

Attracting & Retaining Immigrant Newcomers

What States & Cities Need to Know

July 8, 2014 webinar

Today's Agenda

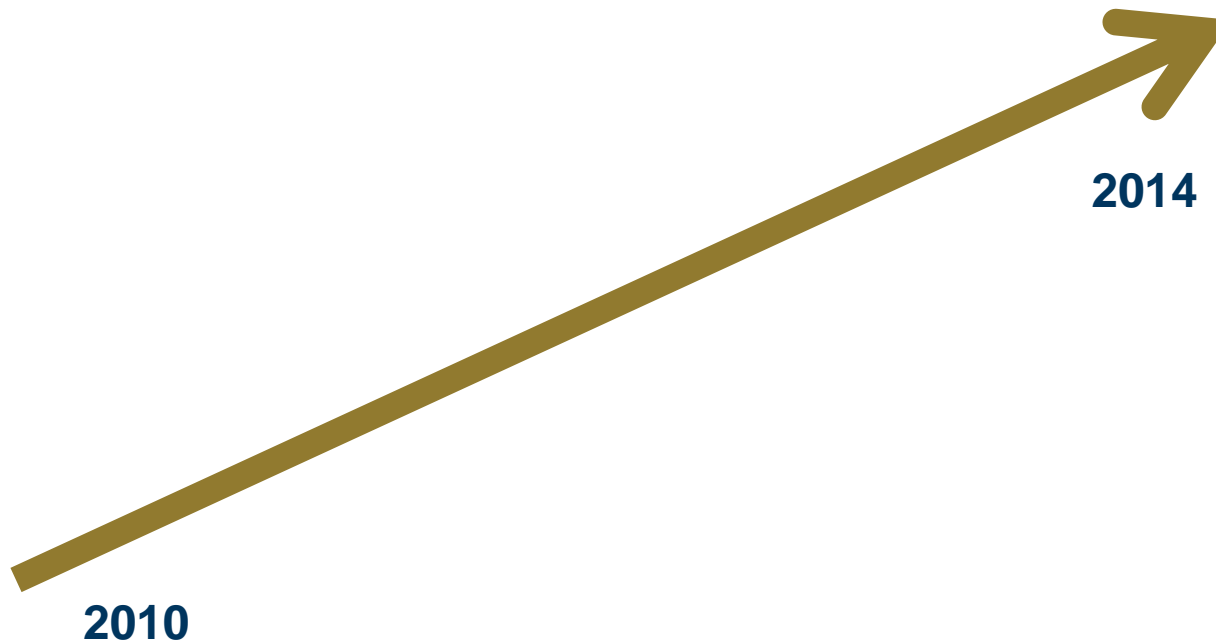
- **Context:** The growth of immigrant talent attraction & retention initiatives nationwide
- **Comparison:** Understanding Philadelphia's success in attracting new immigrant residents
- **Data:** What the *Choosing Philadelphia* study examined
- **Policy options:** Potential strategies for municipalities seeking to increase immigrant population

Following the Q&A period, we will discuss the nuts and bolts of conducting your own local survey of newcomers.

CONTEXT

The growth of immigrant talent
attraction & retention initiatives nationwide

A Fast-Growing Phenomenon



In the past four years, more than **30 cities and states** have announced immigrant talent attraction & retention initiatives

An Approach Taken by Cities Large and Small



ST. LOUIS MOSAIC PROJECT



Immigration Initiatives Use a Variety of Tactics

Most of these initiatives have a modest budget of between \$50,000 and \$300,000, with one to three staff members. Their work may include:

- Welcoming activities such as community dinners and dialogues
- Job-search and mentoring support
- Refugee integration projects such as gardens or art exhibits
- Professional licensing and re-credentialing assistance
- Capacity building and support for ethnic organizations
- Language access and other municipal policy advocacy

...and more.

The Impetus: Demographic Change...



- Some immigration initiatives come out of traditional gateway cities such as New York and Chicago
- But a **majority** come from **smaller industrial cities** in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic states.
- These cities are often facing an **aging population** and shrinking tax base

...and Under-Utilization of Infrastructure

- Many cities also face challenges in making full use of **vacant lots**
- Several initiatives have specifically emphasized the role of **immigrant entrepreneurship** in revitalizing commercial corridors

