

AN EMPLOYER GUIDE TO HIRING GLOBAL TALENT IN CENTRAL OHIO 2024

In partnership with:





THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
CITY COUNCIL

Greetings:

On behalf of Columbus City Council, we are honored to write this letter celebrating the creation and highlighting the importance of this guidebook. We extend a special thanks to the Columbus Chamber of Commerce and all the partners that played a role in this guidebook's development. We would also like to thank you, the reader, for taking the time to engage with the strategies, tips and recommendations in this guide. Your engagement with this information represents a commitment to strengthening inclusivity and access for those who come to our city from around the globe looking for opportunity, safety and stability – and that commitment should be celebrated.

In 2022 our three offices partnered to sponsor the creation of this guidebook on behalf of Columbus City Council, and we are proud to see this end result distributed throughout our community. The city of Columbus and Central Ohio have been focal points of growth statewide and nationally, and the populations leading this growth have been our migrant, immigrant and refugee communities. As individuals from across the world make the decision to call Columbus their new home, it is our duty as leaders of this city to ensure that those new families feel welcome and supported. Part of that work includes efforts that help those new neighbors connect to job opportunities through culturally competent strategies and practices that meet them where they are.

This guidebook and its information will help businesses and industries benefit from the strength and expertise of the ever-growing New American workforce, and in return will give the individuals and families within this workforce paths to financial stability, careers and economic mobility.

We are honored to have sponsored this publication and look forward to seeing the impact it has on our community.

Sincerely,




NICK BANKSTON
Columbus City Councilmember




**LOURDES BARROSO
DE PADILLA**
Columbus City Councilmember




EMMANUEL REMY
Columbus City Councilmember

THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS

ANDREW J. GINTHER

Mayor, City of Columbus



Dear Neighbors,

The national and global spotlights keep finding their way back to Columbus, highlighting all we have achieved despite recent years of hardship and uncertainty. We're at the leading edge of innovation, collaboration and forward-leaning enterprises. We are, without a doubt, a beacon of light and hope for cities looking to navigate beyond the pandemic and forge a recovery that is robust and resilient. There is tremendous opportunity in Columbus.

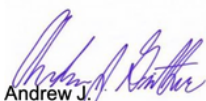
But as we continue to grow, change and evolve, we must not lose sight of our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. We draw great strength from our differences. We celebrate that which makes us unique. We recognize the power of a dynamic and welcoming culture.

I enthusiastically recommend hiring New Americans for your organizations and businesses. As someone deeply committed to fostering diversity, inclusion and talent cultivation, I believe that welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds greatly enriches workplace culture and enhances our collective capabilities.

New Americans bring with them a unique blend of experiences, perspectives and skills that can greatly contribute to the success and innovation of your teams. Their diverse cultural backgrounds often foster creativity, adaptability and a global mindset, all of which are invaluable assets in today's interconnected and dynamic work environment.

Thank you for your consideration, and thank you for all that you do to make Columbus stronger.

Sincerely,


Andrew J.
Ginther, Mayor



Greetings,

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, welcome the creation of this comprehensive hiring guide. It is tailored to assist employers in recruiting internationally trained professionals. And in today's globalized arena, where talent knows no borders, harnessing the skills and experiences of individuals from diverse backgrounds is not just advantageous — it is imperative.

As a society, we thrive on diversity, innovation and inclusivity. Yet, despite the abundance of talent worldwide, many internationally trained professionals face significant barriers when seeking employment opportunities in their chosen fields. These barriers are often rooted in systemic challenges, including unrecognized credentials, language proficiency requirements and unfamiliarity with local hiring processes.

This guide intends to bridge that gap by providing practical steps to successfully incorporate immigrants, refugees and internationally trained professionals into the U.S. workforce and its talent cycle (recruitment, retention and promotion). It provides practical insights into navigating credential evaluation processes, understanding foreign work experience and leveraging cultural competencies to foster inclusive work environments.

By embracing diversity and tapping into the rich pool of talent that internationally trained professionals carry, employers can experience lower workplace attrition, increased diversity and a strengthened brand and reputation. Moreover, by providing opportunities for internationally trained professionals to fully utilize their skills and expertise, we foster economic growth, social cohesion and global interconnectedness.

We commend the authors of this guide for their dedication and commitment to advancing inclusive hiring practices. Their expertise and insights are invaluable resources for employers seeking to build diverse and high-performing teams.

We encourage all employers to embrace the principles outlined in this guide and join us in creating workplaces where talent knows no boundaries.

Sincerely,



KEVIN L. BOYCE

Board President



JOHN O' GRADY

Commissioner



ERICA C. CRAWLEY

Commissioner



KELLY FULLER

*Senior vice president,
Columbus Chamber Foundation*



We express heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all of the individuals and organizations who have contributed to the completion of this guidebook. Our journey together has provided insight and better understanding of the communities within our region.

We thank our fellow group members for their hard work, dedication and cooperation throughout this project. Each team member played a crucial role, bringing unique skills and perspectives to the effort, greatly enriching our work. To our business partners, community-based organizations and educational entities, we are grateful.

We are truly thankful for the collaboration, guidance, support and resources provided for this effort. Thank you all for making this project a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Fuller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly Fuller
Senior Vice President
Columbus Chamber Foundation



Letter from US Together Inc. & Welcoming City

We extend our gratitude to the individuals and organizations who contributed their time, talent and support to the creation of *An Employer Guide to Hiring Global Talent in Central Ohio*.

This guide aims to serve as an essential toolkit for employers, offering them practical guidelines, tools and resources to effectively recruit, onboard and retain immigrants, refugees and internationally trained professionals. By embracing diversity and inclusivity in the workplace, employers not only enrich their teams but they foster innovation, creativity and cultural exchange. We are dedicated to bringing attention to the potential and contributions that immigrants, refugees and migrants bring to our communities. We are committed to facilitating their successful integration through education, training and employer engagement to promote upward mobility and economic empowerment.

Acknowledging the accomplishments of immigrants, refugees and internationally trained professionals as integral to our community's strength is vital. Their achievements reflect their resilience and determination as well as the inclusivity and opportunities present within the society they now call home. Welcoming and supporting immigrants, refugees, migrants and internationally trained professionals' success fosters a sense of unity and collective progress, affirming that when one part of our community flourishes, we all benefit.

At US Together and Welcoming City, we believe that every individual deserves the chance to thrive and succeed, regardless of their country of origin. By equipping employers with the knowledge and support they need to hire immigrants, refugees and internationally trained professionals we are both promoting economic prosperity and building stronger, more resilient communities where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Together, let us continue to build bridges of opportunity and understanding while celebrating the richness and diversity that immigrants and refugees bring to Central Ohio and beyond.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink.

NADIA KASVIN

*US Together Inc.
Co-founder & Director*



A handwritten signature in black ink.

TATYANA MINDLINA

*US Together Inc.
Co-founder & Director*



A handwritten signature in black ink.

GUADALUPE A. VELASQUEZ

*Welcoming City
Managing Director*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We express our gratitude and appreciation to all of the people and organizations who contributed to this guide. We also want to thank our fellow group members for their hard work, dedication and cooperation throughout the project. Each team member played crucial roles, bringing distinctive skills and perspectives, greatly enriching our work. And last but not least, we extend a deep appreciation to our families and friends for their understanding, encouragement and patience throughout this project's journey. Their unwavering support has been a constant source of motivation. We are grateful for the collaboration, guidance support and resources provided. Thank you for making this project a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

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Laura Berger Abbas – President and Owner, Abbas Consulting

Betsy Cohen – Author of *Welcome to the U.S.A. – You’re Hired!: A Guide for Foreign-Born People Seeking Jobs*

Jane Muindi – Program Director, Cincinnati Compass

Bryan Wright – Executive Director, Cincinnati Compass

Michael Sarkis – Former Intern, Welcoming City

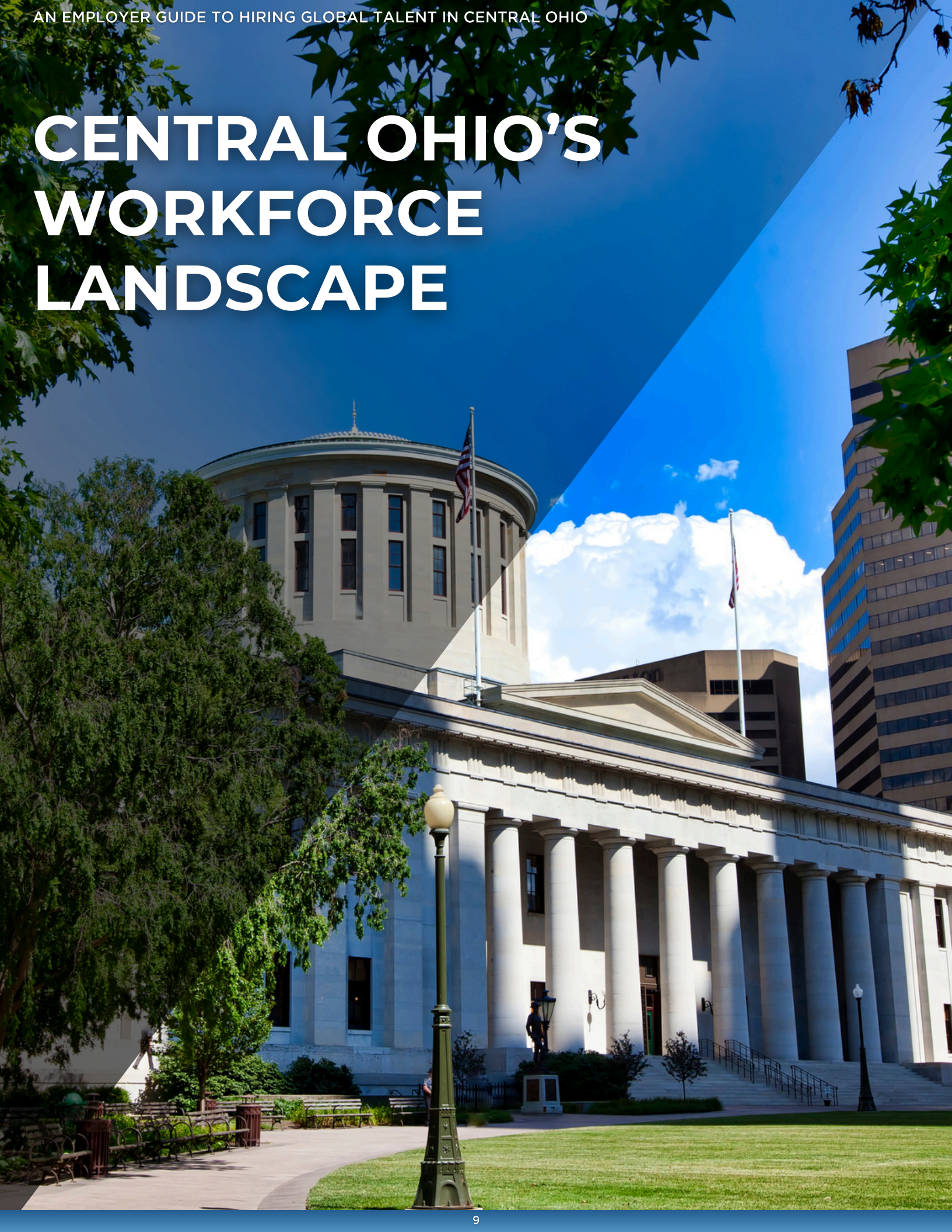
Vivian Westbrook – State and Local Advocacy Attorney, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Maryland

Amanda Bergson-Shilcock – Senior Fellow, National Skills Coalition

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CENTRAL OHIO'S WORKFORCE LANDSCAPE



CENTRAL OHIO'S WORKFORCE LANDSCAPE

Central Ohio is comprised of seven counties (Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway and Union), 21 cities, 116 township and 59 villages. It is home to more than 2.2 million residents, a population larger than those of 15 states.

In recent years many employers in Central Ohio have struggled to find workers amid labor shortages. For companies to attract diverse candidate pools, they must reform their recruitment and retention strategies to include an underemployed population with underutilized skills: foreign-born workers.

WORKER SHORTAGES CONTINUE IN MULTIPLE INDUSTRIES

Since February 2020, 30 percent of health-care workers have either lost their jobs or quit the profession. And the health-care worker shortage is expected to worsen, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges. Indeed, by 2034 there is expected to be fewer than 124,000 additional doctors necessary to meet the nation's health-care requirements.

Re-credentialing immigrants and refugees is a viable solution to the rising health-care worker shortage, as well as employee shortfalls in many other industries. According to the Migration Policy Institute, there are 263,000 immigrants and refugees with degrees in health-related fields working in low-paying and low-skilled fields. Nearly 2 million immigrants and refugees are relegated to low-paying fields and unable to utilize their skills.



RECOGNIZING THE TALENT POOL IN OHIO



CENTRAL OHIO'S WORKFORCE LANDSCAPE

CONTINUED

It is imperative that employers hire people from these underutilized communities for these reasons:

- According to the American Association of Colleges, nearly 65 percent of U.S. jobs will require a college degree, but the current pace of Americans entering college will be insufficient to fill these jobs.
- Re-credentialing immigrants and refugees can help to ease this shortage of workers.
- By not re-credentialing immigrants, refugees and migrants, the nation denies itself the economic benefits that immigrants and refugees can generate. For every 100 immigrants admitted to the United States between 2000 and 2007, 44 additional jobs were created.



According to the Migration Policy Institute, adult immigrants in Ohio are well-educated; nearly half hold college degrees, compared to about a third nationally and even less among native Ohioans. There are approximately 117,000 skilled immigrants in the state, yet about 21 percent of the population, or 24,000 individuals, either are unemployed or not using their skills to the fullest. If these skilled immigrants were given the chance to work in jobs that match their qualifications, however, they could earn an extra \$514.5 million a year collectively, generating an additional \$53 million in state and local taxes. This highlights the untapped potential of Ohio's immigrant population and the significant economic benefits that can be realized by better integrating them into the workforce.

