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A BLUEPRINT FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

INTRODUCTION / CREATING A MUNICIPAL IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION AGENDA

As my grandparents did more than a century ago, immigrants continue to come to America in search of better lives for themselves and their families. They work hard. They start businesses. They seek to give their children opportunities they never had. New York City sees the power of immigration every day - and immigrants have been key to many of the comeback stories that our neighborhoods have written, especially over the past decade.

We know both from experience and from the best data that immigrants drive economic growth. That is why I helped create the Partnership for a New American Economy, a coalition of more than 500 mayors and business leaders who understand that immigration reform will help create jobs for Americans. Immigration reform is crucial to our economic future, which is why our Administration is doing everything we can to push our leaders in Washington to fix our broken immigration system this year.

In New York City, we provide services to all New Yorkers, regardless of when they arrived here. We want immigrant parents to be active members of their children's school communities. And as we work to keep New York the safest big city in the nation, it is critically important that all of our residents feel comfortable and safe alerting the authorities to any criminal activity they may be aware of. With the introduction of the Blueprints for Immigrant Integration, New York remains committed to supporting our nation's diverse immigrant communities.

By continuing to welcome immigrants with open arms, we not only honor the history of our city and country, we strengthen our future.



Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor, City of New York

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to introduce you to a series of Blueprints for Immigrant Integration. As cities across America have begun to seek ways to tap into the value and potential of newcomers, many have reached out to the City of New York for guidance and tools to support their work with immigrant communities. In the interest of proactively moving this conversation forward, the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs has created a series of guides that highlight successful models and practices for other cities to consider and use in developing their own unique responses to serving newcomers.

Immigrants come to this country with many of the same aspirations that you and I share for ourselves and our families. As local government, we can help our immigrant residents achieve their goals by committing to provide meaningful access to services and opportunities for all. I hope that New York City's experience in the creation of a robust and innovative agenda to facilitate immigrant integration can help you and your colleagues think about how to strategically leverage your city's assets to address your immigrant communities' unique needs and enhance their contributions to the civic, economic and cultural life of your city.

Under Mayor Bloomberg's leadership, New York City has implemented landmark policies that improve the quality of life for immigrant New Yorkers and their neighbors. His unwavering support for comprehensive immigration reform has brought mayors and CEOs across the nation together to make the case that immigrants make significant and important contributions to society, advancing technology, launching new enterprises, creating jobs and helping to improve the quality of life for all Americans. Yet as cities, we cannot afford to wait on Congress to enact sensible reforms–the work of serving our immigrant residents is happening now.

The Blueprints for Immigrant Integration series is part of New York City's commitment to supporting Mayor's Offices around the country and providing guidance on effective local policies and practices that help immigrants successfully take part in the life of their communities. Over the coming months, there will be a growing library of resources on immigrant integration on nyc.gov/integration, including blueprints for immigrant civic engagement, citizenship, police and community relations, economic development and more. These blueprints are designed to eliminate the mystery and provide step-by-step guidance on how to better serve immigrant residents.

We invite you to visit nyc.gov/integration and join us in this important work.



Sincerely,

Fatima Shama
Commissioner, New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

CITIES FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

Welcome to Cities for Immigrant Integration. The focus of this convening is to bring together and highlight the great work of cities around the country that have recognized the importance of welcoming and supporting immigrants, and to create a space for municipalities to form collaborative partnerships in the development and replication of successful practices in immigrant integration.

The importance of facilitating communication and collaboration among City officials working on a shared immigrant integration agenda is based on the following:

1. That cities are experiencing the greatest impacts of globalization and migration;
2. That in order to remain competitive, cities must attract and retain newcomers;
3. That in the face of federal inaction and state interference, cities are left to respond to immigration-related challenges;
4. That immigrants, regardless of legal status, are residents of cities, and that all city residents must have equal access to services and resources in order to promote general welfare; and
5. That immigrants and immigrant integration benefit the civic, economic and cultural life of cities.

Recognizing these realities, the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs has provided technical assistance and guidance to numerous cities across the United States and around the world to help them better serve their immigrant residents and allow them to thrive. This collaborative effort has the potential to generate enormous benefits for immigrants and their neighbors around the country and reshape the way cities think about service delivery.

For the City of New York, serving immigrants is about smart policy-making, innovative responses to community needs, and cross-agency programmatic opportunities that better support immigrant New Yorkers. It is important for cities to recognize the assets, challenges, resources and opportunities their immigrant communities provide. Cities that make similar commitments to being immigrant friendly and welcoming immigrants will reap the rewards of increased civic participation, engagement and economic mobility among their residents and foster cultural and economic vibrancy in their cities.

BACKGROUND

New York City has always been a city of immigrants.

More than 12 million immigrants passed through Ellis Island between 1892 and 1956, and since that time New York City's foreign born population has continued to grow, more than doubling between 1970 and 2010. Today, nearly forty percent of all New Yorkers were born outside the United States and more than half speak a language other than English in their homes. The majority of New York City residents–almost sixty percent–are either immigrants or the children of immigrants.