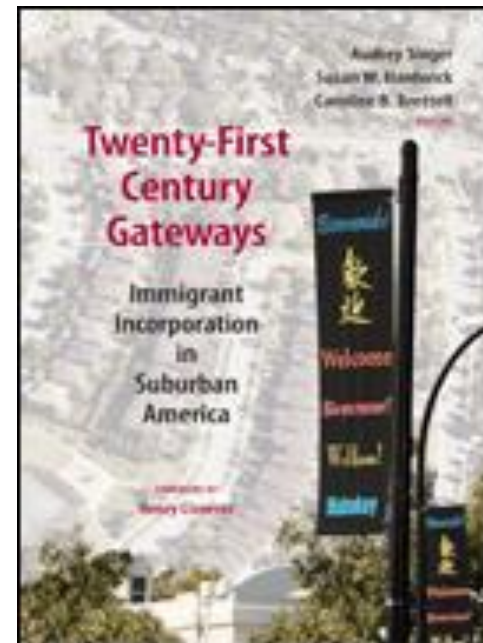


COMPARISON

Understanding Philadelphia's success
in attracting new immigrant residents

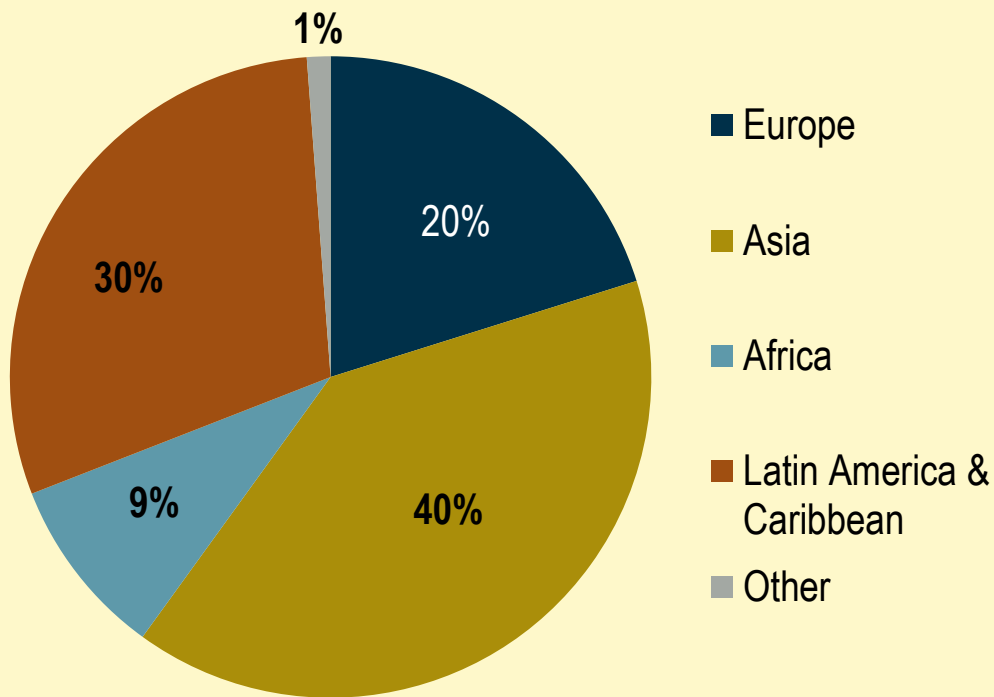
On the Ground: The Local Picture

- Philadelphia is a “Re-Emerging Gateway” for immigrants
- More than **500,000** immigrants in the region; approximately **175,000** in the city



The City is Home to Immigrants from Around the World

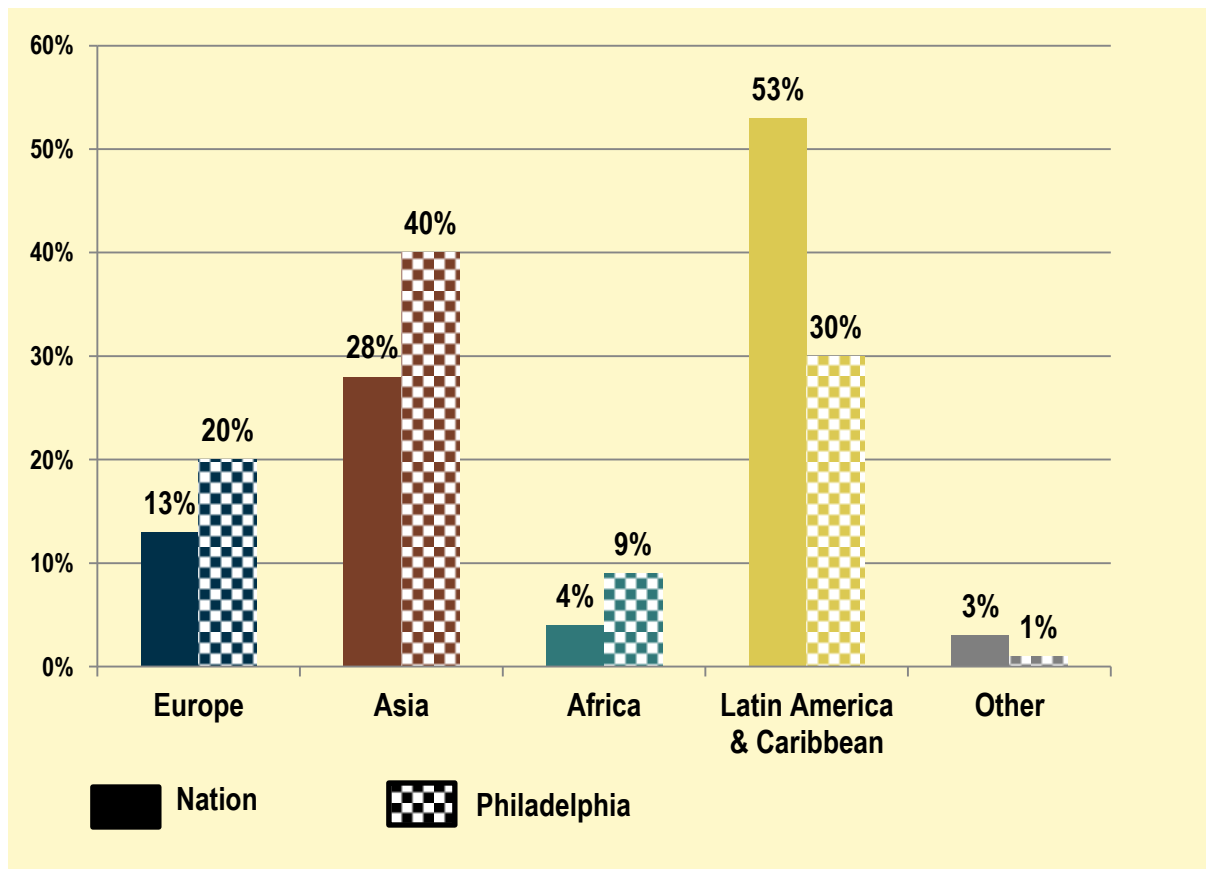
More than 1 in 3 Immigrants in Philadelphia are from Asia



