



Helping Immigrants Thrive in Allegheny County



Through a community-wide effort, we see our region as a place where:

- + Immigrants feel truly welcome
- + Services and systems are readily accessible to people with limited English skills and are responsive to the needs of immigrants
- + Immigrants are integrated into the life of our community while maintaining and sharing their own culture
- + Immigrants are recognized as social, economic and cultural assets
- + Immigrant communities are empowered and their voices are encouraged and widely respected

Why a Community Blueprint

Our region has a long history of welcoming immigrants and benefiting from their important contributions. From building one of the first library systems in the country to the cherished tradition of cookie tables at weddings, immigrants have helped to shape our region. Today's foreign-born residents may come from different countries than past generations, but they share many of the same hopes and challenges.

Immigrants in Allegheny County offer a wealth of diversity in terms of language, culture, skills and talents. Their varied life situations include international students, visiting professors, business professionals, laborers, refugees and other humanitarian migrants. Like those immigrants who shaped our region in past generations, they are helping our communities to be vibrant and innovative places to live and work.

Our region is gaining national recognition for its work in welcoming immigrant residents as part of Welcoming America. The Allegheny County Department of Human Services' Immigrants and Internationals Initiative, supported by the Advisory Council, have made great strides over the past 8 years in developing needed supports and community leadership. The Mayor's office has launched Welcoming Pittsburgh, promoting awareness of and opportunities for immigrant residents. Foundations are investing in the strengths and talents of immigrant communities.

This Community Blueprint is intended to build on these valuable efforts and to engage the broader community in supporting and fully engaging our immigrant neighbors, for the benefit of all residents in our region.

How the Entire Community can **Benefit**

+ PROVIDING NEEDED WORKERS

As baby boomers retire at increasing rates, new immigrant residents can help offset potential labor market shortages in Allegheny County, where the working age population is comprised of approximately 20,000 fewer people aged 25 to 44 than 45 to 64

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

+ BUILDING NEW BUSINESSES

Immigrant community members start businesses at twice the rate of residents born in the US

Source: www.americanprogress.org

+ ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STABILITY

US-born children of immigrants are more likely to go to college, less likely to live in poverty and equally likely to be homeowners as the average American

Source: www.americanprogress.org



Creating the Blueprint

With our growing immigrant population, the national attention attracted by local efforts to support and celebrate immigrant communities, and the launch of Welcoming Pittsburgh, the time was right for a coordinated, county-wide effort.

From June 2015 to June 2016, a total of 173 thoughtful, committed residents of Allegheny County, including 88 immigrants, met to work on the Blueprint. They represented numerous sectors of our community: leaders of ethnic organizations, government, education, health care, nonprofit service providers, and economic development. The resulting plan will engage the broader community in this important work over the next three to five years.

The Process

+ **DHS Immigrant & Internationals Advisory Council meetings** to identify areas of strength, pressing issues and potential strategic approaches

+ **Listening sessions** with various immigrant community groups to identify areas of concern

+ **Peer-led needs assessment** completed in the Latino community

+ **Steering committee meetings** including leaders from government, business and service sectors and the immigrant community to establish strategic priorities

+ **Meetings of each of five Action Teams** to create tactical plans

+ **Final steering committee meeting** to review and approve the plan and set the course for implementation

Strategic Priorities

to help immigrants thrive

Language Access

Enhance the capacity of local organizations and systems to provide access for residents with limited English proficiency (LEP) and increase the ability of LEP residents to exercise and advocate for their language rights.

- + Create a central language coordinating entity
- + Increase awareness of language access responsibilities and rights
- + Increase use of practices for ensuring meaningful access to essential services
- + Collect and share language-related data
- + Establish mechanisms for learning and sharing
- + Increase standards for and use of interpretation and translation services
- + Leverage new developments in language technology

Health & Well-being

Make high quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate physical and behavioral health care readily accessible to immigrant residents.