This guide aims to provide information about how and why employers should hire internationally trained professionals. It also offers a pathway for companies and organizations to invest additional effort to find, recruit and retain foreign-born employees.

New Americans in metro Columbus

Demographic and economic contributions of immigrants in the Columbus area¹

Recognizing the Talent Pool in Ohio

MAY 2021



Population

184,800

Immigrants living in metropolitan Columbus in 2019.

Immigrants made up



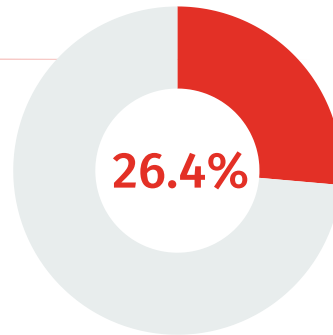
of the metro population in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the population in the metro area increased by



The immigrant population grew by

22.2%



Total population growth in the metro area attributed to immigrants.

Demographics



of immigrants in metro Columbus are recent arrivals, with less than five years of residency in the United States, meaning

In the metro area, immigrants are

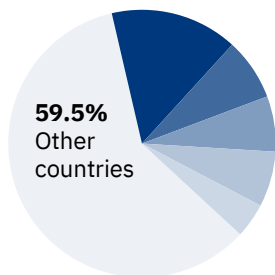
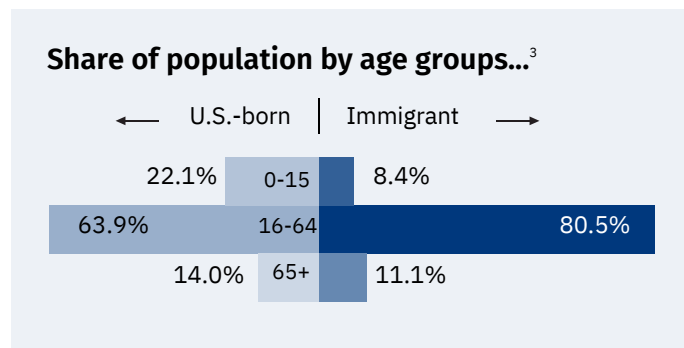


more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.²



of immigrants in metro Columbus have lived in the United States for more than five years.

The top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the metro area were



- India (**15.4%**)
- Mexico (**7.5%**)
- Somalia (**6.7%**)
- China (**6.7%**)
- Bhutan (**4.2%**)

¹ Unless otherwise specified, data comes from one-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019, and figures refer to the metropolitan statistical area of Columbus, Ohio.

² We define working age as 16 to 64 years of age.

³ Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographics *continued*

28,200

immigrants living in the metro area had limited English language proficiency, making up



of the immigrant population.

Among them, the top language spoken at home other than English was

Spanish

which made up **32.3%** of all non-English languages spoken at home by immigrants with limited English language proficiency.

Spending Power & Tax Contributions

Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to state and local taxes, including property, sales and excise levies by governments.

Foreign-born households held



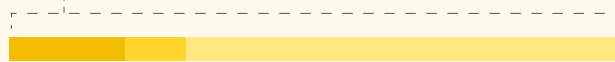
of all spending power in metro Columbus, more than their **8.7%** share of the population.

In 2019, foreign-born residents in the area contributed

\$15.4 billion

to the metro area's GDP, or **11.5%** of the total.⁶

In 2019, immigrant households in the metro area earned **\$7.4 billion**



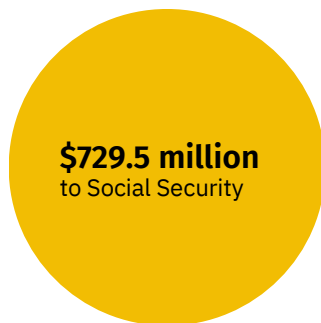
■ **\$1.4 billion**

went to federal taxes⁴

■ **\$712.4 million** went to state & local taxes⁵

■ **\$5.3 billion** left in spending power

Immigrants in the metro area also supported federal social programs. In 2019, they contributed



\$204.3 million
to Medicare

25.6%

of immigrants in the metro area received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with

31.3%

of U.S.-born residents in 2019.

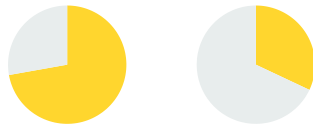
⁴ U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

⁵ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

⁶ These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 1-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

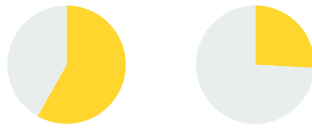
Spending Power & Tax Contributions *continued*

About **72.2%** of immigrants had private health-care coverage, while **32%** had public health-care coverage.⁷



Private

About **58.2%** of U.S.-born had private health-care coverage, while **25.9%** had public health-care coverage.



Public

Given their household incomes, **17.5%** of immigrants lived at or below 150% of the federal poverty threshold, compared to **26.1%** of U.S.-born residents.



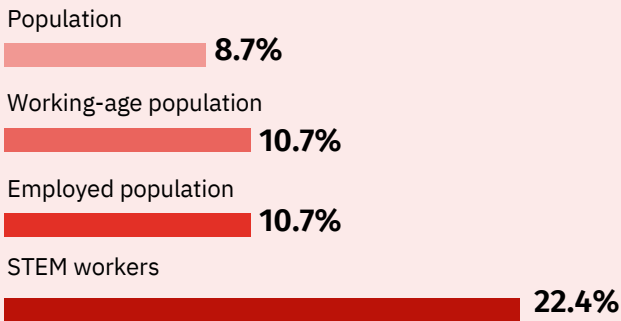
Immigrants

U.S.-born

Workforce

Although the foreign-born population made up **8.7%** of the metro's population, they represented **10.7%** of its working-age population, **10.7%** of its employed labor force and **22.4%** of its STEM workers in 2019.⁸

Immigrant shares of ...



The immigrant working-age population was **49.9%** female and **50.1%** male.



The employed immigrant population was **43.2%** female and **56.8%** male.



Immigrants in the metro area are

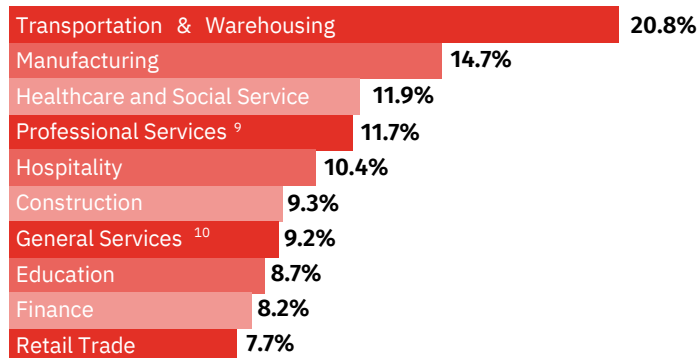
25.9%

more likely to be of working age or employed than their U.S.-born counterparts.

Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the metro area.



of workers in the Transportation & Warehousing industry were foreign-born in 2019.



⁷ Including people who have both public and private health-care coverage.

⁸ STEM refers to occupations that require background or expertise in science, technology, engineering and/or math.

⁹ Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services.

¹⁰ General services include personal services, such as laundry services, barber shops, repair and maintenance, religious organizations, social services and labor unions.

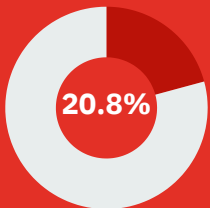
Workforce *continued*

SPOTLIGHT ON Immigrant Essential Workers

Immigrants played vital roles in critical industries that kept the nation functioning throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Immigrants in the metro area continue working in these frontline and essential industries:

Transportation & Warehousing

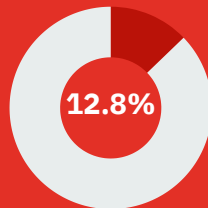
Immigrants made up



of the workforce

Health Care

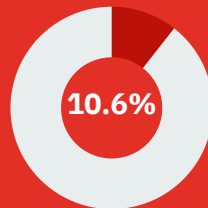
Immigrants made up



of the workforce

Food Service

Immigrants made up



of the workforce

Essential Services ¹¹

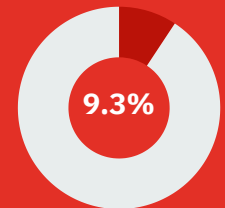
Immigrants made up



of the workforce

Construction

Immigrants made up



of the workforce

SPOTLIGHT ON Job demand in metro Columbus in 2021

Not only are immigrants more likely to be of working age in the area, they are a crucial part of the city's economy and could help it meet the needs of its fastest-growing and most in-demand fields, especially as the need for bilingual and culturally competent public services and health-care increases. The top five industries with the highest demand for bilingual workers: ¹²

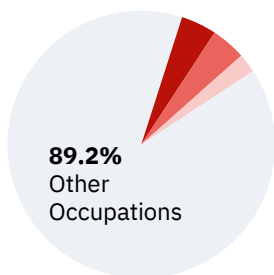
1. Retail Trade

2. Finance & Insurance

3. Health Care & Social Assistance

4. Transportation & Warehousing

5. Professional, Scientific & Technical Services



Immigrants tended to work in these occupations in the metro area in 2019:

- Software developers (4.3%)
- Truck drivers (4.2%)
- Postsecondary teachers (2.3%)

In 2019, about



of college-educated immigrants were underemployed, working in occupations not requiring a bachelor's degree.¹⁴

Due to the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that immigrants living in metro Columbus had helped create or preserve

8,500

manufacturing jobs that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere by 2019.¹³

¹¹ These include services essential for daily living, such as building cleaning, waste management, auto repair and veterinary services.

¹² Data obtained from Burning Glass Technologies for the period between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.

¹³ Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." *New American Economy*.

¹⁴ Information of entry-level education for occupations obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Entrepreneurship

9,800

immigrant entrepreneurs lived in metro Columbus in 2019, making up



of the business owners in the area though making up **8.7%** of the population.

Immigrant entrepreneurs in metro Columbus generated

\$289.6 million

in business income in 2019.

While **7.5%** of the U.S.-born population were entrepreneurs, **8.2%** of foreign-born residents worked for their own businesses.



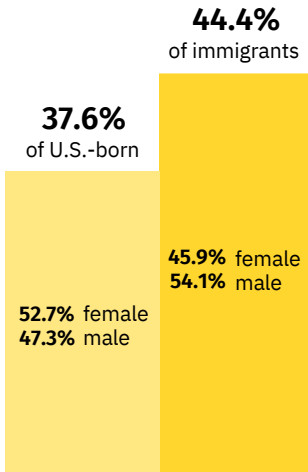
U.S.-born



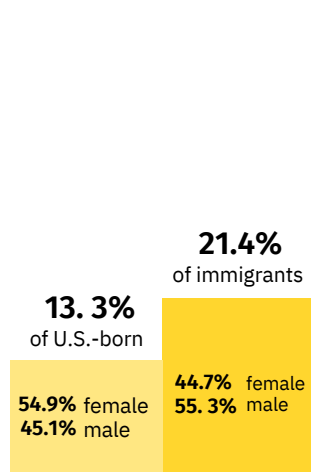
Immigrant

Education

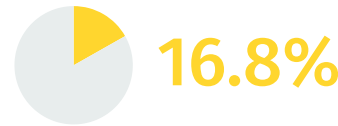
Share of the metro area's population ages 25 or above that held a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2019:



Share of the metro area's population ages 25 or above that held **advanced degrees** in 2019:



of K-12 students in the area were foreign-born in 2019.



of K-12 students in the metro were the children of immigrants in 2019.

¹⁵ Data on total student enrollment derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics. Temporary residents refer to people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

¹⁶ Economic data derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.

SPOTLIGHT ON

University Population

7,900

students enrolled in colleges and universities in metro Columbus in fall 2019 were temporary residents.¹⁵

1,000

international students graduated with STEM degrees from colleges and universities in the area in the 2018-19 academic year.

3,900

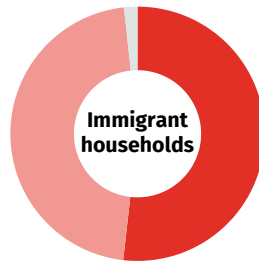
local jobs were supported by international students in the 2019-20 academic year.

\$342.5 million

spent by international students in the 2019-20 academic year.¹⁶

Housing

In 2019, **62.3%** of U.S.-born households in metro Columbus owned their own homes, compared to **44.1%** of immigrant households.



- Lived in houses **42,200**, or **51.8%**
- Lived in apartments **37,900**, or **46.5%**
- Lived in other types of housing **1,400**, or **1.7%**

U.S.-born

Immigrant

The total property value of immigrant households was

\$10.1 billion

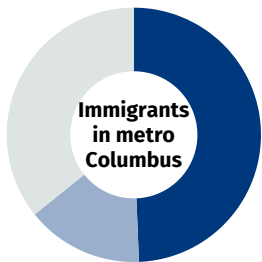
55.9% of immigrant households were renters. Their combined annual rent paid was

\$450.5 million



86% of immigrant households in the metro area had access to broadband connection in their place of residence, compared to **85.7%** of U.S.-born households in 2019.

Naturalization



- 49.4%** Naturalized citizens (91,200)
- 14.9%** Likely eligible to naturalize (27,500)
- 35.8%** Not eligible to naturalize¹⁷ (66,100)



- Naturalized
- Likely eligible
- Not eligible

Nationally, **48.7%** of immigrants are naturalized citizens, **15.9%** are likely eligible to naturalize and **35.4%** are not yet eligible.



of households in metro Columbus included at least one foreign-born resident in 2019.