- There are approximately **175,000** immigrants in the City of Philadelphia, representing **12%** of the population.
- This proportion is comparable to the national level of approximately **13%**.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2007-11.

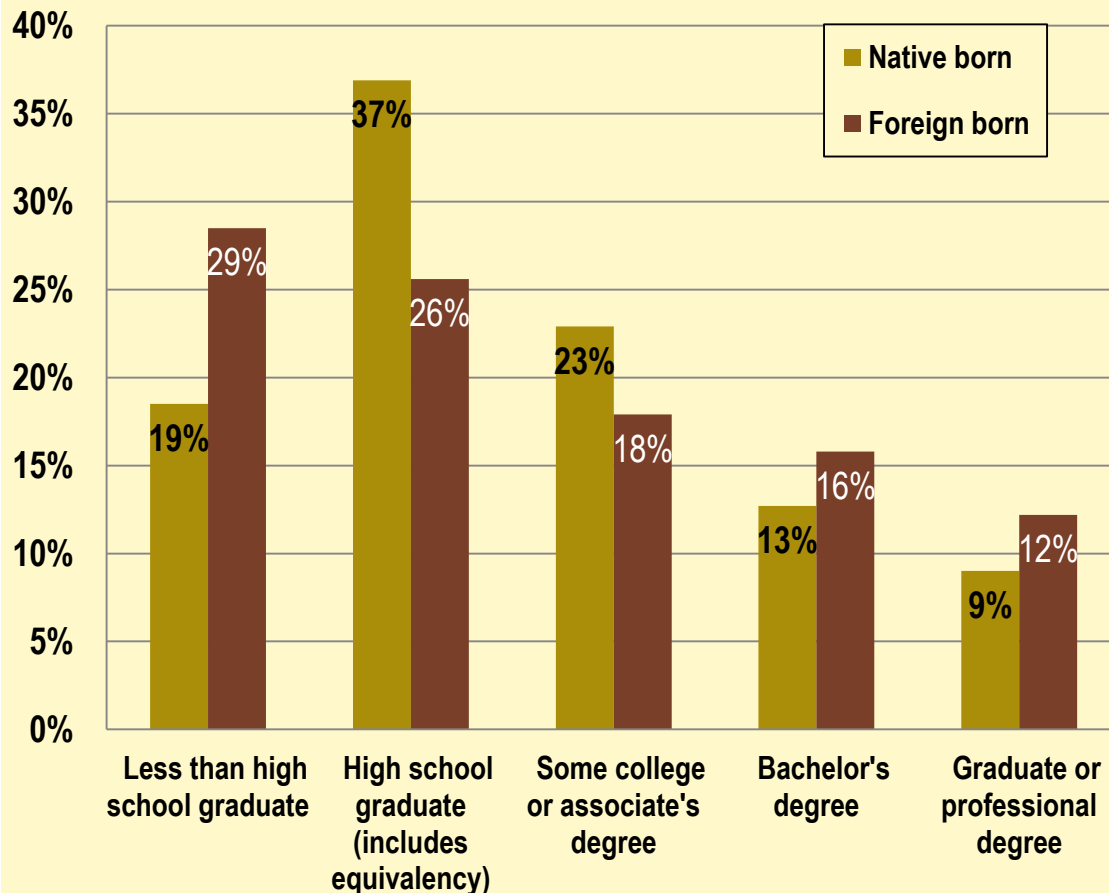
Comparing Philadelphia's Immigrants to the National Picture



- Philadelphia's immigrant population is substantially more diverse, including more immigrants from Africa, Europe, and Asia.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2007-11.

