select “Other” and explain further.

#### Religious Organizations:

**Nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) had volunteered for a religious organization within the past year.**

The number fluctuated dramatically by region of birth. African respondents were the most likely to have volunteered for a religious organization (41%), followed by respondents from Canada and Oceania (31%), Latin American and the Caribbean (29%), Asian and the Middle East (19%), and Europe (14%).

Newer arrivals were less likely to report having volunteered, at 19% compared to 28% of those who had been in the U.S. for six years or more. Similarly, those with stronger English skills were more likely to report religious volunteering (24% of English “Very well” compared to 21% of “Well” and 14% of “Not well”).

#### School or Tutoring Programs:

**A quarter of respondents (25%) had volunteered at a school or as a tutor in the previous year.** We did not ask respondents to specify whether they were volunteering in their own school (that is, tutoring peers in a college setting) in their children’s schools, or some other setting.

There were no statistically significant differences in education-related volunteering by region of

birth or level of English fluency. However, there was a small but statistically significant difference in length of time in the U.S., with 27% of those who had lived in the U.S. for six years or longer volunteering in schools or as a tutor, compared to 23% of respondents who had arrived in the U.S. more recently.

#### Neighborhood, Business or Civic Groups:

**Nearly a quarter of respondents (23%) had volunteered for a neighborhood, business or civic group within the past year.**

There were no statistically significant differences in by region of birth for this question. There *were* substantial differences by length of time in the U.S., with a full quarter (26%) of longer-term residents volunteering compared to just 16% of those who had arrived within the last five years.

Those with stronger English skills were also more likely to volunteer, with 24% of respondents who spoke English “Very well,” compared to 19% of “Well” and just 11% of “Not well.”

#### Ethnic Associations:

**Only 14% of respondents had volunteered for an organization representing their particular nationality, ethnicity, or racial group in the past year.**

African immigrants were the most likely to have volunteered (20%), compared to 13% of respondents from both Asia and the Middle East *and* Latin America and the Caribbean, 10% of Europeans, and 9% of those from Canada and Oceania.

Those who have lived in the U.S. for at least six years were more likely to report volunteering for an ethnic association, at 16% compared to 10% of newer arrivals. In addition, respondents with stronger English skills were also more likely to volunteer for an ethnic asso-

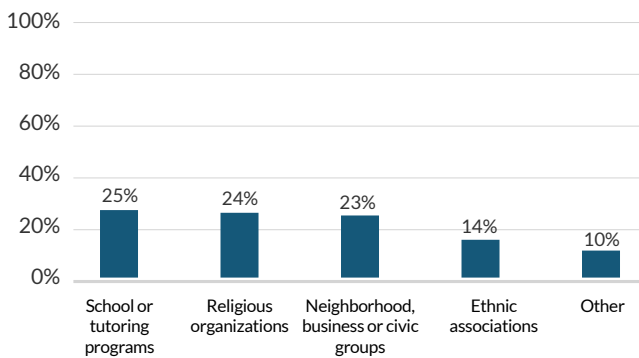
ciation: with 15% of those who speak English “Very well”, 11% of “Well” and 9% of “Not well.”<sup>100</sup>

Other Type of Organizations:

**Overall, 10% of respondents had volunteered in some other context** during the past year. Among the other types of volunteering mentioned by respondents were athletic organizations, criminal justice work, animal rights organizations and shelters, and environmental work. In addition, several respondents mentioned civil and human rights issues or related activities (e.g. pro bono therapy services).

Finally, a handful of respondents specifically noted that they were volunteering in their desired field of work, typically healthcare.

**Appendix A - 12. IMPRINT Respondents’ Volunteer Participation**



**Voting**

We also asked respondents about whether or not they were registered to vote. There were three potential answer categories: Yes, No, and Not Eligible.<sup>101</sup> Overall, 39% of respondents reported that they were registered to vote, 37% said they were not registered, and 24% said they were not eligible.

In other words, 51% of those eligible are in fact registered to vote.

Respondents from Canada and Oceania were the most likely to be registered to vote (78%).<sup>102</sup> Caution should be used in interpreting this number, as it reflects a statistically significant difference, but an overall low number of respondents from this region. A robust percentage of respondents from Europe (43%) and Latin American and Caribbean (42%) reported being registered to vote, followed by 35% of Africans and 33% of Asian and Middle Eastern respondents.

Those who were eligible but not registered to vote included 42% of both African and Asian and Middle Eastern respondents, 36% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, 31% of Europeans, and 14% of those from Canada and Oceania.

Finally, those who reported that they are not eligible to vote included 26% of both Asian and Middle Eastern and European respondents, 22% of respondents from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and 14% of those from Canada and Oceania.

Unsurprisingly, time in the U.S. was very strongly correlated with voter eligibility and registration. A bare 5% of respondents who have lived in the U.S. for five years or less reported being registered to vote, compared to 57% of those living here for six years or more.

Because a surprising 57% of newer arrivals say they are eligible but not registered, compared to 26% of more established residents, we speculate that some recently-arrived respondents may have mis-interpreted the answer categories and thought they were selecting “Not eligible.”

Rounding out the responses, a full 38% of newer arrivals did indeed pick not eligible, compared to just 16% of those who have been in the U.S. for longer.

Respondents with greater English fluency were both more likely to be eligible to vote, and more likely to be registered. This is not unexpected, given that to *become* eligible to vote, immigrants typically must pass a U.S. citizenship test that includes an English-language section.<sup>103</sup>

Overall, 44% of those who speak English “Very well” were registered to vote, 34% were not registered, and 22% were not eligible. Among respondents who speak English “Well,” 28% were registered to vote, 44% were not registered, and 28% were not eligible.

Finally, among respondents who speak English “Not well,” just 13% were registered to vote, 56% were not registered, and 31% were not eligible.

Voter registration rates differed somewhat among the broad pool of respondents to our audio survey, which includes individuals of all educational levels. Forty-one percent (41%) were registered to vote, 25% were eligible but not registered, and 34% were not eligible.

### Source of News

We asked respondents to tell us about all of the ways in which they had obtained news on the previous day. Below, we report findings for each type of media included in our survey. [Appendix A - 13](#) displays the percentages of respondents who reported using various types of news sources.

#### Social Media:

**Overall, 49% of respondents said they had obtained news from a social media source** on the previous day. This number fluctuated modestly by region of origin, from a low of 46% among Europeans to a high of 53% among respondents from Canada and Oceania. Those who had recently arrived in the U.S. were more likely to report using social media (56%) compared

to more-established residents (45%). This may be an artifact of age, homesickness, or some other factor.

There were no statistically significant differences in social media use by English fluency.

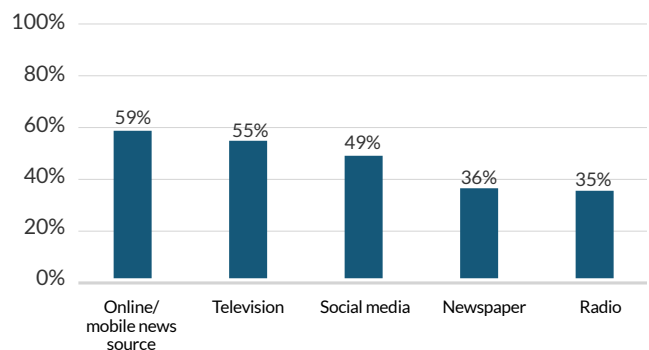
#### Television:

**Overall, 55% of respondents had obtained news from television** the previous day. These included 67% of African respondents, 63% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, 49% of Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants, 48% of Europeans, and just 41% of those from Canada and Oceania.

There were also statistically significant differences by length of time in the U.S.. Specifically, 59% of more established respondents (in the U.S. for six years or more) obtained news from television, compared to 48% of recently arrived respondents.

There were no statistically significant differences in television use by English fluency.

### Appendix A - 13. IMPRINT Respondents' Sources of News



#### Newspaper:

**Over one-third (36%) of respondents had read a newspaper (in print or digital form)** the previous day. Responses ranged from a low of 33% among

Asian and Middle Eastern and African respondents to 39% among those from Latin America and the Caribbean, 40% for those from Canada and Oceania, and 41% of Europeans.

Those who had lived in the U.S. for six or more years were more likely to have read a newspaper the previous day (40%), compared to 30% of recent arrivals. Similarly, those with greater English fluency were more likely to report having read a newspaper, with 38% of respondents who speak English “Very well,” having read a newspaper the previous day, compared to 33% of those who speak English “Well” and 26% of those who speak English “Not well.”

This finding could reflect the overwhelming dominance of English-language newspapers in the U.S., although our survey did specify newspapers in print or digital form, meaning that home-country publications could be included. It is also possible, although unlikely given respondents’ education levels, that this reflects lower literacy in respondents’ native languages.