If all immigrants who are eligible to naturalize became U.S. citizens, their earning potential would increase by

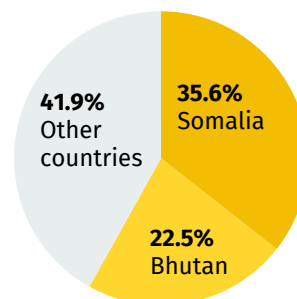
+8.9%¹⁸

Refugees

32,700

refugees, or **17.7%** of the foreign-born population in metro Columbus, likely were refugees.¹⁹

The top countries of origin for the refugees in the metro area were:



¹⁷ Immigrants were not eligible to become naturalized U.S. citizens either because they have not met criteria for naturalization, such as residency requirements, age and English proficiency, or because they are undocumented.

¹⁸ Enchautegui, Maria E. and Linda Giannarelli. 2015. "The Economic Impact of Naturalization on Immigrants and Cities." Urban Institute.

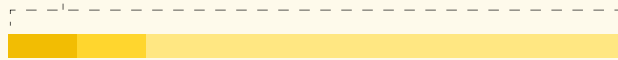
¹⁹ New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."

Refugees *continued*

About **17.5%** of refugees held at least a bachelor's degree.



In 2019, refugee households earned a combined **\$737.9 million**



- **\$82.8 million** went to federal taxes²⁰
- **\$78.3 million** went to state and local taxes²¹
- **\$576.7 million** left in spending power

In 2019, about



of refugees in the area were naturalized U.S. citizens.

DACA-eligible Population

In 2019, DACA-eligible people made up



of the foreign-born population in metro Columbus.

Undocumented Immigrants

41,100

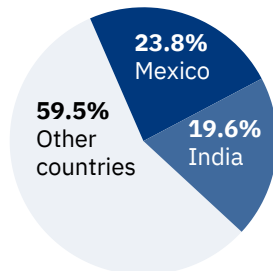
undocumented immigrants lived in metro Columbus in 2019.

They made up



of the foreign-born population in the metro area in 2019.

The top countries of origin for undocumented immigrants in the metro area were:

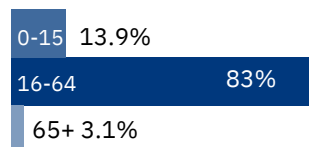


Undocumented immigrants are highly active in the labor force. More than



are of working age in the metro area.

Undocumented immigrants by age groups:

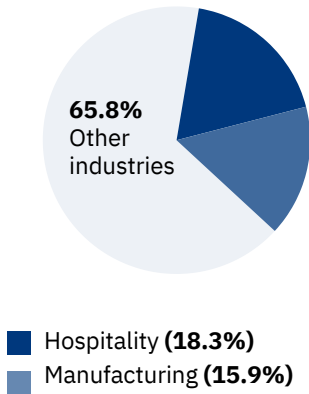


²⁰ U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

²¹ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

Undocumented Immigrants *continued*

Undocumented immigrants tended to work in these key industries:



In 2019, undocumented immigrant households earned **\$887.2 million**

■ **\$66.9 million**
went to federal taxes²²

■ **\$44.7 million** to state and local taxes²³

■ **\$775.6 million** left in spending power

²² U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

²³ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

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Population in the City of Columbus

103,500

immigrants lived in the city in 2019.

Immigrants made up



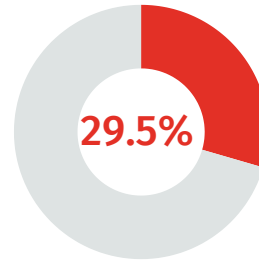
of the total city population in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population in the city increased by

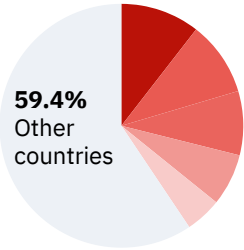
7%

The immigrant population grew by

+19.8%



of total population growth in the city was attributable to immigrants.



The top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the city were:

- India (**10.5%**).
- Mexico (**8.5%**)
- Ethiopia (**4.8%**)
- Somalia (**9.9%**)
- China (**6.9%**)

Spending Power & Tax Contributions in the City of Columbus

Given their income levels, immigrants contributed significantly to state and local taxes, including property, sales and excise taxes levied by governments.

Foreign-born households held



of all spending power in the city, more than their **11.7%** share of the population in 2019.

In 2019, immigrant households in the Columbus earned

\$3.6 billion

■ **\$656.2 million**

went to federal taxes²⁴

■ **\$353 million** went to state and local taxes²⁵

■ **\$2.6 billion** left in spending power

²⁴ U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

²⁵ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

GROWTH OF COLUMBUS' FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION, 2019-22

In 2019, 11.7% of the city's population was foreign born.
Three years later that level had risen to 14.8%.

Place of birth

14.8%

Foreign-born population

about 1.5 times the rate in the Columbus, OH Metro Area: 9.8%

more than double the rate in Ohio: 5%

Place of birth for foreign-born population



* ACS 2022 5-year data

[Show data / Embed](#)

U.S. Census Bureau 2022, † Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.



INCREASING DEMAND IN THE WORKFORCE



INCREASING DEMAND IN THE WORKFORCE

- Worker shortages continue in multiple industries.
- According to the American Association of Colleges, nearly 65 percent of jobs will require a college degree, but the current number of Americans entering college will not be sufficient to fill these jobs.
- Since February 2020, 30 percent of health-care workers either have lost their jobs or quit.
- The health-care worker shortage could worsen, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.
- By 2034 there could be fewer than 124,000 additional doctors necessary to meet the nation's health-care requirements.

SOLUTIONS

- Re-credentialing immigrants and refugees is a viable solution to the increasing health-care worker shortage, as well as employee shortfalls across multiple industries.
- According to the Migration Policy Institute, there are 263,000 immigrants and refugees with degrees in health-related fields working in low-paying and low-skilled fields.
- Nearly 2 million immigrants and refugees are relegated to low-paying fields and unable to utilize their skills.

OUTCOMES

- Re-credentialing immigrants and refugees can help to prevent this shortage of employees.
- By not re-credentialing immigrants, refugees and migrants, the United States denies itself the economic benefits that immigrants and refugees can generate. For every 100 immigrants admitted to the U.S. between 2000 and 2007, 44 additional jobs were created.

BENEFITS OF HIRING AND RETAINING GLOBAL TALENT



BENEFITS OF HIRING AND RETAINING GLOBAL TALENT

● EXCITEMENT AND APPRECIATION FOR THE WORK

Many from the refugee community arrive in Columbus after spending years in resettlement camps around the world. Long denied the opportunity to work and provide for their families, they are highly motivated to find stability in jobs that will allow them to live freely. Having faced extraordinary hardships, many refugees are resilient, creative and adaptable to workplaces.

● HIGH-LEVEL SECURITY AND VETTING

The U.S. Department of State notes, “Refugees are subject to the highest level of security checks of any category of traveler to the United States.”

● FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS

Companies seek ways to create more diverse workplaces and workforces. Multilingual employees increase businesses’ ability to expand their reach and create opportunities in a global economy.

● BOOST THE STATE’S ECONOMY

Granting professional licenses to immigrants would boost the Ohio economy. A 2018 Pew Research Center report revealed that the estimated 44 million immigrants in the U.S. are better educated than ever. An increase in wages that would result from fully employing trained immigrant professionals could add millions of dollars in tax revenue.

BENEFITS OF HIRING AND RETAINING GLOBAL TALENT

● **ALLOWS IMMIGRANTS TO FILL JOB DEMANDS**

Many of the employment areas in which professional licenses are required include high-paying and high-demand jobs. Granting professional licenses to immigrants would allow employers to fill jobs and enable immigrants to contribute their skills to the workforce.

● **ALLOWS STATES TO BENEFIT FROM EDUCATIONAL INVESTMENT**

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, it cost an estimated \$13,847 to educate a U.S. public school student in 2017-18. Granting professional licenses to immigrants who have benefited from public education in America allows them to join the workforce and contribute to a state's economy, giving the state a return on its investment.

● **PROMOTES ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITHIN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES**

Granting professional licenses to immigrants would allow them to become self-sufficient and participate in the economic development of their communities.

DEFINITIONS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS



DEFINITIONS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

Central Ohio is home to a wide array of foreign-born residents, including citizens of various statuses. It is important for employers to distinguish between immigrants, refugees, asylees, migrants, individuals with humanitarian parole and those with temporary protected status so they successfully hire foreign-born residents.

ASYLUM SEEKER

Asylum status is a form of protection available to people who meet the definition of refugee, are already in the United States and are seeking admission at a port of entry.

IMMIGRANT

A personal care individual or any person lawfully in the United States who is not a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or person admitted under a non-immigrant category as defined by the Immigration and Nationality Act Section 101(a)(15).

HUMANITARIAN PAROLE

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services uses its discretion to authorize parole. Parole allows an individual, who may be inadmissible or otherwise ineligible for admission into the United States, to be paroled into the country for a temporary period. The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) allows the Secretary of Homeland Security to use their discretion to parole any non-citizen applying for admission into country temporarily for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit. (See INA Section 212(d)(5).*)

- An individual who is paroled into the United States has not been formally admitted into the country for purposes of immigration law.
- Parole is not intended to be used solely to avoid normal visa processing procedures and timelines, to bypass inadmissibility waiver processing or to replace established refugee processing channels.

* See INA section 212(d)(5).: www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/23_0712_cbp_fy22_parole_requests.pdf

DEFINITIONS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

CONTINUED

MIGRANT

A person who leaves his or her country of origin to seek temporary or permanent residence in another nation.

REFUGEE

Anyone who is outside the country of their nationality, or in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside the country in which they last resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to it, and is unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that nation because of persecution or a fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

The U.S. government may determine a nation eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) if conditions in that country temporarily prevent the safe return of their nationals. These conditions could include a civil war or natural disaster. As a result, the U.S. government can grant TPS to eligible nationals, preventing them from being detained based on their immigration status.

VISAS

Immigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals who intend to live permanently in the United States. Meanwhile, non-immigrant visas are for foreign nationals wishing to enter America temporarily. The following five pages detail more information on visas, including their classifications.

DEFINITIONS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

CONTINUED

VISAS

IMMIGRANT VISAS

These visas are issued to foreign nationals who intend to live permanently in the United States.

NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS

These visas are for foreign nationals wishing to enter the United States on a temporary basis. Examples of temporary travel bases include:

- Tourism or vacation
- Receiving medical treatment
- Business visitor
- Academic or vocational study
- Temporary employment
- Exchange professor, scholar or teacher
- Treaty trader or treaty investor
- Diplomats or other government officials



VISA CLASSIFICATIONS



VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

Here is a list of visa classifications so employers can understand how and when individuals with different visas can work.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED IMMIGRANT VISAS

- **EB-1:** An immigrant must be a multinational executive or manager, be an outstanding researcher or professor, or be outstanding in the fields of science, business, arts and other sectors.
 - **EB-2:** An immigrant must belong to a profession that requires an advanced academic degree or must be exceptional in the fields of business, arts and science.
 - **EB-3:** An immigrant must be a skilled worker or professional.
 - **EB-4:** An immigrant must qualify as a so-called “special immigrant,” which includes employees of U.S. foreign service posts, religious workers and retired employees of international organizations.
 - **EB-5:** Prospective immigrants must be business investors who invest \$1.8 million – or \$900,000 if the investment is made in a specially targeted employment area – in a new commercial enterprise that employs at least 10 full-time U.S. workers.
-

MIGRANT

- **H-1B:** The position a foreign-born individual is applying for must require a specific academic degree and must pay the prevailing wage. Employers must also be willing to attest to certain issues.
- **H-2A:** An applicant must find a temporary and seasonal job, where there are an inadequate number of workers unable and unwilling to do the work. They must also demonstrate they will not harm the wages of U.S. workers in a similar job, and they must submit an H-2A petition with a valid temporary labor certification from the U.S. Department of Labor.
- **H-2B:** An immigrant must be willing to reside in America temporarily and the position they are applying for is seasonal, temporary or a one-time job. There also must be an inadequate number of workers able and willing to fill the job. The H-2B non-immigrant program permits employers to temporarily hire non-immigrants to perform non-agricultural labor or services in the United States. The employment must be temporary for a limited period, such as a one-time occurrence, seasonal need, peak-load need or intermittent need. The H-2B program requires the employer to attest to the government that it will offer a wage that equals or exceeds the highest of the prevailing wage, applicable federal minimum wage, state minimum wage or local minimum wage to the non-immigrant worker for the duration of the job. The H-2B program also establishes certain recruitment and displacement standards to protect similarly employed U.S. workers.

VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

CONTINUED

F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING VISAS FOR ACADEMIC STUDENTS

- **F-1 Academic Student** visas allow entry to the United States as a full-time student at an accredited college, university, seminary, conservatory, academic high school, elementary school, other academic institution, or in a language training program. Students must be enrolled in a program or course of study that culminates in a degree, diploma or certificate, and the school must be authorized by the U.S. government to accept international students.
- **F-1 Curricular Practical Training** visas are related to their area of study for F-1 students. The authorization is for a specific employer for a specific period. Students must secure the training opportunity before a Curricular Practical Training visa can be authorized.
- **F-1 Optional Practical Training** visas are a 12-month work authorization available to F-1 international students who have been full-time students for at least two consecutive semesters. It lets a student work for any employer, as long as the training relates to the student's major course of study and can occur before or after the student's program end date.
- **J-1 Exchange Visitor** visas are authorized for those who intend to participate in an approved program for the purpose of teaching, instructing or lecturing, studying, observing, conducting research, consulting, demonstrating special skills, receiving training, or to receive graduate medical education or training.

Under the Exchange Visitor Program, the U.S. Department of State designates public and private entities to act as exchange sponsors. J-1 non-immigrants are therefore sponsored by an exchange program that is designated by the State Department. These programs are designed to promote the interchange of people, knowledge and skills in the fields of education, arts and science.