Educational Attainment: A Mixed Picture



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2007-11.

In Philadelphia, immigrants are more likely than US-born residents to have:

- **Limited education** (less than high school)

...but also more likely to have:

- **Advanced education** (bachelor's or graduate degree).

How We Got Here

Philadelphia Public School

the notebook

An Independent Voice for Parents, Educators, Students, and Friends of Philadelphia Public Schools

Home | Print edition | Past editions | Blog | Latest news | High school guide

HOME

Focus on Immigrant Students Fall 2008
Vol. 16, No. 1

Theme articles

A plan in the works to make Philly immigrant-friendly

by Paul Socolar

Like 4 | Tweet 3 | COMMENTS (0) | PRINT



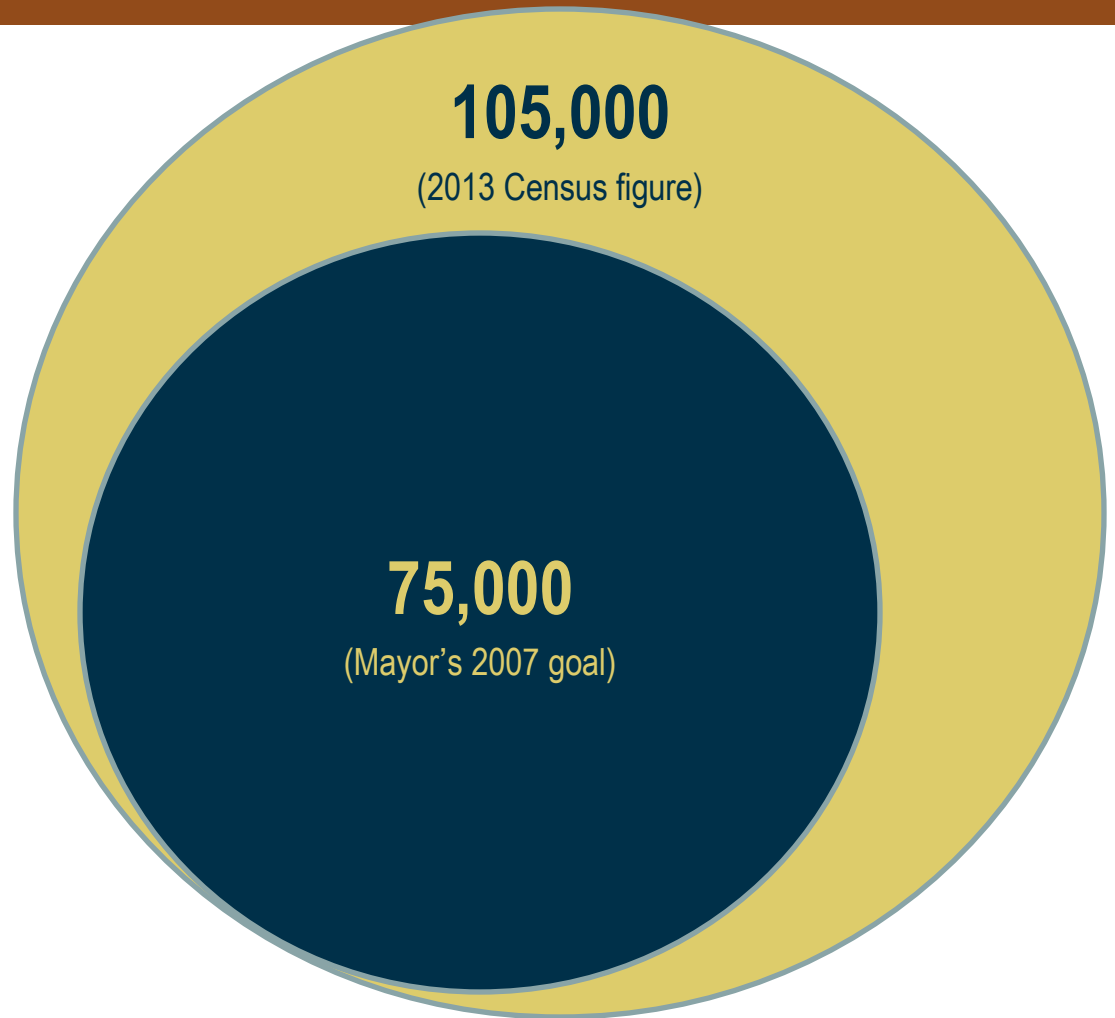
Photo: Harvey Finkle

2008: Mayor Michael A. Nutter pledges to **increase** the city's population by **75,000** people, in part by attracting immigrants

2011: Census figures show city's population on the rise for the first time in more than 50 years

The Picture Today

2013: City's population has grown by a net of approximately **105,000** people since Nutter's vow, substantially exceeding his goal of 75,000



Numbers are Clear: Growth is Driven by Immigrants

“Immigrant Surge: Why Area Grew”

The Philadelphia Inquirer

March 13, 2011

“Among its peer regions, metropolitan Philadelphia has the largest and fastest growing immigrant population.”