#### Online/Mobile News Source:

**Overall, 59% of respondents reported going online for news<sup>104</sup> on the previous day.**

There were modest differences by region of origin, ranging from 54% among Latin American and Caribbean respondents to 63% among Europeans. There was *no* statistically significant difference among newer arrivals versus longer-term residents of the U.S.

Interestingly, despite the significant difference in social media usage described above, there was *no* statistically significant difference in the general “going online/mobile news” answer category between newer arrivals versus longer-term residents of the U.S.

Also, while English fluency had no correlation with respondents’ likelihood to use social media, those with stronger language skills *were* more likely to report going online in general for news. Among respondents who speak English “Very well,” 61% said they went online for news, compared to 54% of “Well” and 48% of “Not well.”

#### Radio:

**Over one third (35%) of respondents reported having heard radio news<sup>105</sup> in the preceding day.**

Europeans were the most likely to report having listened to the radio for news, at 41%. They were followed by African, Latin American, and Caribbean respondents at 37%, those from Canada and Oceania at 32%, and Asian and Middle Eastern respondents at 28%.

Those who had lived in the U.S. for six years or more were also more likely to have turned to the radio for news (39% compared to 27% of newer arrivals).

Respondents with stronger English skills were more likely to have listened to the radio for news: 36% of those who speak English “Very well,” 32% of those who speak the language “Well” and 28% of “Not well.”

#### Other Sources:

Only 3% of respondents said they had obtained news from “other” sources on the previous day.<sup>106</sup> These sources were primarily friends, clients or classmates.

#### Preferred News Source

We also asked respondents to tell us the *one* format in which they most preferred to receive news. **Nearly half (43%) of respondents prefer to get their news via the Internet in general, and another quarter (25%) prefer to get their news via**

**television.** Thirteen percent (13%) prefer a social networking site, 10% a newspaper, 8% by radio, and 2% by other means.

The top three preferred categories did not vary by region of origin — respondents from each region were most likely to select the Internet as their preferred news source, followed by television and then social networking sites. While differences in the percentages for each region were statistically significant, they were still quite modest in scope.

Interestingly, there were *no* statistically significant differences by English fluency for respondents' preferred news source.

Preferred news sources differed somewhat among the broad pool of respondents (at all educational levels) in our *audio survey*.<sup>107</sup> Unsurprisingly, radio led the way at 52%, followed by television (19%) the Internet in general (13%), social networking sites (9%) newspapers (5%), and other (3%).

## Employment

Over two-thirds (68%) of all respondents reported that they were employed.<sup>108</sup> An additional 20% were unemployed but actively looking for a job.

### Appendix A - 14. Labor Force Participation and Employment Status by Region of Birth

	Africa	Asia/ Middle East	Canada/ Oceania	Latin America/ Caribbean	Europe
Employed	68%	60%	78%	72%	74%
Unemployed; actively seeking work	24%	25%	9%	16%	15%
Out of labor force	8%	15%	14%	12%	11%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Five percent were unemployed and *not* looking for a job,<sup>109</sup> 5% were homemakers, 1% were retired, and less than 1% were permanently disabled or ill.

**The overwhelming majority (88%) of respondents were in the labor force** (either employed or actively seeking work). There were modest differences in labor force participation by region. Africans were least likely to be out of the labor force (8%), and Asians and Middle Easterners were most likely (15%) to be out of the labor force.

Among respondents who *were* in the labor force, there were more substantial differences in employment status. Asian and Middle Eastern, and African respondents were more likely to be unemployed and actively seeking work (25% and 24% of overall respondents, respectively), compared to 16% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, 15% of Europeans, and just 9% of respondents from Canada and Oceania. See [Appendix A - 14, Labor Force Participation and Employment Status by Region of Birth](#).

Those who had been settled in the U.S. for six years or more were more likely to be in the labor force (90%) and employed (78%), compared to more recent arrivals (85% of whom were in the labor force, and 52% employed). Additionally, those with stronger English skills were slightly more likely to be in the labor force: 89% of those who speak English “Very well,” compared to 85% of those who speak English “Well” and 79% of those who speak English “Not well.” The effect was stronger when it came to employment: 72% of those who speak English “Very well” were currently employed, compared to 60% of those who speak English “Well” and 46% of “Not well.”

A robust 76% of respondents had worked abroad before coming to the United States. Africans were the most likely (84%) to report international work experience, and those from Canada and Oceania the least likely (64%).

## Employment Industry

Nearly half of respondents were concentrated in two industries: 1) education, human health or social work (33%), and 2) professional, scientific or technical industries (16%). The remainder of the employed respondents were scattered among a variety of other industries, most notably information technology or communications (6%) and wholesale or retail trade (4%).

## Income

**Nearly half (45%) of respondents reported individual income of less than \$30,000 in the previous year.** Another 21% reported income of between \$30,000–\$50,000, and 34% had incomes of \$50,000 or more. [Appendix A - 16](#) shows respondents' reported income by their region of birth.

## Six City Analysis of Employment

As noted above, nearly 70% of IMPRINT respondents were employed at the time of the survey, with some variation from city to city, and the lowest rate (60%) among respondents not in our six target cities. Unemployment was also highest among respondents not in our target cities, with the unemployment rate (26%) approximately ten percent higher than in the target cities. Comparing the target cities to one another, the lowest employment rates were found in San Jose (65%), and the highest rates were in Philadelphia and Boston (77%).

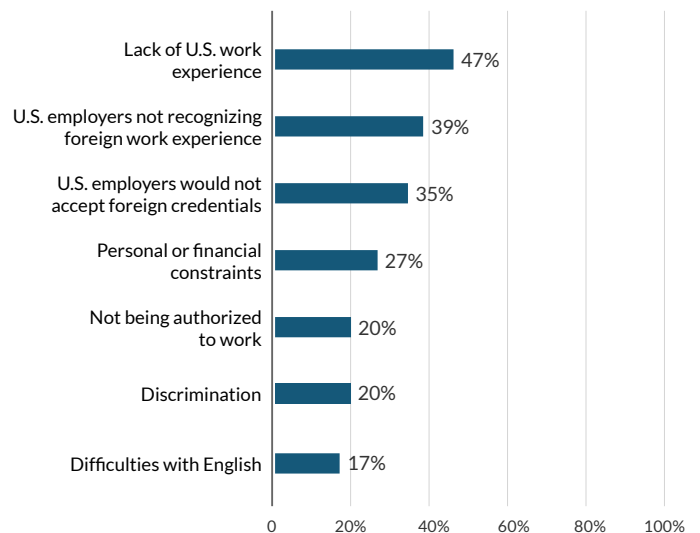
## Barriers in Searching for Employment

We asked respondents “Have any of the following factors created problems for you?” in searching for employment. Respondents could select more than one answer. The question pertained to whether respondents had *ever* faced the barrier,

not just whether they are currently facing it. However, the generally downward trend for barriers with time in the U.S. suggests that barriers may be more salient and/or urgent for those who have lived here less than five years, while respondents who are more established in the U.S. may be less likely to remember barriers they faced in their early years.

Immigrants who reported facing barriers were generally less likely to be employed. Those who *were* employed reported lower earnings. [Appendix A - 15](#) shows the percentage of respondents experiencing various types of barriers in searching for employment.

**Appendix A - 15. Types of Barriers Faced by IMPRINT Respondents in Searching for Employment**



### Lack of U.S. Work Experience

**The most common barrier was “Lack of U.S. work experience,” reported by nearly half of respondents (47%).** The number was highest among African respondents (52%), followed by 50% of Asians and Middle Easterners, 45% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents, 44% of Europeans and 32% of those from Canada and Oceania.

Quite understandably, this barrier drops significantly for those who have spent at least six years in the U.S. (38%) compared to newer arrivals (63%).

While it is difficult to disentangle the cause and effect, individuals who spoke English “Very well” were far less likely to report lack of American experience as a barrier (44%) than those who spoke English “Well” (58%) or “Not well” (71%).

#### Employers in the U.S. Not Recognizing Foreign Work Experience

**The second-most common barrier, reported by 39% of respondents, was “Employers in the U.S. would not recognize my foreign work experience.”** Newer arrivals were more likely (50%) to report this than more established respondents (33%). Respondents from Africa were the most likely (51%) to report this barrier, followed by those from Latin America and the Caribbean (41%), Asia and the Middle East (38%), Europe (32%) and finally Canada and Oceania (22%).

Interestingly, there were substantive differences by English fluency: 36% of those who spoke English “Very well” reported this as a barrier, compared to 52% of those who spoke English “Well” and 60% of those who spoke English “Not well.” This finding could indicate a struggle among Limited English Proficient (LEP) immigrant jobseekers to explain their foreign experience to employers given their limited English skills, or a devaluing of LEP immigrants’ foreign experience by employers.

#### Employers in the U.S. Would Not Accept My Foreign Credentials

**The third most common barrier was “Employers in the U.S. would not accept my foreign credentials,” faced by 35% of all respondents.** Again, this barrier was more common among recent arrivals (45%) than among more established respondents (29%).