O-1 NON-IMMIGRANT VISA

- **O-1A:** For individuals with an extraordinary ability in the sciences, education, business or athletics, not including the arts, motion pictures or television industry.
- **O-1B:** For individuals with an extraordinary ability in the arts or extraordinary achievement in the motion picture or television industries.
- **O-2:** For those who will accompany an O-1 artist or athlete to assist in a specific event or performance.
- **O-3:** For foreign nationals who are the spouses or children of O-1 and O-2 visa holders.

VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

CONTINUED

EMPLOYER SPONSORED VISAS

L-1A: L-1A and L-1B visas may be issued when an employer seeks authorization for qualified employees to be allowed to work and live in the United States. The L-1A visa is for intracompany transferees who work in managerial or executive jobs in a company located outside the United States.

- The L-1A non-immigrant classification enables a U.S. employer to transfer an executive or manager from one of its affiliated foreign offices to one of its offices in America. This classification also enables a foreign company that doesn't yet have an affiliated U.S. office to send an executive or manager to the United States with the purpose of establishing one. An employer must file Form I-129 Petition for a Non-immigrant Worker with a fee on the employee's behalf.
- Such staffers generally have been working for a qualifying organization abroad for one continuous year within the three years immediately before their admission to the United States, and be seeking to enter the country to provide service in an executive or managerial capacity for a branch of the same employer or one of its organizations.
- Executive capacity generally refers to the employee's ability to make a wide range of decisions without much oversight.
- Managerial capacity refers to the employee's ability to supervise and control the work of professional staff and to manage the organization, a department, subdivision, function or component of the organization. It also may refer to the employee's ability to manage an essential function of the organization at a high level without the direct supervision of others. (See section 101(a)(44) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and 8 CFR 214.2(l)(1)(ii) for complete definitions).

L-1B: The L-1B nonimmigrant classification enables a U.S. employer to transfer a professional employee with specialized knowledge relating to the organization's interests from one of its affiliated foreign offices to one of its offices in America. This classification also enables a foreign company that does not yet have an affiliated U.S. office to send a specialized knowledge worker to the United States to help establish one. The employer must file Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker, with fee on the employee's behalf.

- To qualify, the employee must generally have been working for a qualifying organization abroad for one continuous year within the three years immediately before the worker's admission to the United States, and be seeking to enter the country to provide services in a specialized knowledge capacity to a branch of the same employer or one of its qualifying organizations.
- Specialized knowledge means either knowledge the employee has about the petitioning organization's product, service, research, equipment, techniques, management or other interests and its application in international markets, or an advanced level of knowledge or expertise in the organization's processes and procedures. (See 8 CFR 214.2(l)(1)(ii)(D) for specifics.)

WORK ELIGIBILITY



WORK ELIGIBILITY

REFUGEES

- Are authorized to work indefinitely because their status does not expire.
- The Department of Homeland Security provides refugees with an Arrival/Departure record that does not expire, along with a Form I-94.
- Refugees should put N/A on the expiration date and “authorized to work” for section 1 of Form I-9.

ASYLEES

- Are authorized to work indefinitely because their status does not expire.
- The Department of Homeland Security provides asylees with an Arrival/Departure record that does not expire, along with a Form I-94.
- On their Form I-94, asylees will be given some form of notation or stamp to demonstrate that they are authorized to work.
- Asylees should put N/A on the expiration date and “authorized to work” for section 1 of Form I-9.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

- Are eligible for an Employment Authorization Document.
- If Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is extended for any country, the Federal Register will notify the individual with TPS from that country of their need to reapply for TPS and for a new Employment Authorization Document.
- If the Federal Register automatically renews the Employment Authorization Document for those who have Temporary Protected Status, the individuals will be informed of the new expiration date for their Employment Authorization Document.
- If the Federal Register does not automatically renew an individual’s Employment Authorization Document, they still may be able to work past their Employment Authorization Document’s expiration date if they have applied to renew their Employment Authorization Document.

HUMANITARIAN PAROLE

- If it is not deemed to be inconsistent with their Humanitarian Parole, individuals who have Humanitarian Parole status may be granted temporary employment authorization.

WORK ELIGIBILITY

CONTINUED

F-1 CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING VISAS FOR ACADEMIC STUDENTS

F-1 Academic Student visas allow international students to enter the United States as full-time students studying at an elementary or high school, college, seminary or conservatory.

- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorizes students to do practical training or work while they study. Students are eligible for CPT if they have been enrolled in a school, college, seminary or conservatory for at least one full academic year
- With F-1 CPT visas, students can work part- or full-time while they study.
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment that directly relates to a student's area of study. Students are eligible for OPT if they have been enrolled in a school, college, seminary or conservatory for at least one full academic year or have completed their studies.

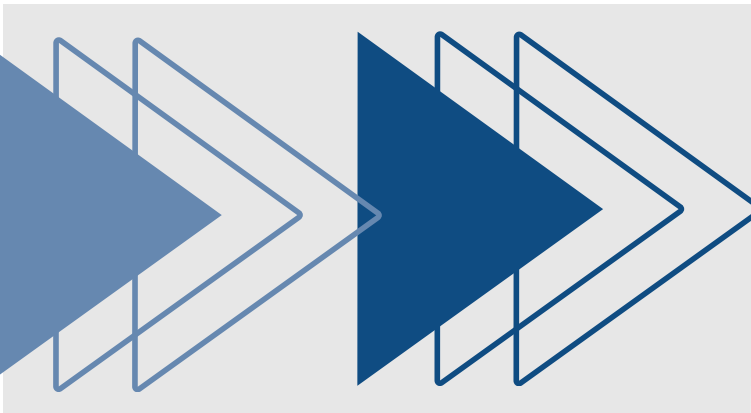
EMPLOYER SPONSORED VISAS

Employer Sponsored Visas include priority workers, professionals holding advanced degrees and those of exceptional ability, professionals and other workers, certain special immigrants and employment creation/investors.

O-1 NONIMMIGRANT VISA

O-1 Non-immigrant visas are for those who possesses extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business or athletics, or who have a demonstrated record of extraordinary achievement in the motion picture or television industries and have been recognized nationally or internationally for those achievements. Since 2022, the Biden administration has taken steps to expand the use and ease of applying for O-1 visas by clarifying eligibility criteria for immigrants with exceptional abilities, particularly in fields such as science, technology, engineering and math.

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING RETENTION AND A SENSE OF BELONGING



Create and uphold internal policies that support foreign credentials by recognizing individuals' work experience to determine their level of expertise, based on transferable skill sets. Have a method of evaluating expertise.

Incentivize employers, institutions and organizations to adopt formal training.

Ensure a safe and productive work environment by providing critical accommodations and bilingual materials for internationally trained professionals, particularly to those for whom English is a second language.

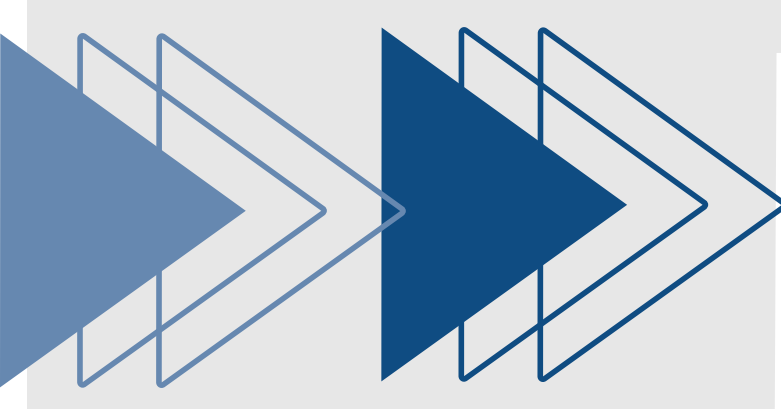
Establish policies that foster a sense of belonging and engagement. Research shows that employees who feel that they belong are more productive and engaged. Promote mutual understanding and support through relationships with peers, mentors, mentorship programs, coaches and supervisors.



CASE STUDY (Example of the last listed strategy): Barilla combines training in unconscious bias and stereotypes with a staffing model that has integrated, cross-functional teams. These teams foster inclusion by having employees from different backgrounds work together and blend different approaches and cultures, creating a more welcoming environment (Tent Partnership for Refugees, 2022).

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING RETENTION AND A SENSE OF BELONGING

CONTINUED



Collaborate with existing organizations and institutions to create pathway guides for internationally trained professionals, to assist them in gaining recognition for their credentials.

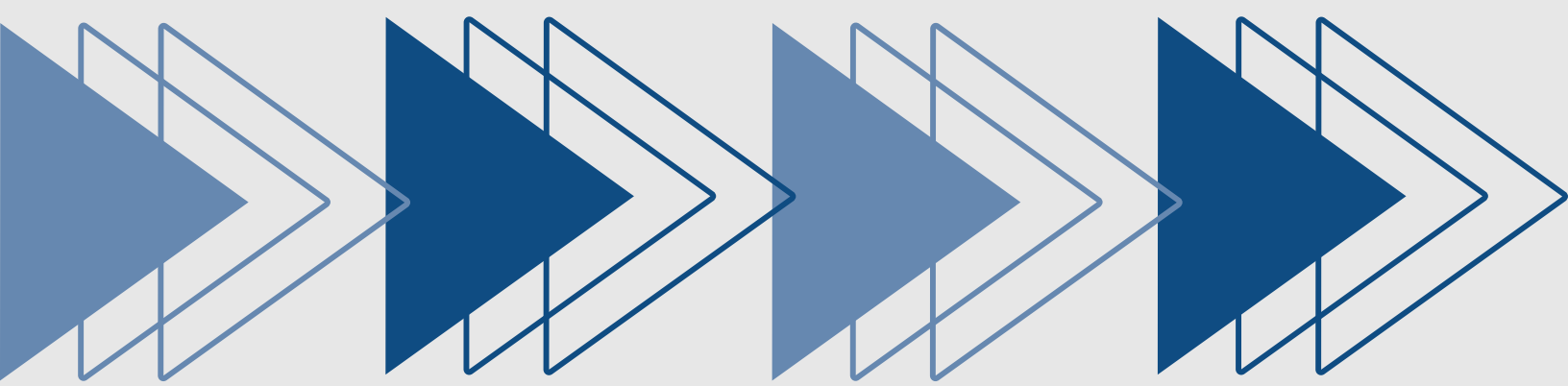
Establish relationships with non-profit service providers that are linguistically and culturally proficient. These partnerships can help grow Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs and provide additional support to immigrant employees.

Ensure that professional licenses or credentials are not limited by immigration status. Allow individuals with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers or those authorized to work lawfully to obtain necessary professional licenses.

CASE STUDY (Example of the second listed strategy): *A utility company with a well-developed DEI program — A large company had a well-developed DEI organization and structure internally. It had employee resource groups, a proactive leadership council that invited diverse speakers from the community to educate the group, and an annual conference they sponsored. This annual conference presented leading ideas about diversity: what it meant, who it involved, the language to use, the way the company would grow in its associate base and understanding this evolving topic serves the community. While the conference's main participants were company employees, it was opened up to key community partners to share their work and to allow others to learn from the speakers (Cohen, 2021).*

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING RETENTION AND A SENSE OF BELONGING

CONTINUED



CASE STUDY (Example of the first listed strategy):

Eunjoo, a supply chain manager from Korea — Eunjoo was working for a large regional company. She had not joined any of the organization's affinity groups, often called ERGs or BRGs. There was one for women, another for all Asians and one for a diversity council. She was busy with work and her family and did not believe it was worth her time. A friend convinced her to join the Asian group. She did, eventually becoming an officer of the group. She organized programming within the company for leadership skills of the group members and connected them to an outside Asian community group. Her leadership skills got noticed at work by those outside the Asian group, including her supervisor. She was asked to take on other broader leadership roles in the company. One opportunity was to step into a leadership role in the company's corporate United Way campaign. She realized that there were direct and indirect benefits from joining the affinity group for those of Asian heritage within the company (Cohen, 2021).

Create and uphold policies that support foreign credential recognition by recognizing individuals' previous work experience. Allow evaluations and testing to determine their level of expertise.

Consider providing networking activities such as "Lunch and Learn" events and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or Business Resource Groups (BRGs) to promote confidence in international employees.

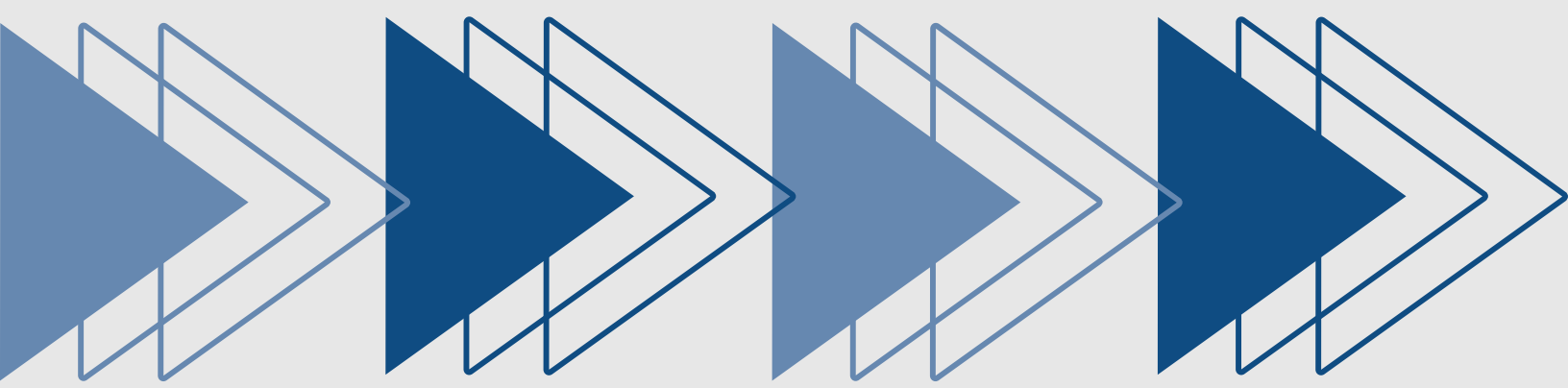


CASE STUDY (Example of the first listed strategy):

Francisco, a marketing manager from Nicaragua — Francisco was looking to leverage his work skills from Nicaragua in a slightly different industry in the United States. He had a range of work experiences but was unsure how to present the best outlook for his future with different companies. He was talkative and had done good projects in his past. He had not thought to do a "show and tell" of a marketing plan he had put together for a new target segment at a prior employer. His mentor advised him to put together a visual portfolio of his work. He also had developed some marketing material visuals that he was ready to share in the job interview. When Francisco had his interview, he showed his work. He smiled and was enthusiastic because he could point to his projects. He could brag a bit about how the work looked and how well the program performed. He shared metrics and results. While his English language skills were not perfect, his future employer could see how Francisco could do this type of work for the new organization and was impressed. Francisco showed confidence and his future employer was able to envision Francisco in the role (Cohen, 2021).

