

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT & IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

ICMA and Cornell University partnered on this survey to better understand local government policies, programs, and other activities related to immigrant populations in their communities. The survey was distributed in spring of 2018 to Chief Administrative Officers of all municipalities with a population over 10,000 and all counties across the United States. It was completed by 1,201 local governments, yielding a response rate of 17%. Almost half of survey respondents are from communities with a population between 10,000 and 25,000.

### Integrating and Engaging Immigrant Communities

- Though some described challenges related to language or cultural barriers, local governments have taken steps to improve communication with immigrants in their communities.

Has your local government engaged in any of the following activities?



*"In the City of Rock Island, first responder/emergency services contacts with immigrant population in emergency situations, and the need for translation services, have resulted in cultural competency training and having cards with translations in several languages that address common situations."*

– Rock Island Township, Illinois

*"Our Council appointed a community task force who developed 'the Commitment for an Inclusive, Equitable, and Compassionate Community' that lays out specific actions for City government and the community to address concerns regarding inclusion and discrimination."*

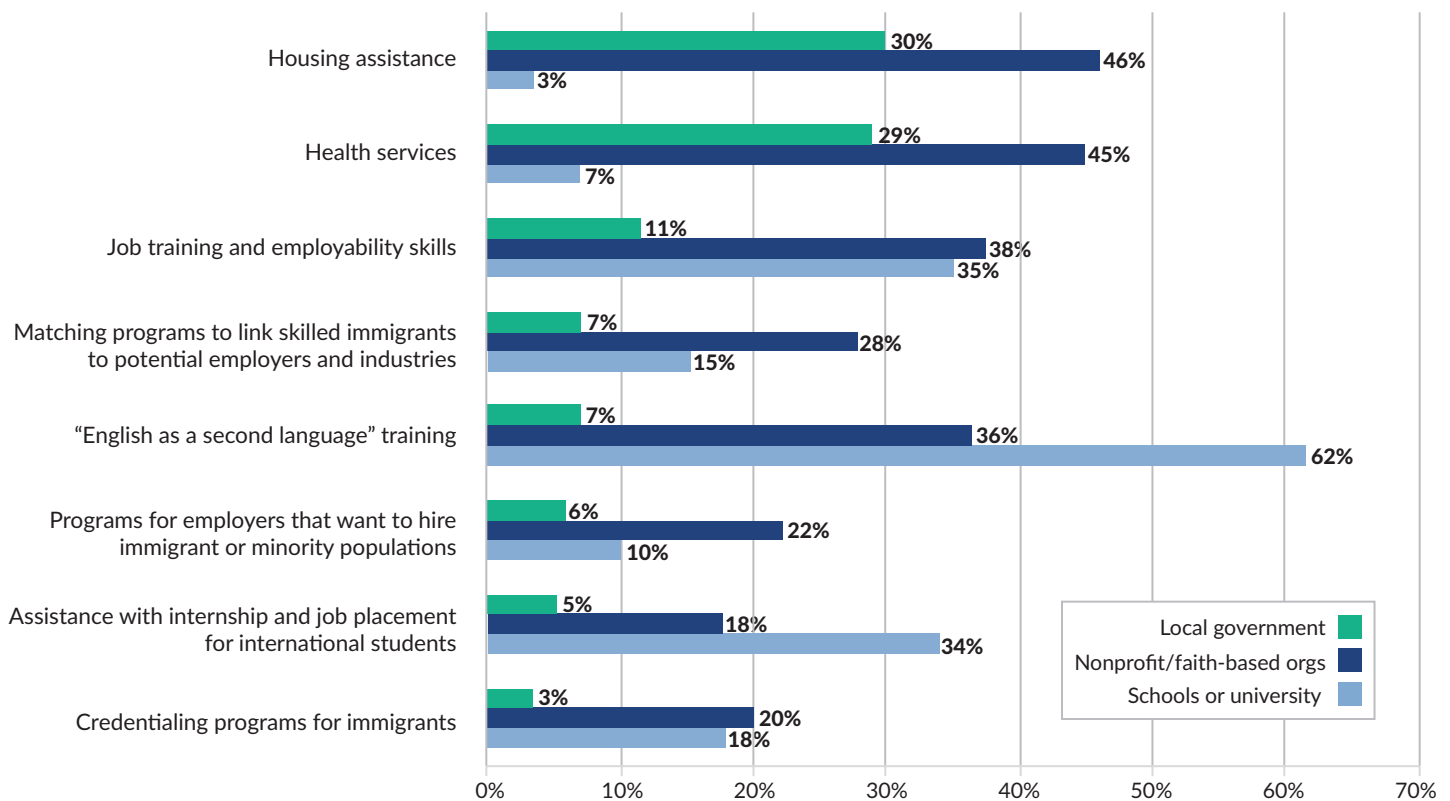
– City of Hayward, CA

- Few responding local governments have enacted or even considered local policies related to illegal immigration issues.
  - 7 percent have enacted local policies prohibiting the hiring of unauthorized workers; less than half as many have enacted a local measure providing some form of sanctuary to immigrants.
- Few communities (4%) reported experiencing a significant civil unrest event related to immigration, ethnic, or cultural issues.
  - Those that had described a wide range of examples, including events dating as far back as the Civil Rights Movement.

## Activities for Immigrants

- Local governments are most often involved in providing housing assistance and health services, and the rate gets higher in larger communities.
- While “other support services” such as food pantries or child care programs were most commonly-reported services available for immigrants in communities, they were most often provided by non-profits or faith-based organizations. These groups are key providers of all direct services.
- English language training (ESL) is provided more in larger communities, and mainly by schools and universities.
- Local government leaders estimate that job opportunities, for both low-wage as well as skilled or specialized opportunities, are among the biggest drivers of immigration growth in their communities.
- But only 11% of local governments highlight immigrant driven diversity as an asset in economic development marketing, and/or support job training opportunities for immigrants.
- Overall, workforce development activities such as credentialing programs or efforts to match student and job-seekers with prospective employers—regardless of how delivered—were less commonly reported than other human services.
- In some communities, these activities are provided by multiple entities.

### Which groups are involved in providing the following services to immigrants in your community?



## Resources

- Welcoming Cities & Counties Initiative: [www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/member-municipalities](http://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/member-municipalities)
- Macomb County, MI OneMacomb Initiative: [people.macombgov.org/People-About](http://people.macombgov.org/People-About)
- City of Dallas, TX Office of Welcoming Communities & Immigrant Affairs: [www.dallascityhall.com/departments/wcia/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.dallascityhall.com/departments/wcia/Pages/default.aspx)
- Los Angeles Justice Fund established by Los Angeles County, the City of Los Angeles, the Weingart Foundation and the California Community Foundation: [oia.lacounty.gov/aboutlajf/](http://oia.lacounty.gov/aboutlajf/)
- The City of Bowling Green, KY International Communities Liaison Program: [www.bgky.org/ncs/icl](http://www.bgky.org/ncs/icl)
- Vera Institute Center on Immigration and Justice working with communities to improve relationships with immigrant communities: [www.vera.org/centers/immigration-and-justice](http://www.vera.org/centers/immigration-and-justice)
- The National Civic League’s All-America Conversations: [www.nationalcivicleague.org/all-america-conversations](http://www.nationalcivicleague.org/all-america-conversations)