This barrier was reported by 43% of African respondents, 37% of those from Latin America and the

**Appendix A - 16. Income by Region of Birth for All Respondents**

	Asia/ Middle East	Africa	Europe	Latin America/ Caribbean	Canada/ Oceania	All Respondents
	N=796	N=426	N=543	N=789	N=102	N=2,760
Less than \$10K	25%	18%	16%	17%	15%	19%
\$10K-\$19,999	12%	18%	12%	15%	10%	14%
\$20K-\$29,999	11%	16%	10%	13%	9%	12%
\$30K-\$39,999	9%	13%	12%	13%	12%	12%
\$40K-\$49,999	7%	8%	11%	11%	9%	9%
\$50K-\$59,999	7%	11%	9%	11%	6%	10%
\$60K-\$74,999	8%	8%	9%	8%	13%	8%
\$75K-\$99,999	8%	6%	9%	5%	13%	8%
\$100K-or more	12%	3%	12%	6%	15%	9%

Caribbean, 32% of Asians and Middle Easterners, 31% of Europeans and 24% of those from Canada and Oceania.

Just 31% of those who spoke English “Very well” reported this issue as a barrier, compared to 46% of those who spoke English “Well” and a sizeable 61% of those who spoke English “Not well.” It is difficult to discern whether this represents a misunderstanding on the part of jobseekers – who may believe that employers are devaluing their credentials when employers are instead reacting to their English skills – or an error on the part of employers, who may be overlooking the very real educational qualifications of applicants due to their language skills. More research on this point is certainly needed.

#### Personal or Financial Constraints

**27% of respondents reported facing “personal or financial constraints.”**<sup>110</sup>

There were no statistically significant differences among respondents by region of birth. New arrivals were much more likely (34%) to report this barrier, compared to those living in the U.S. for at least six years (23%). This difference may be due to differences in social capital (with newer arrivals having fewer friends or family to call upon for childcare help, for example), differences in acculturation more generally, or the fact that newer arrivals are likely to be younger and thus may have younger children or other responsibilities.

A full 42% of those who speak English “Not well” reported facing personal or financial barriers, compared to 33% of those who speak English “Well” and 25% of those who speak the language “Very well.” These findings could reflect the correlation between new arrivals and reduced English proficiency, or there may be another factor at work.

#### Discrimination

**Overall, 20% of respondents reported facing “discrimination”** on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity or other factors. There were significant differences by region of origin. A full quarter (26%) of African respondents and 23% of Latin American and Caribbean respondents said they faced discrimination, compared to 20% of Asians and Middle Easterners and just 14% of those from Europe, Canada, and Oceania.

Respondents who had lived in the U.S. for at least six years were slightly *more* likely to have experienced discrimination (22% compared to 18% of new arrivals). Although this is contrary to the trend of decreasing barriers over time among other variables, it is consistent with informal findings suggesting that immigrants face a learning curve in identifying American-style discrimination, causing newcomers to become more accurate in recognizing it over time.

There were no statistically significant differences by English fluency on this topic.

#### Not Being Authorized to Work

**One in five (20%) of respondents found “not being authorized to work” a barrier.**<sup>111</sup>

There were statistically significant differences in this category by region of origin. A full quarter (25%) of Asian and Middle Eastern respondents reported having lacked work authorization, followed by 22% of those from Latin America and the Caribbean, 18% of Europeans, 14% of Africans, and 12% of those from Canada and Oceania.

Those who have lived in the U.S. for at least six years were less likely to report this issue as a barrier, at 16% compared to a much larger 29% of newer arrivals.



Lack of work authorization was also correlated with English fluency. Just 19% of those who speak English “Very well” reported lack of work authorization as a barrier, compared to 24% of those who speak English “Well” and a full 38% of “Not well” respondents.

### Difficulties with English

#### **Overall, 17% of respondents reported “difficulties with English” as a barrier in their job search.**

Here it is critical to note that the high percentage of respondents with good English skills in our survey pool no doubt played a role in the relatively low number who reported difficulties with English as a barrier they faced.

Indeed, the minority of IMPRINT respondents who *did* have less-developed English skills were dramatically more likely to identify this as barrier. Fully 82% of those who speak English “Not well” chose difficulties with English as a barrier, as well as a still-robust 35% of those who speak English “Well” and just 9% of those who speak it “Very well.”

Not surprisingly, this barrier was more common among new arrivals (22%) compared to those who have lived in the U.S. for six years or more (14%).

Respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean were far more likely to report this barrier (23%), compared to 16% of Europeans and Asians and Middle Easterners, 11% of Africans, and 12% of those from Canada and Oceania.<sup>112</sup>

### Average Number of Barriers

We also calculated the average *total* number of barriers faced by respondents. Immigrants who were unemployed and actively seeking work were more likely to report facing barriers than those who were employed (an average of 2.35 compared to 1.74 barriers).

Individuals who were out of the labor force fell in between the other two categories, at 1.94. We do not have sufficient information to ascertain whether their relatively higher number of barriers is a cause of their withdrawal from the labor force, or a result.<sup>113</sup>

Individuals who arrived in the U.S. within the last five years report a facing a higher number of barriers, with an average of 2.39 barriers compared to 1.62 barriers for those who have lived here six or more years.

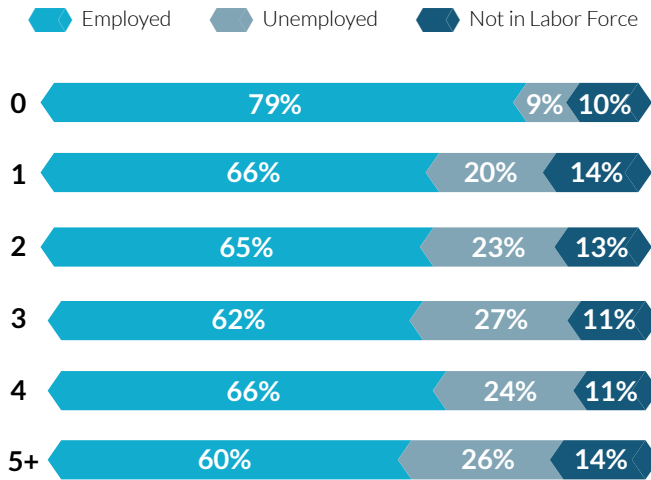
There were modest but statistically significant differences by region of origin: Immigrants from Africa had the highest number of reported barriers (2.08), followed by those from Latin America and the Caribbean (1.94), Asia and the Middle East (1.95), Europe (1.67), and finally Canada and Oceania (1.28).

Age was also correlated, with 18-24 year-olds facing an average of 1.93 barriers, rising to 2.17 among 25-34 year-olds, and then gradually declining in each successive age group except for those over 65. (See [Appendix A - 17](#)) It is likely that this pattern reflects the relatively more sheltered experience of the youngest respondents, who have the least experience in the job market, and the more urgent frustration of those in their early working years. The diminishing

### Appendix A - 19. Average Total Barriers Faced by Age

Age	Average Total Barriers
18 - 24	1.93
25-34	2.17
35-44	1.87
45-54	1.68
55-64	1.5
65 and older	1.74
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.89</b>

### Appendix A - 20. Employment Status by Number of Barriers Faced



Numbers may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

barriers for older respondents may reflect their greater acculturation and comfort navigating the U.S. labor market, or a greater degree of resignation and lowered expectations. The slight uptick among the most senior respondents may reflect the America they immigrated to – certainly a much different place than younger and more recent arrivals face today.

Consistent with many of our other findings, immigrants who had been educated entirely abroad reported a higher average number of barriers (2.17) compared to those with mixed education<sup>144</sup> (1.83) or entirely U.S.-based higher education (0.98).

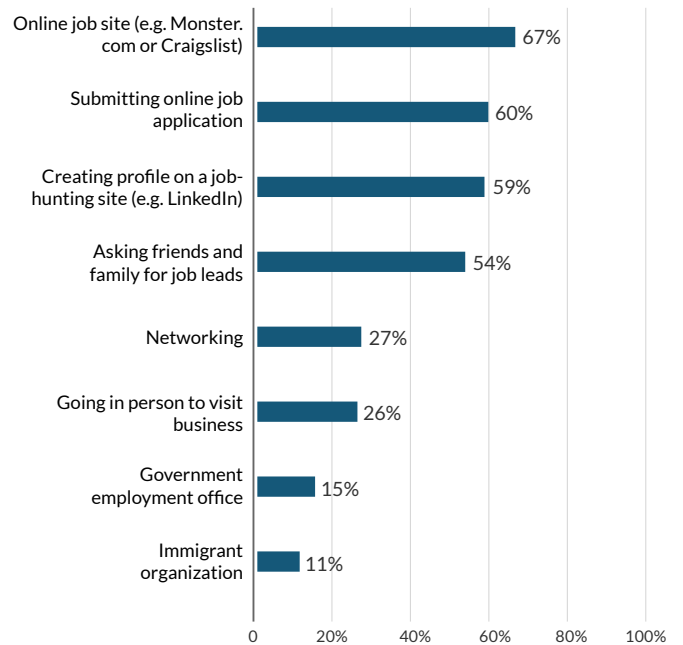
Individuals who had taken an English language class also had a higher average number of barriers (2.12 compared to 1.72 for those who had not taken a class). Given that lack of English proficiency was itself one of the potential barriers listed in our survey, this is not at all surprising.