*Brookings Institution, Recent Immigration to Philadelphia:
Regional Change in a Re-Emerging Gateway. (2008)*



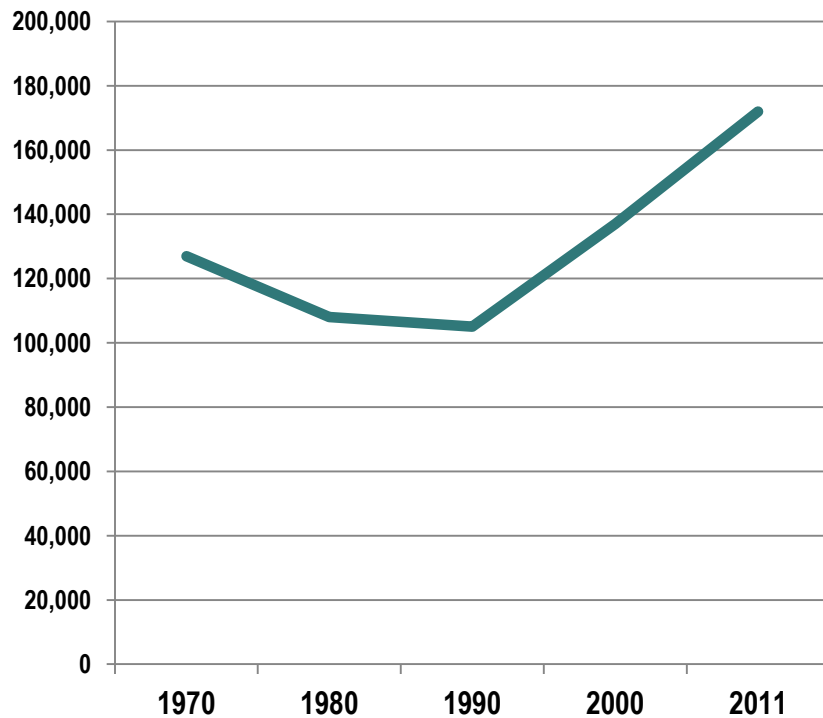
“This is Not a Misprint:
Philadelphia’s Population is Up”

March 10, 2011

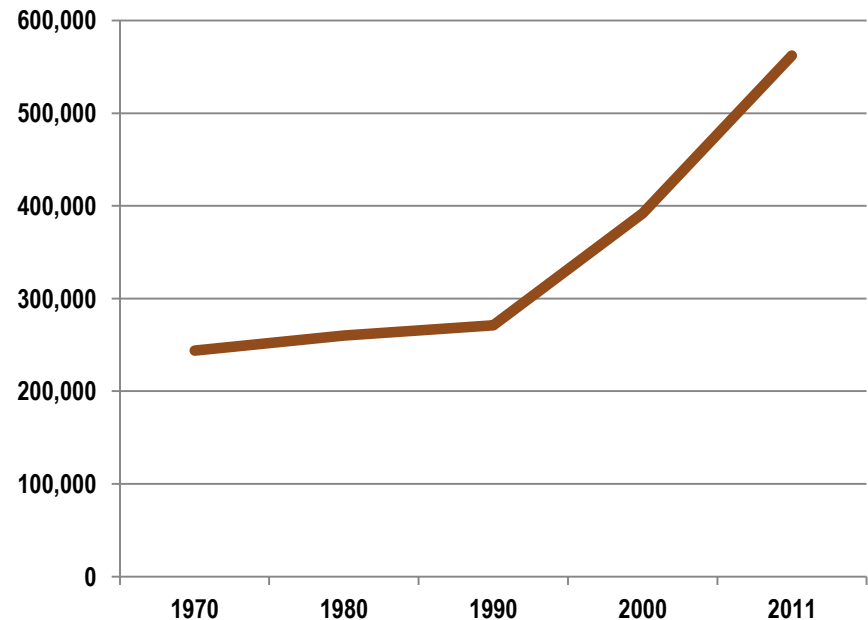
Not Just the City:

Immigration Has Also Increased in Philadelphia Metro Area

City of Philadelphia Immigration Growth



Greater Phila Metro Area Immigration Growth



Source: US Census Bureau.