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING RETENTION AND A SENSE OF BELONGING

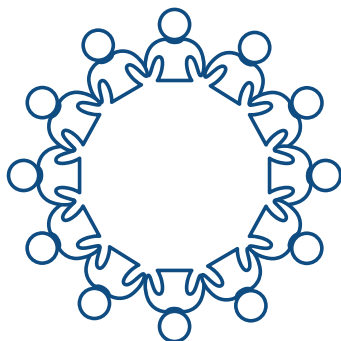
CONTINUED



Offer contextualized English training programs and bilingual videos to help employees overcome language barriers.



Consider providing on-site English-as-a-second-language classes to those who speak a language other than English. The Migration Policy Institute calls it “brain waste” when immigrants are unable to work in their profession.



CASE STUDY (Example of the first listed strategy): Chobani used to translate certain materials into the most common languages, but it realized that many employees could not read or write. It now presents materials in the simplest form possible: lots of pictures and diagrams with simple English words illustrating the job process and translation provided as needed. It also offer virtual English language learning for employees working with limited English proficient employees (Tent Partnership for Refugees, 2022).

CASE STUDY (Example of the second listed strategy): Inditex recognizes the value of a multilingual workforce and gives all of its employees access to the premium version of a language learning program called Busuu and encourages them to learn a new language (Tent Partnership for Refugees, 2022).

CASE STUDY (Example of the second listed strategy): Danby created a formal lunch buddy system, pairing each language learner with a Danby employee who has volunteered to help a newcomer with language practices. It also created informal opportunities to practice English such as carpooling, weekend events and potlucks. Additionally, it provides on-site classes, tutors and a free library of books for local language learners to improve their English proficiency. (Tent Partnership for Refugees, 2022).

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING RETENTION AND A SENSE OF BELONGING

CONTINUED



Provide flexibility regarding language skills. Determine the level of English proficiency required for an individual to successfully perform their tasks before excluding candidates with limited English proficiency.

Promote adaptable and flexible scheduling for immigrants who may be unfamiliar with taking “days off,” or who observe religious holidays not included in the federal holiday calendar.

Consider providing on-site child care or child-care vouchers to enable immigrants to work while ensuring their children are cared for safely.

Supply transportation support or carpooling programs to help employees commute to and from work if they lack access to personal vehicles.

CASE STUDY (Example of the last listed strategy): *Saanvi, a marketing manager from India, in a job-shadowing experience — Job shadowing is a way for someone to spend a short time, possibly one day or a few half days, watching alongside a working professional. In this case, Saanvi spent a day with a local marketing executive at the headquarters of a retail chain. Saanvi was able to hear the way the U.S. marketing team talked about products, pricing, promotion and placement. She heard about the company’s e-commerce growth. And she got a sense of the way the U.S. workplace operated. This experience helped her interview more successfully in the future for a job at a different organization (Cohen, 2021).*

CENTRAL OHIO CASE STUDIES



CASE STUDY: AMERISOURCEBERGEN BETTER PRACTICES

Members of the refugee, immigrant and migrant communities face numerous challenges, coupled with significant barriers, that can impede their ability to find and maintain a job. Learning a new language and resolving issues related to transportation often sideline many potential workers. Learn how one Central Ohio employer gained success through adapting practices in:

- Creating a welcoming culture.
- Flexibility of work.
- Outreach to job seekers and their communities.

CREATING A WELCOMING CULTURE

The moment a visitor enters the AmerisourceBergen Corp. facility in Lockbourne, they are struck by the number of international flags displayed in the employee entrance. Indeed, each flag represents the country of origin of all those who work there. Before an employee sets foot on the floor, they not only are welcomed but are introduced to the diverse workplace population they are joining.

Monthly staff lunches have migrated from pizza in the break room to offerings from locally owned Bhutanese, Vietnamese and African restaurants, providing familiar meals to employees who also are eager to share their culture with co-workers.



Recognizing that many new refugees and immigrants practice different faiths, AmerisourceBergen has created prayer rooms and spaces for team members to incorporate their daily prayers into the workday. Women make up a large percentage of the workforce at AmerisourceBergen and several are nursing mothers. A private and safe space has been created on the job site to allow mothers the time and location to pump breast milk for their babies.

FLEXIBILITY OF WORK

Child care and transportation have long been issues with the workforce in general. They are particularly difficult for new Americans because they often lack connections to child care and do not hold driver's licenses when they arrive in the country.

To meet the needs of working parents, AmerisourceBergen listened to workers who were struggling with the existing shift schedules. The start and end times were problematic and not in sync with the classroom and school bus schedules of employees' children. A new shift was created, allowing the workers to drop off and pick up children from school or day care and continue to contribute a full shift worth of work – just at a new and more convenient time.

Additionally, AmerisourceBergen offered a solution to the challenge of transportation for its workforce. The company now provides a bus to 30 team members, helping to alleviate one of the biggest barriers to getting and keeping a job.

OUTREACH TO JOB SEEKERS

For many years employers have placed job ads and postings on websites to reach job seekers. In today's competitive market for talent, that is not always the best strategy, especially when recruiting from the new American population that may be struggling with language barriers.

Utilizing a more proactive and innovative approach to connecting with job seekers can yield rewards.

Frank DiCenso, director of operations at AmerisourceBergen, has partnered with various social services agencies and local community centers to meet job seekers where they congregate. He develops relationships with the provider agencies that support refugees and immigrants in the region. Developing these relationships has led to a greater understanding of the needs and potential solutions for those being served. Furthermore, hosting on-site career fairs at local community centers has become part of AmerisourceBergen's recruitment efforts.

Marketing materials and recruitment posters feature photos of AmerisourceBergen workers and highlight the many nationalities the company employs. The posters feature application information in both English and the native languages of the employees, making the materials more accessible and facilitating the hiring process more readily.

CASE STUDY: THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

Milly Valverde, director of Destination Medicine Global Health Care & Interpreter Services, sat with the Columbus Chamber Foundation and Welcoming City to share details about her journey and work at one of the region's largest employers: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

Valverde has served as co-chair of the Diversity Council for more than a decade. She also oversees the training of medical interpreters for the hospital's employees. The focus - based on local and current needs - has been translating materials into Spanish, Somali and American Sign Language for staffers who require the accommodation.

A snapshot of OSU Wexner Medical Center:

- 126 languages spoken
- 120,000 requests each year for services
- 25,000 staff members
- 40,000 training sessions completed



“We provide interpreters for our staff. An ADA officer with expanded scope helps advise. We offer orientation and training in their native languages, utilizing interpreters and technology.”



Stakeholder groups drive curriculum for training and learning experiences. Conversations and focus groups at the medical center have led to the formation of employee resource groups, or ERGs. Participation in the ERGs doubled during the height of the Covid pandemic, as people came together over shared experiences.

The current ERGs include:

- Asian American Pacific Islanders
- Black faculty and staff employees
- Diversabilities
- Green Team
- Hispanic Latino
- LGBTQ+
- Support Academic Leadership Advocacy and Access Employee Resource Group
- Veterans
- Women of color
- Young Professionals Network

MD Camp is another example of how the Wexner Medical Center is investing in the growth and development of underrepresented young people in the region. From Ohio State's website:

MD Camp, sponsored by The Ohio State University Area Health Education Center, is an intensive, three-week summer day camp providing participants an experience in the rigors of medical school. MD Camp students will have the opportunity to shadow clinicians and researchers at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and at Nationwide Children's Hospital. By the end of MD Camp, students will have a greater grasp of what a career in medicine is like and how to go about becoming a successful physician.

MD Camp is open to rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors who are interested in pursuing careers in the health professions, including biomedical research. We typically accept students who are considered traditionally underrepresented in medicine, which can include women and individuals from socio-economic and/or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds.

Ultimately, MD Camp strives to inspire students to pursue a career in medicine by challenging them intellectually and facilitating their academic and social development.

“IT IS AN EVOLUTION. WE ARE STILL ON THIS JOURNEY WITH NO REAL END POINT. WE CONTINUE TO GROW AND EVOLVE TOGETHER.” - MILLY VALVERDE

CASE STUDY: THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

CONTINUED

MEDICAL CENTER SUPPORT INITIATIVES

- The Wexner Medical Center has established a resource center with an on-site food pantry and multilingual support for employees. The multilingual support includes providing written materials in several languages, including Somali, Spanish and Bhutanese/Nepali. The center also provides cultural sensitivity training, support for different dietary needs, including international foods, and information and resources in multiple languages for future mothers.
- The Buckeyes Helping Buckeyes program allows employees to give back and help other workers. For example, a member of the Bhutanese/Nepali community can contribute cultural items or food to help support another Nepali employee.
- The medical center provides transportation assistance, such as discounted bus passes for staff members. It also partners with child-care organizations to support employees' needs and also focuses on crisis support. Its priority is making resources easily accessible to employees.

LEARN MORE



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE



INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

The Columbus Chamber appreciates the collaboration of the staff and representatives of organizations with whom it met to discuss employer engagement in immigrant integration. What to consider:

Eye contact: Making eye contact is a sign of respect and confidence in the United States, and candidates who avoid eye contact give the impression they lack confidence, are hiding something or are not trustworthy. In other cultures, making eye contact is considered highly disrespectful, and avoiding eye contact is a sign of respect. So a candidate from Asia or the Middle East who avoids eye contact is actually showing an interviewer respect.

Handshake: A firm handshake is another American sign of confidence, but in Asian cultures, a soft, weak handshake is the norm. And in some cultures people shake hands vigorously for a longer time and may put their left hand on the greeter's elbow, which may feel invasive to some people. As well, a candidate from a culture where men and women don't shake hands may feel uncomfortable shaking hands with an interviewer of the opposite sex.

Smiling: A warm smile is a welcoming gesture from an interviewer, and when a candidate returns the smile both people can connect. Asians may smile when they are embarrassed or to conceal discomfort, and Germans "only smile when there is something to smile about." It can be disconcerting to talk to job candidates who never crack a smile or who smile when you consider it inappropriate.

Gestures: In the United States a nod means agreement, but Indians roll their heads from side to side to indicate agreement. American recruiters may interpret this as disagreement. In other cultures, people move their head down to indicate agreement — which is usually mistaken for disagreement here.

Body odors: Smells can greet an interviewer before a welcoming is exchanged. Americans are very conscious of odors and they expect candidates to be fresh and clean. In some cultures, people use strong perfumes and colognes, which may turn off American recruiters. Food smells such as garlic or spices, or body odors, may also lead recruiters to cross candidates off their list right away.

Space wars: Candidates who come too close for comfort may cause recruiters to retreat. Canadians are used to wide open spaces and feel invaded when someone encroaches in their personal space. In many countries the population is more dense and people are accustomed to standing closer together. A candidate who moves closer is attempting to connect, but Americans may not see it that way.

Showing emotion: In places such as East Asia people do not show emotions openly in a business setting, and they may be perceived as not being interested in the job. On the other hand, some Latin Americans, eastern Europeans and Arabs may show more emotion than we are used to in the workplace, and they may be perceived as not being in control. The amount of emotion we display in the workplace is also based on culture.