### Techniques Used in Job Search

We asked respondents how they had gone about looking for a job in the U.S. Respondents were asked

to select all that applied. However, **there was virtually no correlation between the usage of any of the eight potential strategies and the likelihood of employment.**

### Appendix A - 21. Techniques Used in Job Search



Two-thirds of respondents (67%) said they had **used an online job site such as Monster.com or Craigslist**. There were small but statistically significant differences by region of origin and time in the U.S.. Those who spoke English “Not well” were notably less likely (54%) to use this approach.

Another Sixty percent (60%) of respondents said they had **submitted an online job application**. There were statistically significant but small differences by region of origin and time in the U.S.. Those with more limited English skills were less likely to have used this approach: 54% of those who spoke English “Well” and just 38% of “Not well,” compared to 65% of those who spoke English “Very Well.”

Overall, 59% reported that they had **created a profile on a job-hunting site such as LinkedIn**. There were no

statistically significant differences by region of origin or time in the U.S.. Those who speak English “Well” or “Not well” were substantially less likely to report using this tactic (34% and 21%, respectively, as compared to 45% of those who speak English “Very Well”).

Perhaps the most startling finding is that overall, just over half (54%) of respondents reported that they had **asked their friends and family members for job leads**. This number is starkly lower than we would have expected to see, given that networking is an overwhelmingly common way for white-collar workers in the U.S. to search for (and find) employment. Even more surprisingly, respondents who had lived in the U.S. for at least six years were barely more likely to report using this approach than newer arrivals (56% to 52%).

There were small but statistically significant differences by region of origin, with responses ranging from a low of 46% among respondents from Canada and Oceania to a high of 60% among African respondents. There were *no* statistically significant differences by English fluency on this question.

This finding may represent a rational assessment on the part of immigrant jobseekers that their friends and family are unlikely to be plugged-in enough to know about white-collar job openings, or it may reflect a lack of acculturation and a limited understanding of how vital these “weak ties” are in finding professional employment in the U.S. It may also be a combination of these or other factors.

An even more dramatic finding is that only 27% of respondents overall reported having attended a **networking event** as a way to look for employment. Again, it is difficult to know what is driving this low response, but the issues outlined above are likely to be factors here as well.

There was a moderate increase in the likelihood of networking among respondents with more than

six years in the U.S. (30%) compared to newer arrivals (21%). Those with stronger English skills are, perhaps not surprisingly, more likely to engage in networking. Thirty percent (30%) of those who speak English “Very well” report having attended a networking event, compared to 18% of those who speak English “Well” and just 11% of “Not well.”

There were also small but statistically significant differences by region of origin on this question, with responses ranging from a low of 23% among Asian and Middle Eastern respondents to a high of 31% among European respondents.

Overall, just 26% of respondents reported that they had **gone in person to visit businesses** and ask managers about job openings. This relatively low number is not surprising, as this job-hunting technique is far more common among entry-level blue-collar and service workers than among white-collar professionals.

There were relatively modest but statistically significant differences by region of origin, with the numbers ranging from a high of 30% of African immigrants who reported using this technique, to a low of 21% among Asian and Middle Eastern respondents. There were even smaller differences by time in the U.S., with more-established residents slightly more likely to use this tactic. There were no statistically significant differences by level of English fluency.

Overall, just 15% of respondents reported having **turned to a government employment office** for help finding work. This may reflect a general lack of acculturation and awareness about available resources; a presumption that they were not eligible for services; or geographic, linguistic, or other barriers in accessing public workforce services. There were marginally statistically significant and very small differences by region of origin on this question. In addition, respondents who had lived in the U.S. for at least six years were slightly more

likely (17% to 13%) to report using this approach. There were no statistically significant differences by English fluency.

Similarly, only 11% of respondents overall reported that they **turned to an immigrant organization** for job assistance. Again, this may reflect a rational assessment that such organizations are typically not set up to provide white-collar job search help, or it may reflect geographic or linguistic barriers in accessing such organizations. There were no statistically significant differences by region of origin on this question. Newer arrivals were twice as likely (16% compared to 8% of more established respondents) to use this tactic. Similarly, individuals with lower English proficiency were also more likely to use this approach. Seventeen percent (17%) of those who speak English “Not well” had turned to an immigrant organization, compared to 14% of English “Well” respondents and 11% of “Very well.”

Finally, 10% of overall respondents reported that they had looked for employment in other ways, such as through their U.S. university’s Career Services office or newspaper classifieds.

# Appendix B: IMPRINT and American Community Survey (ACS) Sample Demographics

## Appendix B - 1. Region of Birth for IMPRINT and ACS Respondents Living in the U.S. for Five Years or Less and Six Years or More

	Region of Birth									
	Asia/Middle East		Africa		Europe		Latin America/Caribbean		Canada/Oceania	
	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS
<b>Length of Time in the U.S.**</b>										
5 years or less	47%	45%	46%	47%	25%	26%	30%	29%	26%	19%
6 years or more	53%	55%	54%	53%	75%	74%	70%	71%	74%	81%

\*\*=p<.01

## Appendix B - 2. Comparison of IMPRINT Survey Respondent Demographics to ACS Data

	Current Location													
	Boston		Detroit		Miami		Philadelphia		San Jose		Seattle		Other	
	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	ACS	IMPRINT	
<b>Age Group</b>														
18-24	4%	11%	4%	6%	5%	6%	3%	8%	6%	5%	5%	7%	5%	
25-34	32%	22%	29%	18%	25%	16%	30%	22%	30%	19%	32%	20%	36%	
35-44	30%	25%	25%	27%	27%	21%	30%	23%	31%	28%	27%	26%	27%	
45-54	19%	21%	26%	22%	21%	25%	24%	20%	17%	24%	21%	23%	19%	
55-64	8%	12%	9%	15%	16%	18%	7%	16%	12%	15%	8%	14%	6%	
65 and Older	7%	10%	8%	12%	6%	14%	7%	11%	4%	10%	8%	10%	7%	
<b>Gender</b>														
Male	30%	47%	43%	47%	40%	47%	41%	47%	43%	50%	37%	49%	41%	
Female	70%	53%	57%	53%	60%	53%	59%	53%	57%	50%	63%	51%	59%	
<b>Region of Origin</b>														
Asia/Middle East	24%	38%	45%	54%	7%	8%	24%	48%	58%	74%	41%	54%	35%	
Africa	23%	6%	11%	5%	3%	2%	27%	10%	4%	3%	14%	6%	17%	
Europe	20%	24%	27%	26%	12%	8%	28%	23%	19%	11%	20%	23%	16%	
Latin America/Caribbean	30%	26%	13%	7%	73%	81%	19%	17%	13%	11%	20%	9%	28%	
Canada/Oceania	3%	5%	4%	8%	5%	2%	2%	2%	5%	2%	5%	8%	3%	
<b>Length of Time in the U.S.**</b>														
5 years or less	35%	20%	33%	19%	26%	13%	25%	19%	27%	17%	43%	19%	46%	
6 years or more	65%	80%	67%	81%	74%	87%	75%	81%	73%	83%	57%	81%	54%	
<b>Primary Spoken Language**</b>														
English	26%	-	21%	-	21%	-	34%	-	30%	-	27%	-	23%	
Other	74%	-	79%	-	79%	-	66%	-	70%	-	73%	-	77%	
<b>Speak Language Other than English at Home*</b>														
Yes	80%	76%	82%	73%	78%	83%	75%	74%	80%	88%	77%	75%	81%	
<b>Ability to Speak English**</b>														
Very Well	61%	75%	71%	78%	64%	67%	67%	75%	69%	68%	61%	72%	65%	
Well	33%	19%	28%	18%	28%	22%	27%	18%	27%	24%	32%	20%	28%	
Not Well	6%	6%	1%	5%	8%	11%	6%	7%	4%	8%	7%	8%	7%	
<b>Location of Higher Education**</b>														
Only Outside the U.S.	40%	-	37%	-	40%	-	34%	-	35%	-	42%	-	54%	
Only in the U.S.	15%	-	11%	-	17%	-	9%	-	16%	-	12%	-	5%	
Both in and Outside of the U.S.	45%	-	52%	-	43%	-	57%	-	49%	-	46%	-	41%	

\*= p<.05 and \*\*=p<.01

## Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

### Confidentiality Statement – IMPRINT/WES Survey

#### Informed Consent

##### Research Procedures

This research is being conducted to understand the integration process for new immigrants, with a focus on the household characteristics, education, and employment experiences of various immigrant groups in different cities across the U.S. You are being asked to join this study because you are 18 years or older and were born outside of the United States.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to answer questions about your life experiences before and after your move to the United States. Completing the survey will take approximately 30 minutes. You will complete the survey only one time. The study is expected to include surveys from up to 4,000 people, including you. We estimate that we will collect surveys from November to December 2014.