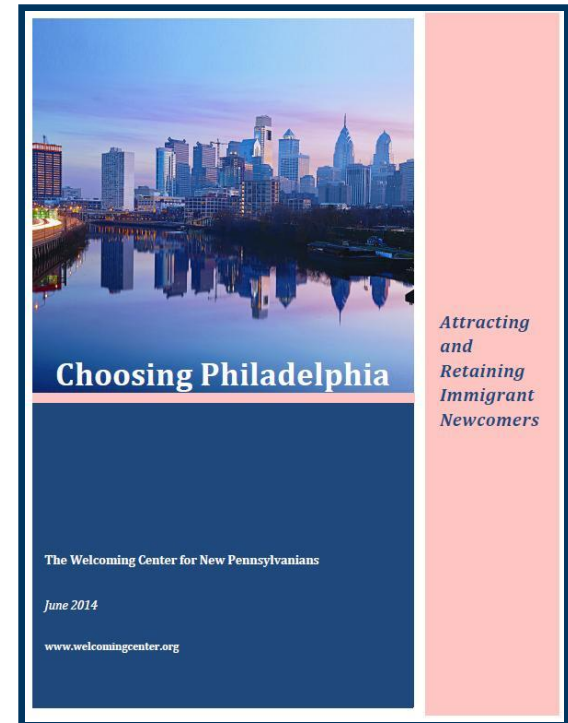
DATA

What the *Choosing Philadelphia* study examined

What Brings Newcomers?

The best way to understand what attracts immigrants to a region is to ask them.

And so we embarked on a survey...



View the full 44-page report
& survey instrument at:
www.welcomingcenter.org/ChoosePHL

A Broad Range of Respondents

The *Choosing Philadelphia* survey encompassed:



- 364 respondents
- 74 countries of origin (and Puerto Rico)
- Mix of in-person & phone interviews, plus online surveys

Not statistically representative, but wide-ranging

What We Asked

Topics covered in our survey include:

- Reasons for moving to Philadelphia
- How people received information before arrival
- Sense of welcome (generally and in specific settings)
- Likelihood of recommending the area to others
- Long-term plans (to stay in the region or leave)



What We Found



Many of our survey findings **reflected steps** that Philadelphia municipal and civic organizations have **taken** to make the city and region **more welcoming**.

Next, we'll explore the **implications** of our findings through the lens of specific policy options for **municipalities**.

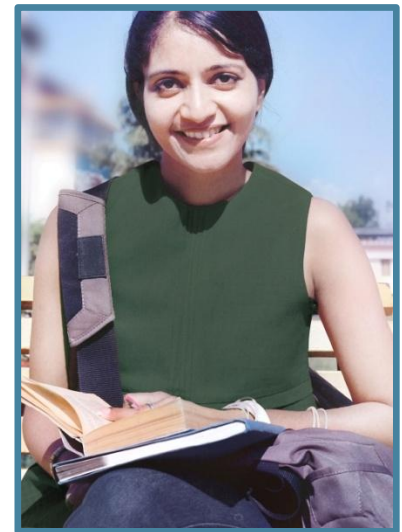
POLICY OPTIONS

Potential strategies for municipalities
seeking to increase immigrant population

Finding:

Extended Social Ties Crucial in Drawing Newcomers

Our survey found that newcomers were often aided in learning about or moving to the region via their **extended social network** – that is, not just their immediate family members, but more distant relatives, friends, and even acquaintances.



Recommendation: Intentionally Foster Word-of-Mouth

Potential activities include:

- A public relations effort to **encourage current residents to share their satisfaction** with friends abroad or elsewhere in the US
- Ensuring that ethnic and community organizations are **actively informed** of municipal programs of interest to newcomers
- Profiling “**success stories**” of newcomers who found their way to the region via a social or personal tie
- Working on college campuses to boost city/regional awareness among prospective newcomers via **peer networks**



How Philadelphia Does It

- The **Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs** hosts an annual xCultural Passport Week and regularly spotlights community events & organizations in its newsletter



How Philadelphia Does It *(continued)*



**Welcoming
Center for**
NEW PENNSYLVANIANS

*Connecting immigrants, employers,
and communities*

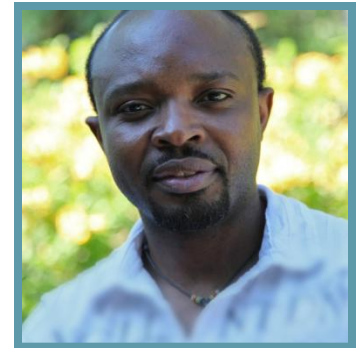
- Since 2008, the **Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition** has registered more than 20,000 new voters at naturalization ceremonies – helping build a database of invested individuals
- The **Welcoming Center's** newsletter reaches more than 9,000 contacts with stories, news, and practical information

Finding:

Momentum Breeds Momentum

*“There were so many other minorities –
it felt like a place of immigrants”*

South Philadelphia resident



Many survey respondents told us **that knowing that there was an established community of others** from their country, religion, or language group helped them feel at home and welcome in our city.

Recommendation:

Be Mindful that Diversity is Relative

Communities should consider their levels of diversity *in the context of peer US cities/regions* to which immigrants may be comparing them.