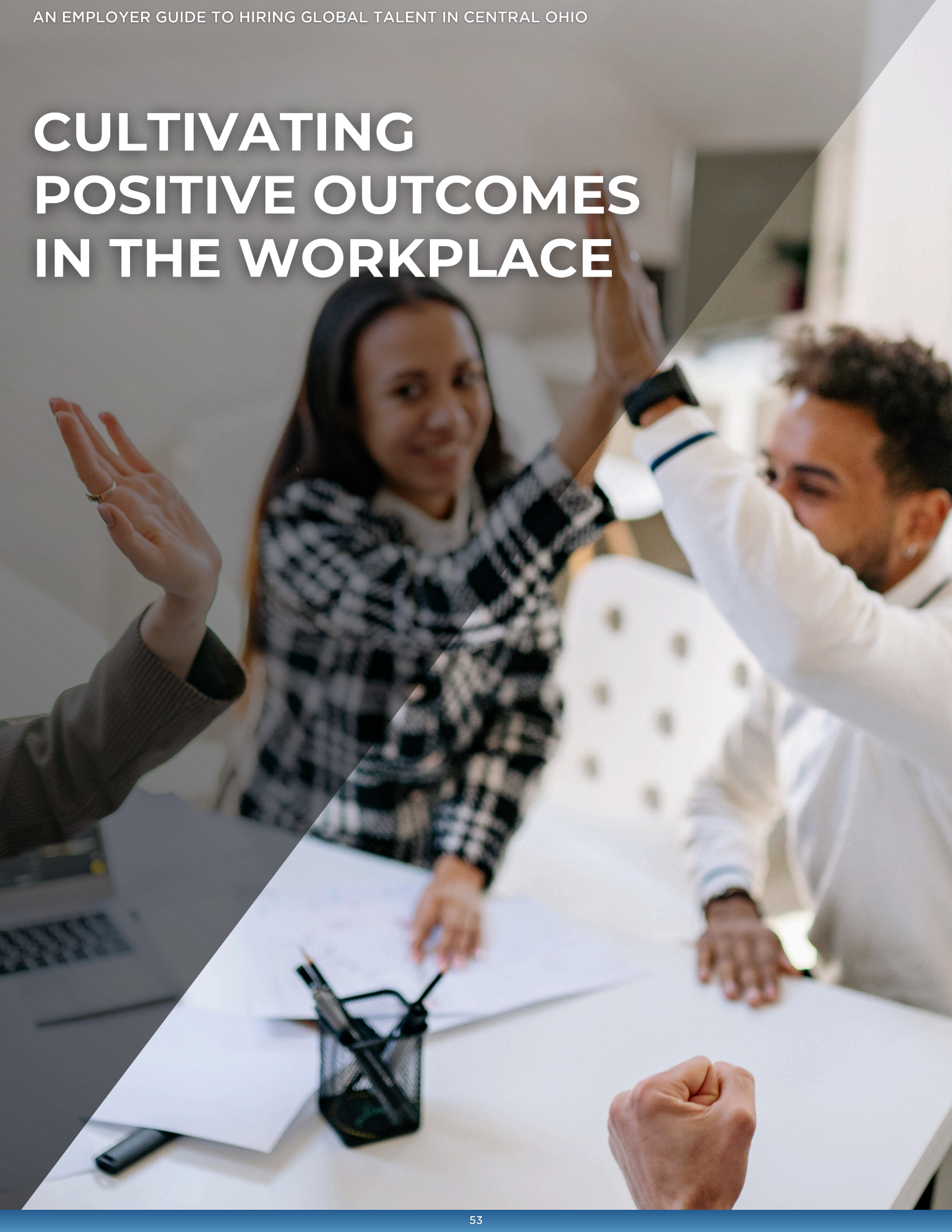
INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

So how can an employer filter all these variations in body language to find the best candidate for the job? First, remember that while basic body language (facial expressions of joy, fear, anger, disgust, sadness and surprise) is universal, most of the body language we use in the workplace is learned behavior. We didn't all grow up knowing how to shake hands with a business contact. We learned it by observing people in the business community, through a book or training course, or from a manager, colleague or mentor.

Most immigrants are highly motivated to learn what it takes to succeed in the United States. They will gladly practice firm handshakes and eye contact for meeting clients if it will help them advance in their careers. It just takes a bit of insight and coaching. Don't pass up skilled and talented people — help them understand the American workplace culture and integrate into your organization so everyone wins.



CULTIVATING POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN THE WORKPLACE



CULTIVATING POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN THE WORKPLACE

TRAUMA-INFORMED HIRING (LOST IN TRANSLATION)

For many immigrants and refugees who have experienced trauma, the American workplace is full of stimuli which can be difficult to process and to find mental regulation. Each individual has different sensory memories from trauma. In the workplace these sensory memories can be activated by a sound, a smell, the texture of something and even a picture on the wall.



WAYS AN EMPLOYER CAN BE SENSITIVE TO POTENTIAL STIMULI IN THE WORKPLACE

● *Lights and alarms*

Lights and alarms in the workplace are the number one trigger for trauma. The initial startle from an unexpected alarm, then flashing lights can cause immigrants and refugees distress, and they may not behave the way you would expect in an emergency situation. Discuss these possible alarms with your new employee before a situation arises. Do a drill if possible. Have a mini light and alarm to show as a simulation of what happens.



● *Explain your signage, provide an interpreter if necessary for clear communication*

Don't expect immigrants and refugees to understand the signs below. Don't assume they understand weather conditions either. As part of onboarding, explain the images in your business regarding severe weather and safety. Provide an interpreter if you think the employee is challenged by the explanation they are given. Tornado, for example, may be a new term for them. Every day they will be walking by the Tornado sign not knowing what it indicates and making assumptions on what that funnel cloud image means. Close the gap and avoid trauma triggers.



WAYS AN EMPLOYER CAN BE SENSITIVE TO THE POTENTIAL STIMULI IN THE WORKPLACE

CONTINUED

- *Have a buddy system in an emergency*

As stated earlier, the immigrant worker's reaction in an emergency might not be what you expected. An immigrant or refugee might hide instead of running out of the room during an alarm. They might run to the restroom instead of the exit door of the building. Have a plan that directs the employee to a specific place or person during emergencies. Being proactive can save lives in emergency situations. Lessening the decision making will ensure safety and expected outcomes.



- *Taking a break outside*

Finally, we all need a break and some more than others. Reducing the stimuli an employee is experiencing, in small bursts of time, helps to self-regulate and clear the mind of all the distracting triggers. Having the intention of building the best workforce comes from constantly understanding the workforce.

Reminder →

TIME FOR A
BREAK.

TAKING A LOOK AT OTHER STATES

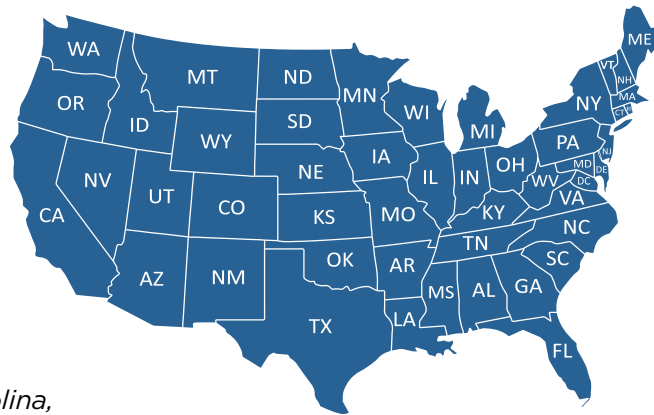


● MEMBER STATES OF THE OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS NETWORK

- California
- Colorado
- Illinois
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington

● STATES THAT HAVE SIGNED EXECUTIVE ORDERS SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF RE-CREDENTIALING

- Pennsylvania



Participating states include North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

● STATES WITH PROGRAMS TO ASSIST IN RE-CREDENTIALING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

- Michigan's Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs has a website that allows immigrants to access licensing requirements for 42 skilled positions.
- Pennsylvania's Department of Commerce collaborates with the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians in offering an Immigrant Fellowship Program, providing 12 weeks of full-time work to graduates of the International Professionals Program, which provides participants with eight weeks of intensive training and aid in seeking employment opportunities.

● STATES THAT HAVE PASSED LEGISLATION ADDRESSING LICENSING FOR HEALTH-CARE WORKERS

- Colorado
- Florida
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Tennessee
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington
- Wisconsin

● STATES THAT HAVE PROPOSED LEGISLATION TO ATTRACT INTERNATIONAL HEALTH-CARE WORKERS



- North Dakota

● STATES THAT HAVE PROPOSED LEGISLATION TO REFORM AND IMPROVE LICENSING FOR IMMIGRANTS

- Connecticut
- Maryland
- Oregon
- South Carolina

WHAT CAN OHIO DO?

- Ensure professional licenses or credentials are not limited by immigration status. Like many states, Ohio could limit the licenses to those with Individual Taxpayer ID numbers or those authorized to lawfully work.
- Allow for evaluations and testing to determine the level of expertise of an individual. Do not force immigrants and refugees to repeat schooling they have already undergone. This can include recognizing work and study that have occurred in a foreign country.
- Create a method of evaluating where certain education has to occur. If in a particular field there tends to be less knowledge on a certain topic, offer training to help cover these gaps.
- Provide English language classes to those who speak English but need a higher level of proficiency in order to practice their profession.



A SUMMARY OF CENTRAL OHIO'S PLAN FOR WELCOMING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



A SUMMARY OF CENTRAL OHIO'S PLAN FOR WELCOMING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

One of the essential principles guiding the U.S. immigration system has been admitting foreign workers with skills that are valuable to America's economy. Immigration law provides several paths for foreign workers to enter the the United States for temporary or permanent employment purposes.



In 2022, the Central Ohio Plan to Welcome Immigrants, Refugees and Migrant Communities was created.

“One of the pillars of the plan is Workforce and Economic Development — which focuses on creating a more equitable work environment for immigrants and refugees in Central Ohio. Centering on racial equity and the qualifications and skills of immigrants and refugees, by way of unified economic and workforce development policies and programs, will create that environment. It will also enhance our current economy and ultimately elevate all residents of the Central Ohio region.”



WORKPLACE INCLUSION GOALS

- Position immigrants and refugees for economic advancement by creating a strong, coordinated infrastructure pathway for career advancement and certification.
- Integrate workforce training and educational opportunities with wraparound services from non-profits to create that pathway.
- Raise awareness in Central Ohio communities regarding the need to understand immigrant and refugee cultural, race, equity and social justice barriers.
- Support policies and regulations that align stakeholders in workforce and economic development — incorporating racial and ethnic equity, and community needs.

SCREENING POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES



SCREENING POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES

Considering hiring new Americans? It is important to be aware that refugees may have gaps on their resumes that might exclude them from further consideration as job candidates, but that should not be disqualifying.

Some factors to be considerate of when reviewing a refugee candidate:

Gaps in employment

An unavoidable consequence of abruptly leaving one's home country and living in refugee camps or other countries is that they likely did not have the legal right to work in the country to where they relocated.

Mismatched skills and experience

Newly arrived refugees will often need to take lower-skilled jobs, which do not align with their skill level, to meet their immediate needs. This is often because their educational or other credentials for higher-skilled jobs do not easily transfer from one nation to another, especially if they left home without those documents. Be cognizant of these circumstances, rather than rejecting a refugee's resume for being underqualified or overqualified for the position.

Interviews

Refugees may not be entirely familiar with the American business culture and have a different approach to participating in a job interview. Take time to inform the candidate of the hiring process for your company, how the interview will work, and repeat or rephrase questions as needed.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

It is important to note that refugees' work authorization does not expire and it is illegal to refuse to hire an individual because a document has an expiration date.

When filling out I-9 documents, you can expect to see common immigration documents issued by the Department of Homeland Security - Form I-94, Employment Authorization Document (Form I-765) or a foreign passport with an I-551 stamp. You might also see a Permanent Resident Card, or so-called Green Card, which is available to refugees after one year into their time in the United States, and granted to Afghans and Iraqis with Special Immigrant Visas within weeks of their arrival.

Other documents you might come across are Social Security cards, driver's licenses and state identification cards for refugees who have been in the country for a longer period. Human resources and hiring managers should take care to understand refugee and immigration paperwork.

Just like for any other potential employee, a refugee can present any document that reasonably appears to be genuine and relates to the employee, according to the List of Acceptable Documents outlined by the U.S. Department of Justice. It is illegal to demand to see certain documents, such as immigration documents, if a refugee presents a document from List B (such as a state ID) and a document from List C (such as a Social Security number).

It is also worth noting that refugees do not need to inform employers of their refugee status, and employers do not need to ask. But you may wish to do so in order to ensure the employee receives the support they need to do the job successfully.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Do refugees have Green Cards?

- Refugees are eligible to receive Green Cards one year after their arrival into the United States, when they are allowed to change their status to Legal Permanent Resident.

Do Green Cards expire?

- No. An expiration date on the Green Card means that the holder must renew the card, not that the bearer's work authorization has expired.

Does the employment authorization of refugees expire?

- No. Refugees are "aliens authorized to work" and should write N/A in the document expiration date in Section 1 of the Form I-9 since their employment authorization does not expire.

Can an immigrant start a job without a Social Security number?

- Yes. Refugees may experience a delay in receiving a Social Security number. Although employers will eventually need to record an SSN for wage reporting purposes, the employee may start work regardless of whether they have been issued one. Employers can enter 000-00-0000 in the SSN field for employees who have not yet received their Social Security numbers.

HIRING REFUGEES HAS MANY ADVANTAGES. YET THERE CAN BE CHALLENGES FOR EMPLOYERS IF CERTAIN BARRIERS ARE NOT UNDERSTOOD AND ADEQUATELY MITIGATED. EMPLOYERS MAY NEED TO MAKE MODEST INVESTMENTS TO FACILITATE RECRUITING AND RETAINING REFUGEES TO YIELD THE BENEFITS OF A VIBRANT AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE.