##### Participation

Your participation is voluntary, and you may quit the survey at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you stop filling out the survey, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to you. There are no costs to you or anyone else.

##### Confidentiality

The data in this study will be confidential. The research team will not share your name with the public. Your name and other personal information

will not be connected with your survey responses. The research team will make every effort to keep all the information you provide during the study strictly confidential, as required by law.

All survey responses and personal information will be kept in a locked case in the investigator's office. Computer-based files will only be made available to the research team involved in the study by providing access privileges and passwords. There is one exception to confidentiality. It is our legal responsibility to report situations of suspected child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities. Although we are not seeking this type of information in this study, nor will you be asked questions about these issues, we will report them as required under the law if discovered.

##### Risks

We do not expect there to be any risks to you for participating in this research.

##### Benefits

There are no direct benefits to you as a participant. However, your participation could help the research team gain a better understanding of the experiences of immigrants and identify ways to improve any barriers to social integration or socioeconomic mobility, which can benefit you indirectly in the future.

##### Contact

This research is being conducted by Dr. James Witte and Dr. Alicia Lee at George Mason University. They may be reached by phone at 703-993-2993 or by email at [jwitte@gmu.edu](mailto:jwitte@gmu.edu) for questions or to report a research-related problem. You may contact the

George Mason University Office of Research Integrity & Assurance at 703-993-4121 if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research. This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

Current version is at: <http://onq.clemson.edu/IMPRINT> Text to individual questions follows.

Questions Used in Survey			
ID	Prefix	Root	Answers
1	Welcome!	<p>Thank you for participating in the <b>Survey of College-Educated Immigrants in the United States</b>. This survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.</p> <p>This project is being conducted by the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University, WES Global Talent Bridge and IMPRINT.</p> <p>If you have questions about the survey you may e-mail <a href="mailto:gtb@wes.org">gtb@wes.org</a>. If you have any questions about your rights as a survey participant, please contact the Institutional Review Board at George Mason University (<a href="mailto:IRB@gmu.edu">IRB@gmu.edu</a>).</p> <p>To comment on a specific part of the survey, simply click on the the "Submit Comment" button on any screen.</p> <p>If you wish to go back a page and change or correct a previous answer, please use your browser back button.</p>	
2		In what country were you born?	Afghanistan   Albania   Algeria   Andorra   Angola   Antigua and Barbuda   Argentina   Armenia   Aruba   Australia   Austria   Azerbaijan   Bahamas   Bahrain   Bangladesh   Barbados   Belarus   Belgium   Belize   Benin   Bhutan   Bolivia   Bosnia and Herzegovina   Botswana   Brazil   Brunei   Bulgaria   Burkina Faso   Burma   Burundi   Cambodia   Cameroon   Canada   Cape Verde   Central African Republic   Chad   Chile   China   Colombia   Comoros   Congo, Democratic Republic of the   Congo, Republic of the   Costa Rica   Croatia   Cuba   Curacao   Cyprus   Czech Republic   Denmark   Djibouti   Dominica   Dominican Republic   Ecuador   Egypt   El Salvador   Equatorial Guinea   Eritrea   Estonia   Ethiopia   Fiji   Finland   France   Gabon   Gambia   Georgia   Germany   Ghana   Greece   Grenada   Guatemala   Guinea   Guinea-Bissau   Guyana   Haiti   Holy See   Honduras   Hong Kong   Hungary   Iceland   India   Indonesia   Iran   Iraq   Ireland   Israel   Italy   Jamaica   Japan   Jordan   Kazakhstan   Kenya   Kiribati   Kosovo   Kuwait   Kyrgyzstan   Laos   Latvia   Lebanon   Lesotho   Liberia   Libya   Liechtenstein   Lithuania   Luxembourg   Macau   Macedonia   Madagascar   Malawi   Malaysia   Maldives   Mali   Malta   Marshall Islands   Mauritania   Mauritius   Mexico   Micronesia   Moldova   Monaco   Mongolia   Montenegro   Morocco   Mozambique   Namibia   Nauru   Nepal   Netherlands   Netherlands Antilles   New Zealand   Nicaragua   Niger   Nigeria   North Korea   Norway   Oman   Pakistan   Palau   Palestinian Territories   Panama   Papua New Guinea   Paraguay   Peru   Philippines   Poland   Portugal   Qatar   Romania   Russia   Rwanda   Saint Kitts and Nevis   Saint Lucia   Saint Vincent and the Grenadines   Samoa   San Marino   Sao Tome and Principe   Saudi Arabia   Senegal   Serbia   Seychelles   Sierra Leone   Singapore   Sint Maarten   Slovakia   Slovenia   Solomon Islands   Somalia   South Africa   South Korea   South Sudan   Spain   Sri Lanka   Sudan   Suriname   Swaziland   Sweden   Switzerland   Syria   Taiwan   Tajikistan   Tanzania   Thailand   Timor-Leste   Togo   Tonga   Trinidad and Tobago   Tunisia   Turkey   Turkmenistan   Tuvalu   Uganda   Ukraine   United Arab Emirates   United Kingdom   United States and its territories including Puerto Rico   Uruguay   Uzbekistan   Vanuatu   Venezuela   Vietnam   Yemen   Zambia   Zimbabwe
3		In what year did you first come to live in the United States?	2014   2013   2012   2011   2010   2009   2008   2007   2006   2005   2004   2003   2002   2001   2000   1999   1998   1997   1996   1995   1994   1993   1992   1991   1990   1989   1988   1987   1986   1985   1984   1983   1982   1981   1980   1979   1978   1977   1976   1975   1974   1973   1972   1971   1970   1969   1968   1967   1966   1965   1964   1963   1962   1961   1960   1959   1958   1957   1956   1955   1954   1953   1952   1951   1950   1949   1948   1947   1946   1945 or earlier
4		In which area do you currently live?	Boston   Detroit   Miami   Philadelphia   San Jose   Seattle   Other
5	Language	What is your <b>primary</b> language?	Amharic   Arabic   English   French   Hindi   Korean   Mandarin   Spanish   Tagalog   Vietnamese   Don't know   Other
6		Which languages do you speak well enough to have a <b>conversation</b> (check all that apply)?	Amharic   Arabic   English   French   Hindi   Korean   Mandarin   Spanish   Tagalog   Vietnamese   Other
7		Do you speak a language other than English at home?	Yes   No
9	Please select the appropriate box to indicate how well you do each of the following:	Understand English	Very well   Well   Not well   Not at all
10		Speak English	Very well   Well   Not well   Not at all
11		Read English	Very well   Well   Not well   Not at all
12		Write English	Very well   Well   Not well   Not at all
14	Your Education and Employment Training	Have you gone to a college/university outside the U.S.?	Yes   No



Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

Questions Used in Survey			
ID	Prefix	Root	Answers
15		Have you gone to a college/university <b>in</b> the U.S.?	Yes   No
16	Have you	taken a <b>free</b> English as a Second Language (ESL) class?	Yes   No
17	Have you	taken a <b>fee-based</b> English as a Second Language (ESL) class?	Yes   No
18	Have you	participated in a professional training or development program <b>outside</b> the U.S.?	Yes   No
19	Have you	participated in a professional training or development program in the U.S.?	Yes   No
22	Higher Education Outside the U.S.	In what country outside the U.S. did you <b>most recently</b> receive higher education?	Afghanistan   Albania   Algeria   Andorra   Angola   Antigua and Barbuda   Argentina   Armenia   Aruba   Australia   Austria   Azerbaijan   Bahamas   Bahrain   Bangladesh   Barbados   Belarus   Belgium   Belize   Benin   Bhutan   Bolivia   Bosnia and Herzegovina   Botswana   Brazil   Brunei   Bulgaria   Burkina Faso   Burma   Burundi   Cambodia   Cameroon   Canada   Cape Verde   Central African Republic   Chad   Chile   China   Colombia   Comoros   Congo, Democratic Republic of the   Congo, Republic of the   Costa Rica   Croatia   Cuba   Curacao   Cyprus   Czech Republic   Denmark   Djibouti   Dominica   Dominican Republic   Ecuador   Egypt   El Salvador   Equatorial Guinea   Eritrea   Estonia   Ethiopia   Fiji   Finland   France   Gabon   Gambia   Georgia   Germany   Ghana   Greece   Grenada   Guatemala   Guinea   Guinea-Bissau   Guyana   Haiti   Holy See   Honduras   Hong Kong   Hungary   Iceland   India   Indonesia   Iran   Iraq   Ireland   Israel   Italy   Jamaica   Japan   Jordan   Kazakhstan   Kenya   Kiribati   Kosovo   Kuwait   Kyrgyzstan   Laos   Latvia   Lebanon   Lesotho   Liberia   Libya   Liechtenstein   Lithuania   Luxembourg   Macau   Macedonia   Madagascar   Malawi   Malaysia   Maldives   Mali   Malta   Marshall Islands   Mauritania   Mauritius   Mexico   Micronesia   Moldova   Monaco   Mongolia   Montenegro   Morocco   Mozambique   Namibia   Nauru   Nepal   Netherlands   Netherlands Antilles   New Zealand   Nicaragua   Niger   Nigeria   North Korea   Norway   Oman   Pakistan   Palau   Palestinian Territories   Panama   Papua New Guinea   Paraguay   Peru   Philippines   Poland   Portugal   Qatar   Romania   Russia   Rwanda   Saint Kitts and Nevis   Saint Lucia   Saint Vincent and the Grenadines   Samoa   San Marino   Sao Tome and Principe   Saudi Arabia   Senegal   Serbia   Seychelles   Sierra Leone   Singapore   Sint Maarten   Slovakia   Slovenia   Solomon Islands   Somalia   South Africa   South Korea   South Sudan   Spain   Sri Lanka   Sudan   Suriname   Swaziland   Sweden   Switzerland   Syria   Taiwan   Tajikistan   Tanzania   Thailand   Timor-Leste   Togo   Tonga   Trinidad and Tobago   Tunisia   Turkey   Turkmenistan   Tuvalu   Uganda   Ukraine   United Arab Emirates   United Kingdom   United States and its territories including Puerto Rico   Uruguay   Uzbekistan   Vanuatu   Venezuela   Vietnam   Yemen   Zambia   Zimbabwe
23		Did you study for a <b>first university degree</b> outside the U.S.?	No, did not (You may skip other questions on this page. Scroll to bottom and click 'NEXT' to continue)   Yes, but degree <b>not completed</b>   Yes, and degree <b>completed</b>
24		What was your field of study/specialization?	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries   Arts and Humanities   Business, Finance, Accounting   Education   Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction   Health   Information and Communications Technologies   Law   Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Statistics   Social Sciences, Journalism   Other Field of Study
25		Did you study for a <b>post-graduate degree/diploma</b> outside the U.S.?	No, did not (You may skip other questions on this page. Scroll to bottom and click 'NEXT' to continue)   Yes, but degree <b>not completed</b>   Yes, and degree <b>completed</b>
26		How many years did you study toward this degree?	Less than a year   1 year   2 years   3 years   4 years   5 years   6 years   7 or more years
27		What was your field of study/specialization?	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries   Arts and Humanities   Business, Finance, Accounting   Education   Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction   Health   Information and Communications Technologies   Law   Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Statistics   Social Sciences, Journalism   Other Field of Study
28		Have you applied for your <b>most recent</b> foreign education to be evaluated in the U.S.?	Yes   No   Don't know   Not applicable
29	Foreign Education Evaluation	What happened to your application? Your qualifications were:	Fully recognized   Partially recognized   Not at all recognized   I am still waiting for a response
30		Did the evaluation help you advance your career goals?	Yes   No
31		If no, which of the following items best describes why you have not had your <b>most recent</b> foreign education evaluated?	I don't have any relevant materials   I don't know how   The application process is too complicated   It's too costly   I don't need it
32		Based on your foreign education, have you applied for a U.S. professional license (e.g. through a licensing board, professional examination, etc.)?	Yes   No   Don't know   Not applicable
33		What happened with your license application?	I am now licensed to practice in the U.S.   I was denied a license   I am still waiting for a response   Don't know   Not applicable
34		If no, what is the <b>most important reason</b> why you have not applied?	I don't have any relevant education or credentials   I don't know how   The application process is too complicated   I was not aware that I could do it   I do not need it   Other

Questions Used in Survey			
ID	Prefix	Root	Answers
35		Does your current job make use of your <b>most recent</b> higher education obtained <b>outside the U.S.</b> ?	I am not currently working   No, my current employment <b>does not make</b> use of any part of the higher education I obtained outside the U.S.   My current employment <b>makes some use</b> of the higher education I obtained outside the U.S.   My current employment <b>makes full use</b> of the higher education I obtained outside the U.S.   Don't know
36		Are you currently enrolled in school and taking classes? (Other than English as a Second Language (ESL))	Yes   No   Don't know   Not applicable
37		If yes, what level of education?	Secondary school/high school/GED   Associate's degree   Bachelor's degree   Graduate or professional degree program   Other
38		Did you study for a Bachelor's degree in the U.S.?	No, did not (You may skip other questions on this page. Scroll to bottom and click 'NEXT' to continue)   Yes, but degree <b>not completed</b>   Yes, and degree <b>completed</b>
39		How many years did you study toward this degree?	Less than a year   1 year   2 years   3 years   4 years   5 years   6 years   7 or more years
40		Did you receive a graduate or professional degree in the U.S.?	No, did not (You may skip other questions on this page. Scroll to bottom and click 'NEXT' to continue)   Yes, but degree <b>not completed</b>   Yes, and degree <b>completed</b>
41		How many years did you study toward this degree?	Less than a year   1 year   2 years   3 years   4 years   5 years   6 years   7 or more years
42		What was your field of study/specialization?	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries   Arts and Humanities   Business, Finance, Accounting   Education   Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction   Health   Information and Communications Technologies   Law   Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Statistics   Social Sciences, Journalism   Other Field of Study
43		Does your current employment make use of your <b>most recent</b> higher education obtained <b>in the U.S.</b> ?	I am not currently working   No, my current employment <b>does not make use</b> of any part of the higher education I obtained in the U.S.   My current employment <b>makes some use</b> of the higher education I obtained in the U.S.   My current employment <b>makes full use</b> of the higher education I obtained in the U.S.   Don't know
44	Why did you decide to take an ESL class?	Learn basic English	Yes   No   Don't know
45		To prepare for the TOEFL or another exam	Yes   No   Don't know
46		Learn job-related vocabulary	Yes   No   Don't know
47		Get a job or a better job	Yes   No   Don't know
48		Get more education or training	Yes   No   Don't know
49		Get involved in local community activities	Yes   No   Don't know
50		Which of the following statements best describes your situation? Check only one.	Employed (including if you are self-employed or working for your family business)   Unemployed, actively looking for a job   Unemployed, not actively looking for a job   Permanently sick or disabled   Retired   Doing housework, looking after children or other persons
51	Employment	How many jobs do you currently have?	1 job   2 jobs   3 jobs   4 or more jobs
52		On average, how many total hours do you work a week?	5 or fewer   6-10 hours   11-15 hours   16-20 hours   21-25 hours   26-30 hours   31-35 hours   36-40 hours   41-45 hours   46-50 hours   51-55 hours   56-60 hours   61 or more hours
53		What is your employment status at your main job?	Full-time (35 hours per week or more)   Part-time
54		Which of the following best describes your current job?	Armed forces   Clerical support worker   Craft or related trade worker   Manager   Plant or machine operator or assembler   Professional   Service or sales worker   Skilled agricultural/forestry/fishery worker   Technicians or associate/para professional   Unskilled worker   Other
55	Employment	Which of the following best describes the industry in which you are employed:	Accommodations or food service   Administrative or support services   Agriculture, forestry or fishing   Arts, entertainment or recreation   Construction   Education; human health or social work   Electricity, gas, steam or AC supply   Employed in private household;   Financial or insurance services   Information technology or communications   Manufacturing   Mining or quarrying   Professional, scientific or technical   Public administration or defense   Real estate   Transportation or storage   Water supply, sewage, waste management or recycling   Wholesale or retail trade   Other industry
56		In your own words, what is the title of your current position at your main job?	
58		In the last year, what was your income (before taxes and other deductions) from all employment? Your answers will be treated as completely confidential.	\$0 to \$9,999   \$10,000 to \$14,999   \$15,000 to \$19,999   \$20,000 to \$24,999   \$25,000 to \$29,999   \$30,000 to \$34,999   \$35,000 to \$39,999   \$40,000 to \$49,999   \$50,000 to \$59,999   \$60,000 to \$74,999   \$75,000 to \$99,999   \$100,000 to \$149,999   \$150,000 or more   Did not work in the past year   Don't know
59		Do you feel that your current level of education and training is enough to meet your career goals?	My current level of education and training is good enough   I need more training, but I can't do it right now   I need more training and I am currently in training or plan to be soon   Don't know   Other
60		Before coming to the United States, did you work in another country?	Yes   No

Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

Questions Used in Survey			
ID	Prefix	Root	Answers
61		Which of the following best describes the title of your last position before coming to the U.S.:	Armed forces   Clerical support worker   Craft or related trade worker   Manager   Plant or machine operator or assembler   Professional   Service or sales worker   Skilled agricultural/forestry/fishery worker   Technicians or associate/para professional   Unskilled worker   Other
62	Employment Outside the U.S.	Which of the following best describes the industry in which you were employed:	Accommodations or food service   Administrative or support services   Agriculture, forestry or fishing   Arts, entertainment or recreation   Construction   Education; human health or social work   Electricity, gas, steam or AC supply   Employed in private household;   Financial or insurance services   Information technology or communications   Manufacturing   Mining or quarrying   Professional, scientific or technical   Public administration or defense   Real estate   Transportation or storage   Water supply, sewage, waste management or recycling   Wholesale or retail trade   Other industry
63		In your own words, what was the title of your last job before coming to the U.S.?	
64		In the past year, have you volunteered your time to any of the following? <b>Check all that apply</b>	Religious organization   School or tutoring program   Neighborhood, business, or community group   Organization representing your particular nationality, ethnic, or racial group   Other
65		Where did you get news yesterday? Check all that apply.	Social networking site   Watched news on television   Read a newspaper in print or digital   Got online/mobile news   Listened to radio news   Other
66		Where do you prefer to get news about the community where you now live? Check only one.	Social networking site   Television   Radio   Newspaper   Internet   Other
67		Which of the following best describes your situation when you first arrived in the U.S.?	I had no family members or friends in the U.S. that I could rely on for support.   I had a few family members or friends in the U.S. that I could rely on for support.   I had many family members or friends in the U.S. that I could rely on for support.
68		Which of the following best describes your current situation in the U.S.?	I have no family members or friends in the U.S. that I can rely on for support.   I have a few family members or friends in the U.S. that I can rely on for support.   I have many family members or friends in the U.S. that I can rely on for support.
69		Are you registered to vote in the U.S.?	Yes   No   Not eligible
70		In what year were you born?	1945 or earlier   1946   1947   1948   1949   1950   1951   1952   1953   1954   1955   1956   1957   1958   1959   1960   1961   1962   1963   1964   1965   1966   1967   1968   1969   1970   1971   1972   1973   1974   1975   1976   1977   1978   1979   1980   1981   1982   1983   1984   1985   1986   1987   1988   1989   1990   1991   1992   1993   1994   1995   1996   1997   1998   1999   2000
71		Are you	Male   Female
73	Where Do You Currently Live?	Where in the Boston Area do you live?	Boston   Brockton   Brookline   Cambridge   Cranston   Fall River   Framingham   Haverhill   Lawrence   Lowell   Lynn   Malden   Manchester   Medford   Nashua   New Bedford   Newton   Pawtucket   Peabody   Plymouth   Providence   Quincy   Revere   Somerville   Taunton   Waltham   Warwick   Weymouth   Worcester   Other Place
74	Where Do You Currently Live?	Where in the Detroit area do you live?	Canton Township   Clinton Township   Dearborn   Dearborn Heights   Detroit   Grosse Pointe   Farmington Hills   Livonia   Macomb Township   Novi   Pontiac   Redford Township   Rochester Hills   Royal Oak   Saint Clair Shores   Shelby Charter Township   Southfield   Sterling Heights   Taylor   Troy   Warren   Waterford Township   West Bloomfield Township   Westland Bloomfield Township   Other Place
75	Where Do You Currently Live?	Where in the Miami area do you live?	Boca Raton   Boynton Beach   Coconut Creek   Coral Springs   Davie   Deerfield Beach   Delray Beach   Fontainebleau   Fort Lauderdale   Hialeah   Hollywood   Homestead   Jupiter   Kendale Lakes   Kendall   Lauderhill   Margate   Miami Beach   Miami Gardens   Miramar   North Miami   Pembroke Pines   Plantation   Pompano Beach   Sunrise   Sweetwater   Tamarac   Tamiami   The Hammocks   Wellington   West Palm Beach   Weston   Other Place   Miami
76	Where Do You Currently Live?	Where in the Philadelphia area do you live?	Atlantic City, New Jersey   Bridgeton, New Jersey   Camden, New Jersey   Dover, Delaware   Hammonton, New Jersey   Millville, New Jersey   Ocean City, New Jersey   Philadelphia, Pennsylvania   Reading, Pennsylvania   Sea Isle City, New Jersey   Ventnor City, New Jersey   Vineland, New Jersey   Wildwood, New Jersey   Wilmington, Delaware   Other Place
77	Where Do You Currently Live?	Where in the San Jose area do you live?	Alum Rock   Aromas   Burbank   Campbell   Cupertino   East Foothills   Gilroy   Hollister   Los Altos   Los Gatos   Milpitas   Monte Sereno   Morgan Hill   Mountain View   Palo Alto   San Jose   San Martin   Santa Clara   Saratoga   Sunnyvale   Other Place
78	Where Do You Currently Live?	Where in the Seattle area do you live?	Auburn   Bellevue   Burien   Everett   Federal Way   Kent   Kirkland   Lakewood   Marysville   Redmond   Renton   Sammamish   Seattle   Shoreline   Tacoma   Other Place
79	Where Do You Currently Live?	In what city(town), state do you live?	

Questions Used in Survey			
ID	Prefix	Root	Answers
80	Have any of the following factors created problems for you getting a job in the U.S.?	Difficulties with English	Yes   No
81		Employers in the U.S. would not accept my foreign credentials	Yes   No
82		Employers in the U.S. would not recognize my foreign work experience	Yes   No
83		Personal or financial constraints (e.g., transportation costs, family responsibilities)	Yes   No
84		Discrimination (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity or other)	Yes   No
85		I did not have authorization to work	Yes   No
86		Lack of U.S. work experience	Yes   No
87		How have you looked for a job in the U.S.? <b>(check all that apply)</b>	Searched online job postings (e.g., Monster, Indeed, Craigslist)   Created a profile on an online site (e.g., LinkedIn)   Submitted online job application   Gone to businesses to speak to managers and ask about openings   Asked my friends/relative, if they knew of job openings   Went to a government employment office   Went to networking events   Went to immigrant organization for job assistance   Other way(s)
88		Please describe any other ways you have searched for a job.	
89	Thank You!	We appreciate your participation in the <u>Survey of College-Educated Immigrants in the United States!</u>  Results from the survey will be released in March 2015. Results will be posted online at <a href="http://www.imprintproject.org">www.imprintproject.org</a>  Want to learn more about pathways to success for new Americans? If so, <a href="#">click here</a> .	
90		Please write other language here.	
91		How many years of study did you put toward this degree?	Less than a year   1 year   2 years   3 years   4 years   5 years   6 years   7 or more years
92		What was the other Field of Study?	
93		What was the other Field of Study?	
94		<b>If your field of study for this degree was health, <i>what was your field of specialization in health?</i></b>	Dentistry   Medicine   Nursing and Midwifery   Pharmacy   Physical or Occupational Therapy   Veterinary   Other Specialization
95		<b>If your field of study for this degree was health, <i>what was your field of specialization in health?</i></b>	Dentistry   Medicine   Nursing and Midwifery   Pharmacy   Physical or Occupational Therapy   Veterinary   Other Specialization
96		What was your field of study/specialization?	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries   Arts and Humanities   Business, Finance, Accounting   Education   Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction   Health   Information and Communications Technologies   Law   Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Statistics   Social Sciences, Journalism   Other Field of Study
97		What was the other Field of Study?	
98		What was the other Field of Study?	
99		<b>If your field of study for this degree was health, <i>what was your field of specialization in health?</i></b>	Dentistry   Medicine   Nursing and Midwifery   Pharmacy   Physical or Occupational Therapy   Veterinary   Other Specialization
100		<b>If your field of study for this degree was health, <i>what was your field of specialization in health?</i></b>	Dentistry   Medicine   Nursing and Midwifery   Pharmacy   Physical or Occupational Therapy   Veterinary   Other Specialization
101		Please enter other type of organization	
102		Please enter specific name(s) of source(s)	
103		Please enter specific name of source	
104		If other, please explain	
105	What Next?	We are interested in speaking in-depth with some of our survey participants about their experiences.	
106		If yes, please provide your email address.	

Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

Questions Used in Survey			
ID	Prefix	Root	Answers
107	Would you be willing to have us contact you?	Yes   No	
108		If yes, please provide your email address here.	
109		If you know anyone else who might want to participate in this survey, please provide us with their email addresses at right and we will send them a link to the survey. If providing multiple addresses please separate them with a comma.	
110		Which other place?	
111		Which other place?	
112		Which other place?	
113		Which other place?	
114		Which other place?	
115		Which other place?	
116		What was your main reason for taking an ESL class?	