Specific policy options include:

- Gathering information about what current residents believe to be the municipality's most significant indicators of diversity
- Mapping existing informal “**communities of interest**” (a la NORCs, or naturally occurring retirement communities)
- “**Signal-boosting**” existing self-started initiatives by young or marginalized community members

How Philadelphia Does It

Organic initiatives often spring from **enlightened self-interest** rather than municipal policy

- Ethnic or religious student groups, faith organizations, and chambers of commerce help raise the profile of diverse groups
- Entities such as the **Mural Arts Program** and **Philadelphia Folklore Project** help to showcase cultural traditions while fostering community interaction



Liberian Women's Chorus for Change

Photo courtesy of LWCC and Philadelphia Folklore Project

Finding:

A Healthy Blend of Primary & Secondary Arrivals

Slightly more than half (**57%**) of our survey respondents had arrived in Philadelphia as their **first U.S. destination**.

In other words, a talent recruitment strategy focused only on arrivals from overseas would have **missed 43%** of immigrants in our sample.



Recommendation:

Be Alert to Differences in Migration Streams

Primary migrants who are arriving directly from abroad may follow different paths to a community than secondary migrants who come from elsewhere in the U.S. **Policy options to consider:**

- Analyze Census data to **detect trends** in migration patterns
- Conduct **spot surveys** to capture quick feedback from current residents
- Review refugee resettlement projections to understand the role of “**guided migration**” in the community

Finding:

Tangible Outcomes Are the Most Salient



“I feel welcome here [because] I [got] a job in less than a month”

Numerous respondents emphasized that being able to **find their economic footing** was a decisive factor in feeling at home in our region.

Recommendation:

Focus on Bread-and-Butter Economic Factors

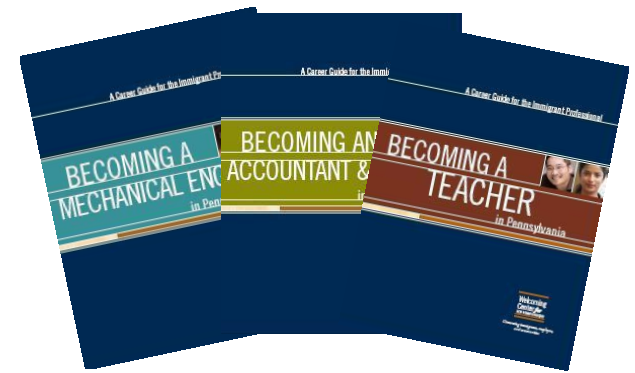
Connecting newcomers to employment or entrepreneurship opportunities can be the most effective way to cement their residence.

Policy options include:

- Offering meaningful **internship or placement opportunities** through employer partners
- Ensuring a strong referral connection or even subcontracting between ethnic organizations and **existing workforce and small business programs**

How Philadelphia Does It: Employment

- Local **Workforce Investment Boards** subcontract with immigrant organizations to provide employment placement
- **Career Guides** provide guidance on re-credentialing for immigrant professionals trained abroad



How Philadelphia Does It: Entrepreneurship

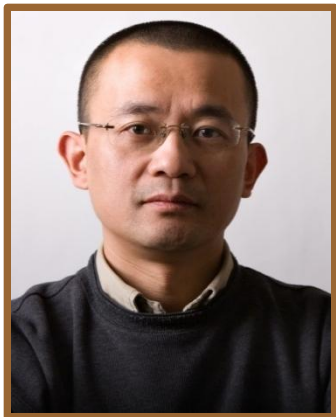
- City's Commerce Department contracts with Welcoming Center to provide **culturally competent** small business development services
- City's **Department of Licenses & Inspections** and Health Department meet with community representatives on issues of concern for **immigrant merchants**
- “**How to Start a Business**” guides, English for Entrepreneurs classes, and Opportunity Calls multilingual announcements provide practical tools for merchant success



Finding:

Within the Same Area, “Micro-Climates” for Immigrant Integration

“There was nothing culturally common between us and the neighborhood we lived in”



“People here talk down to immigrants. Especially if they have an accent”

Our survey found significant differences in experience among immigrants of different backgrounds.

Recommendation:

Find a Place at the Decisionmaking Table for All Voices



- **Pro-actively inviting** a diverse range of perspectives can help to ensure that an array of experiences are included in neighborhood and citywide discussions
- Using a “**Citizens Academy**” model can help to build familiarity with US-style customs and procedures among newcomers

How Philadelphia Does It

- **Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations** works to defuse community tensions and build understanding
- **City Council** members have held hearings and introduced legislation on topics of interest to immigrant communities
- Welcoming Center hosts **town hall discussions** and fosters cross-ethnic collaboration among US-born and immigrant business owners and community members



Finding:

Solid Infrastructure Enables Other Growth



From nonprofit organizations to **public transit**, from **libraries** to strong **public policy**, good infrastructure provides the scaffolding that other efforts need to grow.