LOCAL RESOURCES



AREA RESOURCES

TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

- **COTA** – www.cota.com
- **Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission** – www.morpc.org
- **Share Mobility** – www.sharemobility.com

RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

- **The Riverview International Center** – www.riverviewinternationalcenter.org
- **US Together** – www.ustogether.us
- **Welcoming City** – www.welcomingcity.com



AREA RESOURCES

ESOL/ESL PROVIDERS (ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE/ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES)

- **The Ark Church** – www.arkchurchdublin.com
- **Asian American Community Services** – www.aacsohio.org
- **Career and Technology Education Centers** – www.c-tec.edu
- **CLC Works** – www.clcworks.org
- **Columbus City Schools** – www.ccsoh.us
- **Columbus Metropolitan Library** – www.columbuslibrary.org
- **Columbus State Community College** – www.csc.edu/community/language-institute
- **Covenant Baptist Church** – www.covenant-baptist.org
- **Delaware Area Career Center** – www.delawareareacc.org
- **Dominican Learning Center** – domlearningcenter.org/services
- **Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools** – www.eastlandfairfield.com/o/aw/page/aspire-programs
- **Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services** – www.ethiotss.org
- **FESTA** – www.wearefesta.org
- **First Alliance Church** – www.firstalliance.church
- **Godman Guild** – www.godmanguild.org/adult-literacy-and-education
- **Grace Polaris Church** – www.gracepolaris.org
- **Grace Powell Church** – www.gracepowellchurch.com/missions/local
- **Grove City Church of the Nazarene** – www.thenaz.church
- **The Lingo Project** – www.thelingoproject.org
- **Muslim Family Services of Ohio** – www.mfsohio.org
- **Northwest Presbyterian Church** – www.npcdublin.org
- **Northwest United Methodist Church** – www.nwumc.com
- **Redeemer Moravian Church** – www.redeemermoravian.org
- **Somali Community Association of Ohio** – www.somaliohio.org
- **Vineyard Columbus East Campus** – www.vineyardcolumbus.org/pickerington

*THIS LIST MAY NOT INCLUDE ALL ESL/ESOL/LOTE RESOURCES

NATIONAL RESOURCES

- **U.S. Department of State Refugee Program FAQs** - www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/factsheets/2017/266447.htm
- **Office of Refugee Resettlement State Programs** - www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/state-programs-annual-overview
- **Cultural Orientation Resource Center**, which provides cultural backgrounders on refugee countries of origin and general information - www.cal.org/projects/cor-center
- **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Population Statistics Database** - www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/reports-and-publications/unhcr-data

FOR EMPLOYMENT-RELATED QUESTIONS

- **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service**, helps employers connect with candidates through resettlement agencies and provides training and consulting services to businesses - www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Immigration-and-Refugee-Services
- **Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices**, with an employer hotline available at 1-800-255-8155 (1-800-237-2515 for hearing impaired) weekdays, and guidance from its Office to Commonly Asked Questions about refugee employment - www.justice.gov/crt/immigrant-and-employee-rights-section
- **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**, for information related to immigrant work authorization and documentation - www.uscis.gov
- **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**, for information about preventing national origin discrimination - www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/nationalorigin.cfm

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT ASSIST REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

- **Refugee Council USA**, a coalition of 25 non-government organizations dedicated to refugee protection and ensuring excellence in U.S. refugee resettlement programs. It provides additional resources on the resettlement process and ways to take action to support refugees - www.rcusa.org
- **Upwardly Global**, assists foreign-trained professionals rebuild their careers through internet-based training and support services - www.upwardlyglobal.org
- **Welcoming America's Welcoming Refugees**, assists organizations and communities plan ways to help refugees feel a stronger connection to their communities and build understanding among residents - www.welcomingrefugees.org

APPENDIX



TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT-BASED VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

There are many temporary employment-based visa classifications. Here is a quick guide to the classifications that allow employers to hire and petition for foreign nationals for specific jobs for limited periods of time. Most temporary workers must work for the employer that petitioned for them and have limited ability to change jobs. In most cases, they must leave the country if their status expires or if their employment is terminated.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMON TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT-BASED VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

	H-1B	H-2A	H-2B	L-1A & L-1B
Who is eligible?	Certain foreign professionals in "specialty occupations."	Temporary agricultural workers from certain designated countries.	"Seasonal" non-agricultural temporary workers.	Certain foreign workers employed by certain entities abroad that are related to U.S. employers, whose services are being sought by their employers in the United States.
Are there any numerical annual limits?	65,000 per year, plus 20,000 more for foreign professionals with a U.S. master's or higher degree.	No annual limit.	66,000 per year.	No annual limit.
Duration	Initially admitted for a period of up to three years; may be extended for a maximum of three additional years.	Initially admitted for period of approved employment; may be renewed for qualifying employment in increments of one year each for a maximum stay of three years.	Initially admitted for a period of up to one year; may be renewed twice for a maximum stay of three years.	Initially admitted for a period of up to three years; may be extended for a maximum of two additional years for an L-1B and four additional years for an L-1A.
Employer requirements	The employer must attest that employment of the H-1B worker will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. Employers must comply with wage requirements.	The employer must attest that no qualified U.S. workers who can fill the position are available. Employers must comply with recruitment, wage, benefits, housing, transportation, and other requirements.	The employer must attest that no qualified U.S. workers who can fill the position are available. Employers must comply with wage, housing, transportation, and other requirements.	No requirements regarding adverse effects, wages, housing, etc.
May the foreign workers bring their spouses and children under 21?	Yes, spouses and children under 21 may enter on an H-4 visa, and certain spouses are allowed to work.	Yes, spouses and children under 21 may enter on an H-4 visa but may not work.	Yes, spouses and children under 21 may enter on an H-4 visa but may not work.	Yes, spouses and children under 21 may enter on an L-2 visa, and spouses are allowed to work.

FAMILY-SPONSORED AND EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCE IMMIGRANTS CATEGORIES

Category		Numerical limit
Total Family-Sponsored Immigrants		480,000
Immediate Relatives		
	Aliens who are the spouses and unmarried minor children of U.S. citizens and the parents of adult U.S. citizens	Unlimited
Family-Sponsored Preference Immigrants		226,000 (floor)
<i>1st preference</i>	Unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens	23,400 plus unused visas from 4 th preference visas
<i>2nd preference</i>	2A: Spouses and minor children of LPRs 2B: Unmarried sons and daughters of LPRs	114,200 plus unused 1 st preference visas [77% are reserved for 2A preference]
<i>3rd preference</i>	Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens	23,400 plus unused 1 st or 2 nd preference visas
<i>4th preference</i>	Siblings of adult U.S. citizens	65,000 plus unused 1 st , 2 nd , or 3 rd preference visas
Employment-Based Preference Immigrants		140,000
<i>1st preference</i>	Priority workers: persons of extraordinary ability in the arts, science, education, business, or athletics; outstanding professors and researchers; and certain multi-national executives and managers	28.6% of total plus unused 4 th and 5 th preference visas
<i>2nd preference</i>	Members of the professions holding advanced degrees or persons of exceptional abilities in the sciences, art, or business	28.6% of total plus unused 1 st preference visas
<i>3rd preference—skilled</i>	Skilled shortage workers with at least two years training or experience, professionals with baccalaureate degrees	28.6% of total plus unused 1 st or 2 nd preference visas
<i>3rd preference—“other”</i>	Unskilled shortage workers	10,000 [taken from number available for 3 rd preference]
<i>4th preference</i>	“Special immigrants,” including ministers of religion, religious workers other than ministers, certain employees of the U.S. government abroad, and others	7.1% of total; [religious workers limited to 5,000]
<i>5th preference</i>	Employment creation investors who invest at least \$1 million (amount may vary in rural areas or areas of high unemployment) which will create at least 10 new jobs	7.1% of total; [3,000 <i>minimum</i> reserved for investors in rural or high unemployment areas]

Source: CRS summary of INA §§203(a), 203(b), and 204, (8 U.S.C. §§1153(a) 1153(b), and 1154).

Notes: *children* refer to unmarried minors under age 21; *sons and daughters* refer to children ages 21 and older.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT-BASED IMMIGRATION

Lawful permanent residency allows a foreign national to work and live lawfully and permanently in the United States. Those designated Lawful Permanent Residents are eligible to apply for nearly all jobs, though not jobs legitimately restricted to U.S. citizens, and can remain in the country even if they are unemployed. Immigrants who acquired lawful permanent resident status through employment may apply for U.S. citizenship after five years.

The adjustment of status to permanent residency based on employment generally involves these three steps:

First, employers seeking to petition on behalf of foreign workers are commonly required to obtain certification from the Department of Labor establishing that there are no U.S. workers available, willing and qualified to fill the position at a wage that is equal to or greater than the prevailing wage generally paid for that occupation in the geographic area where the position is located.

Second, the employer is required to petition U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for the foreign worker. Immigrants can petition for themselves under limited circumstances.

Third, a foreign worker who is already in the country in a temporary visa classification may apply for “adjustment of status” to permanent residence upon the approval of an employer’s petition if there is a visa number available. If these conditions have been met and the individual is outside the country or is in the United States but chooses to apply for an immigrant visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad, the individual files an immigrant visa application, which is processed by a U.S. consular officer.

FOR IMMIGRANTS WANTING TO WORK IN THE U.S. ON A PERMANENT BASIS

Immigrant workers have long played critical roles in the U.S. labor force in a wide range of industries and occupations. Yet hiring an immigrant worker on a permanent basis as a Lawful Permanent Resident, rather than a temporary worker, is a complex and time-consuming process.

There are five employment-based “preference categories” for working permanently in the United States, and the distinctions between these categories are sometimes subtle. In some cases a worker may “self-petition” rather than be sponsored by a prospective employer. And in two of the preference categories, if a worker is being sponsored by an employer, the U.S. Department of Labor must issue a “labor certification” stating that hiring a foreign worker will not disadvantage any similarly employed U.S. workers.

Family-sponsored and employment-based preference category immigrants are limited in numbers. Both types are subdivided into five categories. Within each family and employment preference category, the Immigration and Nationality Act further allocates the number of people who can receive Limited Permanent Resident (LPR) status each year. The five family preference categories are based broadly upon a hierarchy of family relationships to U.S. citizens and LPRs.






Among the five employment preference categories, the first three are based broadly upon a hierarchy of professional accomplishments and skills needed by U.S. employers. The fourth category includes 13 sub-categories of “special immigrants,” including religious workers, employees of the U.S. government abroad and juvenile court dependents.

As part of the Immigration Act of 1990, Congress added a fifth preference employment-based category that allows foreign investors to acquire LPR status as EB-5 immigrant investors. For this category, the Immigration and Nationality Act allocates up to 10,000 admissions annually and generally requires a minimum \$1 million investment and employment of at least 10 U.S. workers. Less capital is required for aliens who invest in designated Targeted Employment Areas, which include rural areas or areas experiencing unemployment at 150 percent of the national average.

Employers seeking to hire prospective immigrants through the second and third employment-based preference categories must petition the Labor Department to obtain a certification on behalf of the alien. Prospective immigrants must demonstrate that they meet the qualifications for both the particular job and the preference category. If the department determines that a labor shortage exists in the occupation for which a petition is filed, it will issue a labor certification.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCE CATEGORIES EXTENDED

There is a limit on the number of immigrant visas that can be issued each year. These visas are distributed across five preference categories, each with its own set of eligibility requirements. These are the preference categories:

-  EB-1: PRIORITY WORKERS
-  EB-2: PROFESSIONALS WITH ADVANCED DEGREES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH EXCEPTIONAL ABILITY
-  EB-3: SKILLED WORKERS, PROFESSIONALS, AND OTHER WORKERS
-  EB-4: SPECIAL IMMIGRANTS
-  EB-5: IMMIGRANT INVESTORS

Individuals with extraordinary abilities, outstanding professors or researchers, and multinational executives or managers fall under the EB-1 category.

To qualify for the EB-1 category, individuals must meet specific criteria.

Extraordinary ability: Individuals must show exceptional ability in the sciences, arts, education, business or athletics through sustained national or international acclaim, supported by achievements like major awards, significant contributions and recognition by experts.

Outstanding professors or researchers: This category is for those who have a at least three years of experience in teaching or research and can demonstrate international recognition in their academic field. The criteria for demonstrating that an individual is an outstanding professor or researcher includes proof of major awards, membership in associations that require members to demonstrate outstanding achievement, published material in professional publications written by others, participation as a judge of the work of others, original scientific or scholarly research contributions, and authorship of scholarly books or articles. (Continued on next page)

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCE CATEGORIES EXTENDED

Multinational executives or managers: To be eligible, the individual must have been employed abroad for at least one of the three years preceding the petition. The petitioning employer must be a U.S. employer, must have been in operation in the country for at least a year, must have a qualifying relationship to the entity the individual worked for abroad and must hire the individual as an executive or manager.

EB-2: Professionals with advanced degrees and individuals with exceptional ability

The EB-2 category is designed for those with advanced degrees and individuals with exceptional abilities. It includes two subcategories:

Professionals with advanced degrees: Individuals must possess an advanced degree or its equivalent (a bachelor's degree plus five years of post-bachelor's, progressive work experience).

Individuals with exceptional ability: This subcategory is open to those with exceptional ability in the sciences, arts or business (meaning "a degree of expertise significantly above that ordinarily encountered in the sciences, arts or business").

EB-3: Skilled workers, professionals and other workers

The EB-3 category covers a range of skilled, professional and unskilled workers. It is divided into three subcategories:

Skilled workers: This is for individuals with at least two years of relevant work experience, education or training.

Professionals: Individuals in this subcategory must hold a bachelor's degree in a field related to their employment. A bachelor's degree must also be a normal requirement for entry into the occupation.

Unskilled or other workers: This is for individuals performing unskilled labor (requiring less than two years of training or experience) that is not of temporary or seasonal nature.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCE CATEGORIES EXTENDED

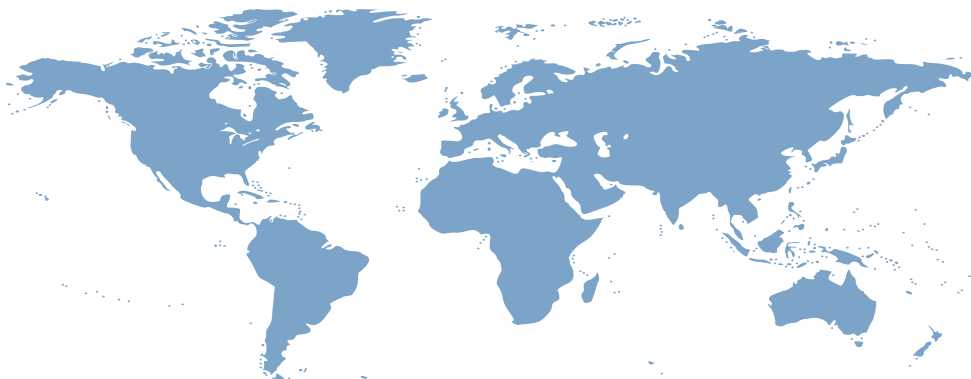
EB-4: Special immigrants

The EB-4 category is unique and caters to a diverse range of individuals. To qualify, individuals must meet specific criteria related to their unique circumstances and qualifications. These individuals fall under the EB-4 category:

- Religious workers.
- Special immigrant juveniles.
- Certain broadcasters.
- Certain retired officers or employees of a G-4 international organization or NATO-6 civilian employees.
- Certain employees of the U.S. government who are abroad.
- Members of the U.S. armed forces.
- Panama Canal company or Canal Zone government employees.
- Certain physicians licensed and practicing medicine in a U.S. state as of Jan. 9, 1978
- Non-citizens who have supplied information concerning a criminal organization or enterprise or a terrorist organization, enterprise or operation.