# Endnotes

1. In fact, the overwhelming majority of our survey respondents — 88% — were in the labor force, and other analysis led us to conclude that few of the remaining respondents had withdrawn from the labor force because of integration-related factors.
2. U.S. Census Bureau: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html> and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2015/median-weekly-earnings-by-education-gender-race-and-ethnicity-in-2014.htm>
3. We also note that the \$50,000 figure is approximately equal to U.S. median household income. In other words, with this level of individual income, even if no other member of the household were contributing income, this individual and his or her household would equal or exceed the income of 50% of American households.
4. We did not attempt to determine whether respondents earning between \$30,000–\$49,999 were permanently stalled in lower-wage jobs or had the potential to continue increasing their earning power. This is a fruitful area for further research and analysis.
5. Because some respondents took *both* free and fee-based classes, the overall percentage of respondents who took some form of English class is 43%.
6. We also analyzed success data based on respondents' self-reported English listening, reading, and writing skills. In all cases, the responses differed by only a few percentage points from the speaking skills data.
7. Because all of our definitions of success were calculated as a percentage of respondents in the labor force, and all of them required that the respondent be employed to count as successful, it is unsurprising that respondents over 65 showed significantly lower rates of success. While many people 65+ years are likely to be out of the labor force entirely (and thus not included in our pool) others are likely to be unemployed (20% of those who were 65 and older were unemployed and actively looking for work, as compared to approximately 15% of those ages 35 to 64), or voluntarily working reduced hours, and thus likely to have reduced income.
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15. Success rates were calculated for respondents who were *in the labor force*, which was the overwhelming majority of our respondents. Further details about our definitions of success can be found in the beginning section of this report.
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79. Similar to an internship, a mid-ternship is an opportunity for adults to gain additional American workplace experience in their field, or to explore a new field or occupation.
80. Gelman, Andrew. 2015. "Here's why you should worry about the polls for the 2016 U.S. elections — and beyond." *The Washington Post*. Retrieved September 9, 2015. (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/08/31/heres-why-you-should-worry-about-the-polls-for-the-2016-u-s-elections-and-beyond/>)
81. Witte, James and Phillip Howard. 2002. "Technological & Methodological Innovation in Survey Instruments: The Future of Polling" in *Navigating Public Opinion*, edited by Fay Cook and Jeff Manza. New York: Oxford University Press.
82. We use ACS data from the six cities of our study because 62% of the IMPRINT national sample came from these six cities. Many of the respondents from other areas came from large urban areas that are more like the six cities than they are like the nation as a whole.
83. Controlling for region of origin may isolate other ways that the IMPRINT and ACS samples differ from one another. As was the case with gender, labor market outcomes or other outcomes may vary with characteristics that are correlated with place of birth (e.g., race, ethnicity or language ability). In this case, conducting the analysis separately according to place of birth may determine if these other characteristics account for differences in outcomes rather than place of birth.
84. Because our study was deliberately focusing on individuals with at least some higher education from abroad, only a small minority of respondents fell into this third category.
85. College-educated respondents to our audio survey were somewhat less likely to report having received higher education abroad. Seventy-four percent (74%) of audio respondents reported receiving at least some of their higher education outside the United States.
86. An additional 8% of respondents had studied toward an advanced degree abroad, but had not completed the degree.
87. These are not mutually exclusive groups. A respondent could have obtained a graduate degree from abroad and another advanced degree in the U.S..
88. "Respondents" here refers to respondents in the six cities and all other cities in the online IMPRINT survey.
89. The sections are not mutually exclusive. "U.S. Educated Immigrants" includes respondents who had obtained some or all of their higher education in the United States, while "Foreign Educated Immigrants" includes respondents who had obtained some or all of their higher education abroad. Thus, respondents who have "blended" U.S. and foreign education are included in both analyses.
90. With the IMPRINT data, the ability to speak English is always self-reported, while in the ACS, the data is self-reported for the person completing the form but then he or she indicates the language ability of all other members in the household.
91. The percentage of those who report speaking English "Not at all" was too small to be included in our analysis.
92. We use ACS data from the six cities of our study because 62% of the IMPRINT national sample came from these six cities. Many of the respondents from other areas came from large urban areas that are more like the six cities than they are like the nation as a whole.
93. In subsequent analyses of the impact of English language ability on labor market outcomes, this variable may prove particularly useful as there is more vari-



- ation and the ability to write is relevant across a variety of occupations.
94. The percentage of those who report speaking English “Not at all” was too small to be included in our analysis.
  95. N=3,971 online survey respondents for this variable.
  96. In the U.S., such classes are provided by a wide range of institutions and groups, which rely on a mix of public and private funding. Nearly 700,000 adults each year are served in federally funded ESOL classes, which are overwhelmingly focused on beginner and intermediate-level spoken English. Statistics on federally-funded adult English language classes can be found at the National Reporting System website, [www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org)
  97. In this study, percentages have been rounded to the nearest percent. Totals may not always equal 100%.
  98. The U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) does not ask about evaluation of foreign education. In fact, it does not even inquire about the country in which respondents obtained their education. Therefore, we cannot compare our findings in this section with ACS data.
  99. Our survey did not provide the same answer categories for the questions about reasons why respondents with foreign education chose not to apply for U.S. licensure and credential evaluations.
  100. Stronger English language skills among African immigrants (with Nigerians so over-represented in our survey) may be a contributing factor to their higher rates of volunteerism.
  101. The “Not eligible” category encompasses all of those who have not yet become naturalized U.S. citizens, and therefore could not register to vote even if they wanted to. It is important to note that since the survey did not inquire about immigration status, it is unclear how many of the “Not eligible” respondents are on a pathway to naturalization. Some respondents are likely to be legal permanent residents (“green card” holders) who are not yet eligible to apply for citizenship. Typically, green-card holders must wait 3-5 years before applying. Other respondents may be in the U.S. on an employment-based visa such as H-1B, on a student visa, or may be unauthorized. None of this latter set of respondents would currently be on a path to citizenship and all would have fallen under the “Not eligible” category.
  102. Caution should be used in interpreting this number, as it reflects a statistically significant difference, but an overall low number of respondents from this region. (N=113 for Canada and Oceania.)
  103. There are rare exceptions to this rule, but they primarily apply to individuals who are senior citizens at the time they take the citizenship test.
  104. This category was deliberately structured broadly to include all types of online news, not simply newspapers.
  105. It is important to note that these statistics reflect respondents who listened to the radio for news. We did not ask (so our data does not show) the percentage of online survey respondents who listened to the radio for other purposes, such as music, religious programming, or sports talk.
  106. Specifically, N=93.
  107. Due to technical limitations, respondents in our audio survey had a slightly different set of answer options on this question than our online survey respondents. For this reason, the “preferred news sources” in this paragraph vary slightly from the news sources in previous paragraphs of this chapter, and therefore are not a precise comparison.
  108. This number includes those who are self-employed or working for a family business.
  109. This category could include respondents currently enrolled in education or training programs.
  110. These constraints could include transportation costs or family responsibilities that created a barrier to employment.
  111. Since our survey did not gather information on immigration status, it is impossible to know whether “not being authorized to work” was temporary (as in the case of a student who later successfully transitioned to an employment-based visa) or effectively permanent (for individuals with unauthorized immigration status, or those waiting in decades-long visa categories).
  112. Notably, a disproportionate number of African respondents were from Anglophone West Africa, which likely influenced the numbers here.
  113. For example, our experience suggests that those who are outside the labor force often have fewer opportunities to practice their English skills, especially if they are full-time parents or caregivers.
  114. “Mixed education” refers to respondents who obtained some of their higher education in the U.S. and some abroad.

## About the Partners

**World Education Services (WES.org)** led this project through its Global Talent Bridge program. For more than 40 years, WES has helped highly-skilled immigrants in the U.S. and Canada achieve their academic and professional goals by leveraging and utilizing their education and training earned abroad. Through its **Global Talent Bridge program (global-talentbridge.org)**, WES conducts outreach and provides training, tools and resources designed to ensure the successful integration of immigrant professionals, and serves as host of the IMPRINT coalition.

**IMPRINT (imprintproject.org)**, based at WES, is a national coalition of nonprofit organizations active in the emerging field of immigrant professional integration. Working closely with partners in government, community agencies, higher education, business and other sectors, IMPRINT raises awareness of the talents and contributions of foreign-educated immigrants and refugees. The coalition works to identify and promote best practices and advocates for federal, state and local policies that facilitate the integration of immigrant professionals into the U.S. economy.

**Institute for Immigration Research (iir.gmu.edu)**, the lead research partner on this project, is a joint venture between George Mason University and the Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Massachusetts. Its mission is to refocus the immigration conversation among academics, policy-makers and the public, including the business community and media, by producing and disseminating unbiased and objective, interdisciplinary academic research related to immigrants and immigration to the United States.

**AudioNow (audionow.com)** is the leading call-to-listen platform and provider of interactive mobile applications for broadcasters. Based in Washington D.C., AudioNow connects in-language broadcasters with hard-to-reach diaspora communities worldwide. It hosts broadcasts from more than 2,600 different radio stations in 94 languages, from the U.S., Central America, South Asia, the Philippines, Africa and the Middle East. In 2014, it broadcasted more than 2.5 billion listening minutes.

**The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (KnightFoundation.org)** supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation believes that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged.





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