How Philadelphia Does It

- A robust array of **refugee resettlement** agencies help incorporate a steady stream of refugee arrivals
- The School District of Philadelphia's **Office of Multilingual Family Support** works to ensure that newcomers' children are promptly enrolled in school



How Philadelphia Does It

- With more than 90 **colleges and universities** in the Philadelphia region, immigrants have numerous opportunities to pursue education, obtain employment, and draw on a critical mass of globally minded colleagues.



A Final Note: Mayoral Executive Orders

Although paper policies alone cannot ensure immigrant integration, the process of organizing to build community support for policy change can have other positive ripple effects. Both top-down leadership from elected officials and grassroots work by advocates are necessary for success.

- 2008: Language access policy
- 2009: Immigration status policy
- 2013: MOIMA established
- 2014 Immigration detainer policy



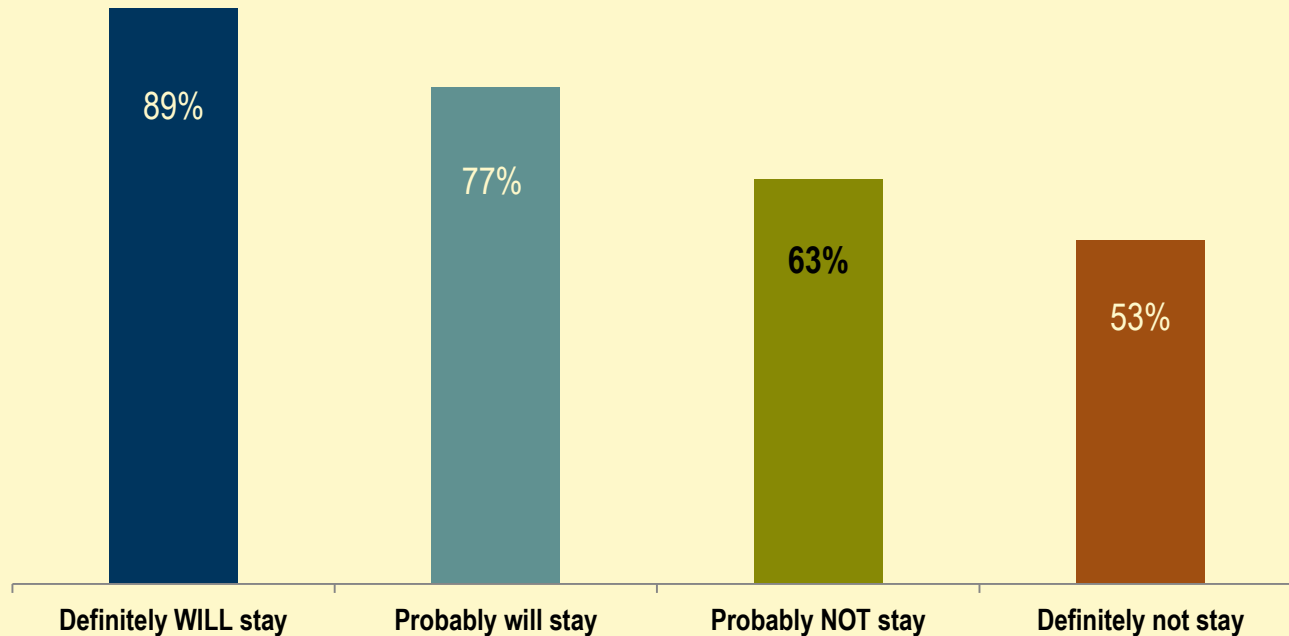
Mayor Michael A. Nutter

In addition: Philadelphia Police Department Directive on Language Access

The Bottom Line

People Who Felt Welcomed Initially More Likely to Say They Will Stay in the Region Long-Term

(Chart shows % who felt welcomed initially)



Fostering Momentum



- There is much more to learn when it comes to attracting and incorporating new immigrant residents
- We invite your suggestions, questions, and ideas!

NUTS & BOLTS

Tips for conducting your own survey

Tips for Designing Your Own Study

- Begin with the end in mind
- Take the time up front to beta-test the survey tool
- Consider the pros and cons of in-person/phone interviews versus online surveys
- Ensure that sufficient time is built in for cleaning of data
- Have one person follow the process all the way through
- Our survey tool is free to use or adapt!

About the Welcoming Center

*Founded in 2003,
to date we have served
more than 12,000 immigrant
and US-born individuals
through **education,
employment, and
entrepreneurship** services.*



*Connecting immigrants, employers,
and communities*



WELCOMING CENTER for NEW PENNSYLVANIANS

The logo for the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians features the text "Welcoming Center for NEW PENNSYLVANIANS" centered between two horizontal orange bars. The text is in a white, sans-serif font, with "NEW PENNSYLVANIANS" in all caps and a smaller font size than the other words.

Welcoming
Center for
NEW PENNSYLVANIANS

*Connecting immigrants, employers,
and communities*

Amanda Bergson-Shilcock
1617 John F. Kennedy Blvd.

Suite 555

Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-557-2835

amanda@welcomingcenter.org