EB-5: Immigrant investors

The EB-5 category is aimed at immigrant investors seeking to invest a significant amount of capital into new commercial enterprises that create jobs for U.S. workers. Specifically, this category is for immigrant investors who are investing \$1,050,000 (or \$800,000 in a targeted employment area or infrastructure project) in a new business that will boost the U.S. economy and create at least 10 full-time jobs for qualified workers.



OUT-OF-DATE OR LACK OF SKILLS

Living outside of their home country, refugees may have a skills deficit due to changing fields, gaps in employment due to displacement and different technologies. Alternatively, refugees may not have the experience or education a position calls for but can still do the job.

Potential solutions:

- Provide job shadowing before and during employment.
- Utilize skills interviews so refugees can show their hands-on expertise.
- Provide on-the-job training. Consider contacting your state's Department of Labor to potentially leverage funds to provide on-the-job training.
- Partner with community colleges to offer skills-based courses employees need to start work and move up.

LACK OF CREDENTIALS

Refugees may arrive with their educational documents in a foreign language. Other times, due to the urgency with which they left their homes, refugees do not possess their documents.

Potential solutions:

- Refugees can have their documents translated into English; states often have a list of approved translators.
- Refugees can have their credentials evaluated by an independent agency, such as World Education Services, to determine if the education received overseas is equivalent to the level of education in the United States. Note that credential evaluation most likely is paid by the refugee, but employers should consider covering those costs. It also is possible that some state refugee employment programs pay for credential evaluations, which is permitted under refugee social services and targeted assistance programs by the Office of Refugee Resettlement regulations. Most states do not cover these costs.
- For refugees lacking credential documents, evaluate their skills in on-the-job training or offer competency-based promotions.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Many refugees arrive in America without the skills to communicate fluently in English. This language barrier can create difficulties for refugees and employers during recruiting as well as on-the-job.

Potential solutions:

- Have refugee resettlement agencies assist with interpretation and paperwork completion for initial screening and interviews.
- Hire one bilingual “team lead” to serve as an interpreter. Make sure to compensate this additional work.
- Host on-site English as a Second Language classes.
- Translate important documents, such as safety signs and holiday schedules, into major languages.
- Offer advancement training as incentives to employees who have reached a certain level of English proficiency.
- Communicate clearly with refugees by speaking slower, not louder.
- Ensure directions are clear and don’t employ idiomatic language. For example, avoid informal phrases like “give it a shot,” “it’s a piece of cake” or “let’s catch up”.
- Do not ask yes-or-no questions but check for understanding with clarifying inquiries; for example, “What time will your shift start tomorrow?” instead of “Do you know what time you start tomorrow?”.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Cultural practices or traditions of a refugee’s home country may not align with expectations in the American workplace. Employers need to be aware of key cultural differences and ways to mitigate the negative effects of cultural differences.

Potential solutions:

- Allow time off for religious holidays or accommodate holiday needs. For instance, allow Muslim employees – who request time off in advance – to take off for Eid holidays or allow for different break times during Ramadan to accommodate breaking the fast and prayers.
- Reconfigure break times to align with religious needs, such as daily prayers. For example, allow Muslim employees to take different break times to complete daily prayers.
- Understand and accommodate for various cultural events. For example, Bhutanese funerals are week-long affairs.
- Be open with employees about American business culture. For example, emphasize the importance of arriving on time for shifts and professional appointments.

DIFFERING COMMUNICATION STYLES

Other cultures may utilize a more passive form of communication, while the assertive verbal communication style or body language typically practiced in the United States might be viewed as disrespectful or rude.

Potential solutions:

- Make sure to solicit information from employees, so you understand clearly their point of view; no response on a topic might be covering up a miscommunication or misunderstanding.
- Give employees a chance to give feedback anonymously.
- Understand that some cultures do not practice direct eye contact, and any lack of eye contact is not lack of confidence or sign of dishonesty, as an American might interpret.

TRANSPORTATION

Recently arrived refugees are likely to rely on public transportation because they may not have private vehicles to get to and from work, may not know how to drive or may lack a U.S. driver's license. If your company is outside of public transportation lines, there are creative ways to ensure refugees can get to work.

Potential solutions:

- Arrange for carpooling with other employees and ensure that shifts align with carpooling routes.
- Use an employer-sponsored van for employees.
- Connect with local non-profits that offer discounted cars to low-income populations.
- Check with state or local social services departments to see if any transportation assistance is available.
- Where available, employees can use ride-sharing services such as Lyft or Uber, and if possible for the employer, consider providing subsidies for this transportation.

CHILD CARE

A common barrier to employment is a lack of child care, especially for refugees who might have limited family or social networks to rely on for such help.

Potential solutions:

- Connect to local social services departments where child-care vouchers may be available.
- Encourage informal child-care arrangements within networks.
- Allow parents and caregivers to work separate shifts.
- Inform employees about child-care centers and Head Start programs close to the work location, or offer child care at the workplace.

FINAL THOUGHTS

America is a place where immigrants take the freedom they are given to create opportunity for themselves. The United States promotes freedom and opportunity to allow people to achieve a good quality of life. And that is appealing. Most of the time, immigrants come from places that deal with pressing problems like high population, poverty, poor economy or no citizen rights provided at all. Once they enter the States, it gives them a chance to start over and live the American dream.

Revising the system of permanent legal immigration should be a major component of any immigration reform proposal. In recent years, Congress has considered proposals to alter the legal immigration system — with a comprehensive approach or incremental revisions aimed at strategic changes.

Those favoring expanded immigration typically advocate for specific changes. Some favor a significant reallocation of the visa categories or a substantial increase in legal immigration to satisfy the desire of U.S. families to reunite with their relatives still abroad and to meet the labor force needs of employers hiring foreign workers.

Others favor a reallocation toward employment-based immigration to help U.S. employers compete for the “best and the brightest,” including foreign professional workers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics — those dubbed STEM fields. Proponents of family-sponsored migration maintain that any proposal to increase immigration levels generally should include the option of additional family-sponsored visas to reduce entry times for those already waiting in line — currently up to years or decades.

Still others favor revising employment-based immigration so that immigrants are selected on merit-based criteria — such as educational attainment, employment in high-demand fields, English language skills and age — rather than largely being sponsored by employers under the current system. Many in Congress also support eliminating the Diversity Immigrant Visa, which they contend poses security risks and requires relatively little of immigrants in terms of skill and education requirements.

In designing legislative and administrative programs to deliver relief to all Americans and help them on the path to prosperity, providing legal status to undocumented immigrants must be considered a key tool to ensure the economy is sufficiently robust and resilient, equitable and inclusive.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Immigrant workers and entrepreneurs generate economic growth and opportunities for all workers and families, but the U.S. economy remains constrained by a shortfall of foreign-born workers. This shortfall has worsened the labor squeeze in vital industries. Across sectors and industries, immigrants propel economic growth and productivity, driving the growth rate of the U.S. population and labor force in the face of shifting demographics.

Immigrants also continue to drive economic growth via their contributions to innovation in STEM fields and entrepreneurship. The ideas and opportunities that these innovators and entrepreneurs generate help the United States continue to attract the brightest minds from around the world. Moreover, reforming the immigration system can help strengthen the U.S. economy by paving the way for sustained economic growth and by creating opportunities for all.

Four major principles currently underlie U.S. policy on legal permanent immigration: the reunification of families, the admission of immigrants with needed skills, the protection of refugees and asylees, and the diversity of immigrants by country of origin. These principles are embodied in federal law, the Immigration and Nationality Act. The act's amendments of 1965 replaced the national origins quota system, which was enacted after World War I, with per-country ceilings, and the statutory provisions regulating legal permanent immigration to the United States were last revised significantly by the Immigration Act of 1990.



FINAL THOUGHTS

Despite extensive critiques of the permanent legal immigration system, no consensus exists on the specific direction reforms to the system should take. Some maintain that revising provisions governing legal permanent immigration should be a key component of any major immigration reform proposal, while others support the existing provisions and their underlying rationales. This report may help inform the debate and discussions of policy options that may emerge as Congress considers current immigration proposals.

Non-immigrants — such as tourists, foreign students, diplomats, temporary agricultural workers, exchange visitors and intracompany business personnel — are admitted for specific purposes and temporary periods of time. Non-immigrants must leave the United States before their visas expire, although certain classes of non-immigrants may adjust to Limited Permanent Resident (LPR) status if they qualify. Refugees and asylees are fleeing their countries because of persecution or fear of persecution. After one year in refugee status here, refugees must apply to adjust to LPR status. In contrast, asylees may, but are not required to, apply for LPR status after a year.

Conditions for the admission of immigrants and refugees are more stringent than for non-immigrants, and many fewer immigrants than non-immigrants are admitted each year. Once admitted, however, immigrants are subject to few restrictions. For example, they may accept and change employment, and may apply for U.S. citizenship through the naturalization process, generally after five years. Naturalization is voluntary, and persons may remain as Limited Permanent Residents indefinitely as long as they do not commit a crime or some other act that makes them deportable.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Prospective immigrants must maneuver a multi-step process through federal departments and agencies to obtain Limited Permanent Resident status. First, petitions for LPR status are filed with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security by the prospective immigrant or by the sponsoring relative or employer. If the prospective LPR is residing abroad or has not established a lawful residence in the United States, the petition is forwarded to the federal Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs in the alien's home country after Citizenship and Immigration Services has approved it.

If the prospective immigrant is already legally residing in the United States, Citizenship and Immigration Services handles most of the process, which the immigration act refers to as "adjustment of status" because the alien is moving from a temporary status to LPR status. Roughly half of all persons granted LPR status in fiscal 2016 — the most recent year for which such data are available — did so by adjusting status.

The Consular Affairs officer (when the alien is coming from abroad) or the Citizenship and Immigration Services adjudicator (when the alien is adjusting status from within the United States) must be satisfied that the alien is entitled to LPR status. These reviews are intended to ensure that prospective immigrants aren't ineligible for visas or admission under the grounds for inadmissibility spelled out in the nation's immigration act.

Immigrant admissions and adjustments to LPR status are subject to complex numerical limits and preference categories that give priority for admission on the basis of family relationships, needed skills and geographic diversity. In addition, immigrants who enter through the family-sponsored and employment-based preference categories are subject to a 7 percent per-country cap. Limits on immigration combined with the per-country cap for some categories have resulted in a sizable "visa queue" of foreign nationals with approved immigration petitions who must wait until a numerically limited visa becomes available before they can immigrate permanently to the United States.

ENDNOTES



ENDNOTES

1. “Foreign born” does not include people born in Puerto Rico or U.S. island areas or U.S. citizens born abroad of American parent(s). U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. The American Immigration Council elected to use data from the 2018 ACS 1-Year estimates wherever possible to provide the most current information available. Since these estimates are based on a smaller sample size than the ACS 5-year, however, they are more sensitive to fluctuations and may result in greater margins of error (compared to 5-year estimates).
2. Silva Mathema, “State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants,” University of Southern California’s Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration and the Center for American Progress, March 2017, www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/03/16/427868/state-state-estimates-family-members-unauthorized-immigrants/.
3. American Immigration Council analysis of data from the 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year, using Silva Mathema’s “State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants” and IPUMS-USA. Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover and Matthew Sobek, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0 [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017).
4. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html.
5. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system, www.bls.gov/soc/major_groups.htm.
6. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” 2019.
7. New American Economy analysis of 2018 ACS microdata using IPUMS. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power, January 31, 2020, <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/>
8. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants (Washington, D.C.: April 2018), Appendix 1, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants>.
9. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power.
10. “Business owners” include people who are self-employed, at least 18 years old, and work at least 15 hours per week at their businesses. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.
11. The Rules for Immigrants Wanting to Work in the United States on a Permanent Basis | American Immigration Council | April 2020
12. Currently there are 22 types of temporary employment classifications. See USCIS, “Temporary (Nonimmigrant) Workers,” last accessed June 2, 2021, <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-nonimmigrant-worker>.
13. Some nonimmigrant visa classifications permit foreign workers to work in the United States without an employer having first filed a petition on the foreign worker’s behalf. These include such nonimmigrant classifications as the E-1, E-2, E-3, and TN classifications. See USCIS, “Temporary (Nonimmigrant) Workers,” last accessed June 2, 2021, <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-nonimmigrant-workers>.
14. U.S. Department of State, Report of the Visa Office, 2000-2020, “Classes of Nonimmigrants Issued Visas,” <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics/annual-reports.html>.
15. Ruth Ellen Wasem, U.S. Immigration Policy on Permanent Admissions (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2012), 1, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R_L32235.pdf.
16. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2019 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, Table 2, <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2019/table2>.
17. William A. Kandel, Permanent Legal Immigration to the United States: Policy Overview (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, May 11, 2018), 2-5, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R42866.pdf>. Additional employment-based visa numbers may be available in a particular fiscal year because the difference between the maximum number allotted for family-based visas and the number actually issued in a fiscal year is added to the total available for employment-based visas for the next fiscal year. 8 U.S.C. § 1151(d)(2)(C).
18. William A. Kandel, Permanent Legal Immigration to the United States: Policy Overview (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, May 11, 2018), 2-5, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R42866.pdf>.
19. U.S. Department of State, “Visa Bulletin For June 2021,” <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-bulletin/2021/visa-bulletin-for-june-2021.html>.

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