- + Create easy-to-understand information regarding health, health services and insurance that is widely available in multiple languages
- + Promote appropriate and regular use of interpretation services in physical and behavioral health care
- + Increase access to affordable health care services
- + Ensure that health care workers are trained and able to serve people from multiple cultures
- + Increase neighborhood-based outreach, education and service provision tailored to the needs of communities, including the use of community health workers
- + Increase the number of multilingual health care providers and raise awareness about their services



BY THE NUMBERS

82,395

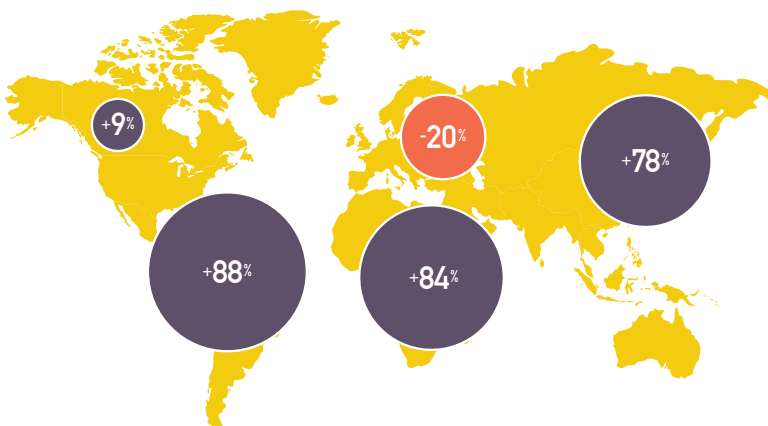
Allegheny County residents speak a language other than English at home, and 1/3 of them report speaking English "less than very well"



Home regions of immigrants in Allegheny County are changing, with **major shifts between 2000 and 2014**

Source: Census 2000; 2014 American Community Survey

- EUROPE
- + ASIA
- + AFRICA
- + LATIN AMERICA
- + NORTH AMERICA



🍎 Education

Enable educators to support immigrant student success, family engagement, and lifelong learning.

- + Support access to early intervention and early childhood education
- + Strengthen supports for academic success from pre-K to 12 and support college readiness
- + Ensure that parents can meaningfully participate in their child's education
- + Expand community-based ESL classes and provide needed supports such as child care and flexible hours
- + Increase availability and use of postsecondary education and training opportunities

👜 Economic Development

Promote career, entrepreneurial, and other economic opportunities for immigrant residents, including access to affordable housing, childcare and transportation.

- + Create a coordinating entity to lead immigrant economic development efforts jointly in the city and county
- + Increase access to career development opportunities
- + Educate employers and the workforce development system on the value of immigrant talent and experience
- + Promote vocational ESL resources for career development
- + Make entrepreneurial opportunities and supports readily available
- + Advance opportunities for and access to safe and affordable housing, transportation, child care and other resources that remove barriers to and accelerate economic progress



BY THE NUMBERS

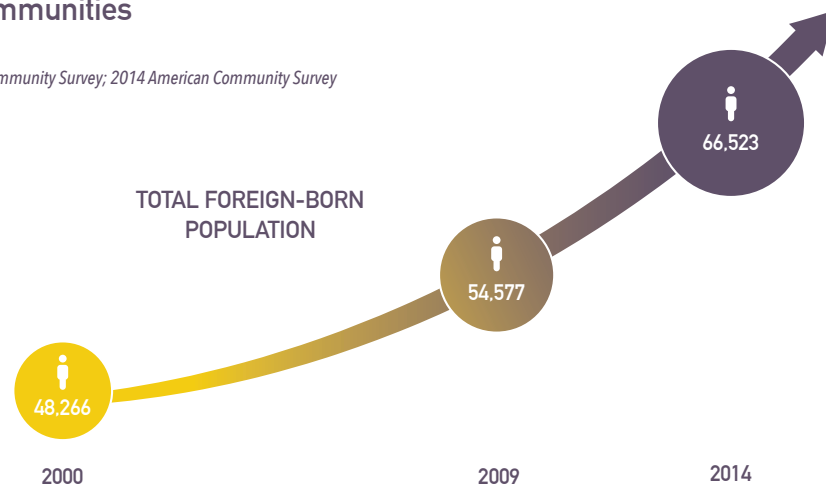
Over 1,700

Children enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in Allegheny County schools in the 2014 school year — an increase of 87% since 1999



Since 2000, newcomers born outside the US are arriving in Allegheny County in increasing numbers, adding to the growth of our immigrant communities

Source: Census 2000; 2009 American Community Survey; 2014 American Community Survey





Family Support

Strengthen supports for immigrants across the life span.

- + Strengthen collaboration with first responders and other services and systems, such as the Area Agency on Aging and Children, Youth and Families
- + Strengthen Family Support Centers that provide immigrant programs
- + Ensure that parenting supports and youth programs are available beyond the age range of Family Support Centers
- + Increase access to and information about affordable child care, including care provided within the immigrant community
- + Improve access to the continuum of services for families in crisis, including domestic violence, substance abuse, trauma and family therapy



Civic Engagement

Develop opportunities for immigrants to participate fully in the civic life of the community.

- + Increase supports for obtaining citizenship
- + Create opportunities for leadership development
- + Support and develop strong ethnic community organizations
- + Promote community engagement, social integration and cultural understanding among immigrant communities and established local communities



BY THE NUMBERS

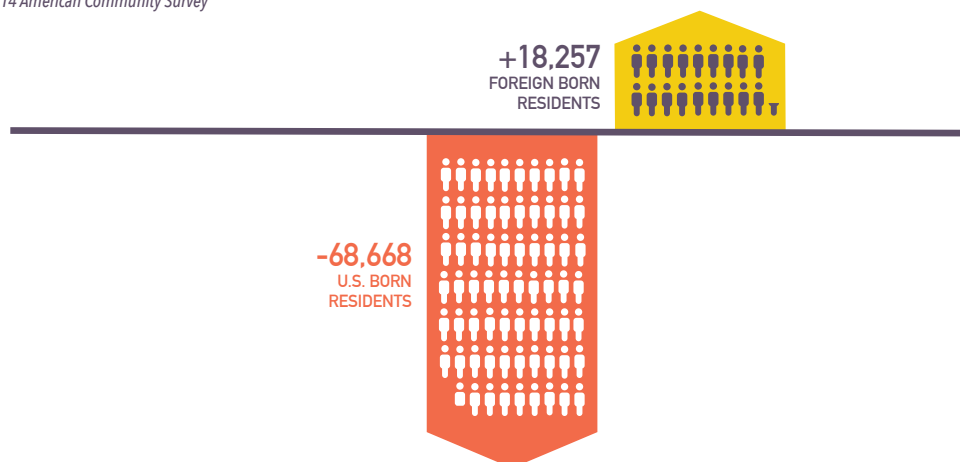
1 out of 20

Allegheny County residents was born outside the US



Immigrants are helping to counteract **native-born population decline** in Allegheny County seen from 2000 to 2014

Source: Census 2000; 2014 American Community Survey



Immigrant Community Blueprint

Implementation and Metrics for Success

Implementation will be guided by tactical plans created by Blueprint Action Teams and coordinated by a central entity.

The tactical plans corresponding to each strategic priority area are available online at www.allegheycounty.us/DHS/immigrantcommunityblueprint

• Roles & Activities

For plan implementation

- + Coordinate and oversee implementation efforts
- + Collect and share data
- + Build the capacity of local organizations through increased language access, inclusive hiring, training, staff development and greater resources to provide direct services
- + Increase broad community awareness of immigrant issues and available resources
- + Advocate for policies that help immigrants reach their full potential as members of the broader community
- + Connect immigrants to resources and opportunities
- + Raise the profile of immigrant communities and support the development of their leaders

Photos by: the Bhutanese Community Association of Pgh and Luv Purohit for PRYSE Academy

🎯 Measuring Success

Progress will be measured through increases in:

- + Agencies and systems, including health care, education, justice, government and human service, with language access plans and practices that meet standards established through the Blueprint
- + Foreign-born residents who choose to live in Allegheny County
- + Foreign-born residents of Allegheny County who become U.S. citizens
- + Affordable language interpretation and translation services listed in a central data base
- + English as a Second Language classes listed in a central data base, and students enrolled in those classes
- + Immigrants enrolled in industry sponsored workforce training programs and courses in emerging opportunity fields such as health care
- + Sites that meet pre-established criteria as welcoming points of access

Services currently available in Allegheny County for immigrants

- + Allegheny County has several immigrant-serving programs, agencies, and organizations. These include four Refugee Resettlement agencies, family support centers, several ESL providers, health care providers, AmeriCorps and a host of ethnic community associations who participate in the DHS Immigrants and Internationals Advisory Council. In addition, Immigrant Services and Connections (ISAC), funded by DHS, is a six-agency collaborative that assists immigrants and refugees with accessing services through the use of service coordinators and navigators from local immigrant communities.