The City of New York owes its success to the vibrancy, entrepreneurship, and diversity of its immigrant communities. Foreign migration to New York has remained one of the primary drivers of the City's growth over the past several decades, and its recent designation by the Economist Intelligence Unit as the "World's Most Competitive City" is, in part, thanks to the City's thriving small business sector, nearly half of which is supported by immigrant owned enterprises.

At the same time, adequately serving a diverse and constantly-changing constituency presents tremendous challenges for municipal government. The City of New York has had a long-standing commitment to serving immigrant communities and for nearly three decades has maintained an office dedicated to understanding and responding to the needs of immigrants. More recently, under the visionary leadership of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, New York City has pioneered innovative policies and programs that address the challenges of serving a diverse audience while also leveraging immigrant communities' countless assets.

Yet increasingly, New York is not the only city taking on these challenges. In the face of federal inaction on immigration reform, as well as the misguided attempts by state legislatures around the country to deter the settlement of newcomers, cities have emerged as the centers of innovation in service delivery. Over the past several years, numerous cities across the United States and around the globe have formalized their commitment to serving immigrants by establishing dedicated offices, councils and committees to ensure access to services and promote growth and vibrancy through attracting newcomers.

Immigrants help cities thrive. That is the premise of each of the Blueprints for Immigrant Integration and the reason why this conversation is so important. The cities that acknowledge and celebrate this idea are the ones that will succeed in the 21st century. Committing time, expertise and resources to facilitating immigrant integration begins with activating and strengthening your City's assets. Establishing a central office dedicated to identifying challenges and leveraging opportunities to better support immigrants is a strategy the City of New York has used to facilitate the integration of newcomers and maximize their contributions to the civic, economic and cultural life of the City.

NEW YORK CITY MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS

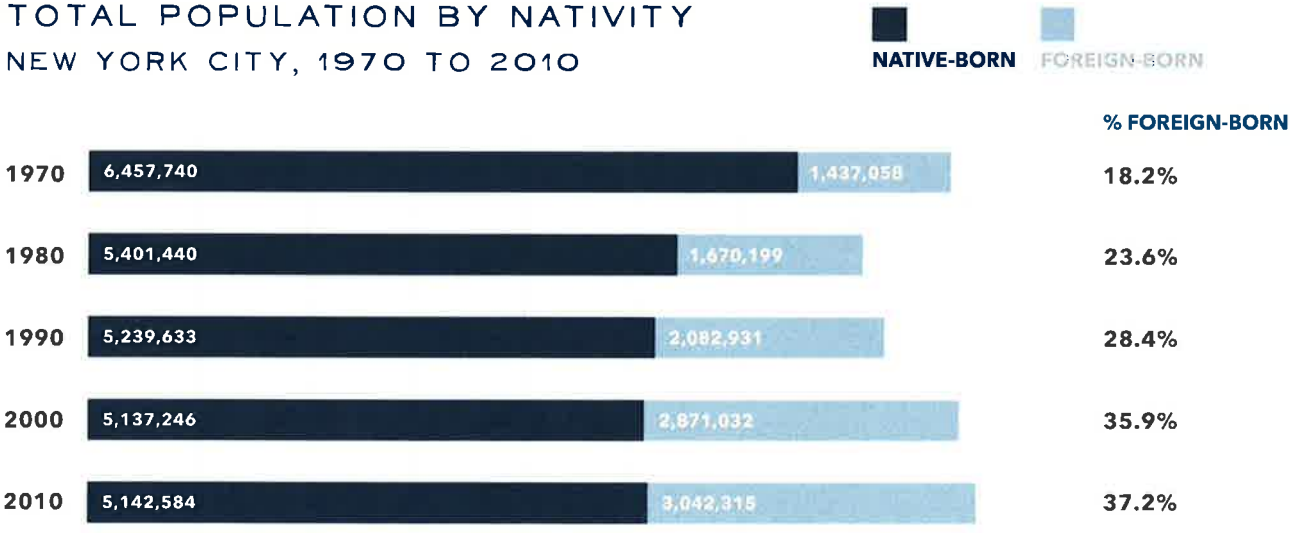
MISSION:

Building on its Charter mandate, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs promotes the well-being of immigrant communities by recommending policies and programs that facilitate the successful integration of immigrant New Yorkers into the civic, economic and cultural life of the City.

OBJECTIVES:

+ **Ensure and Enhance Access:** Promote the use of City services by immigrant New Yorkers
+ **Build Strategic Partnerships:** Liaise with immigrant communities and key stakeholders to create, support and encourage collaboration and strategic partnerships among City agencies and immigrant communities
+ **Provide Technical Assistance:** Provide guidance and expertise to City agencies and community partners and serve as a key resource regarding immigrants
+ **Celebrate Contributions:** Coordinate programs celebrating immigrant contributions and supporting immigrant heritage

TOTAL POPULATION BY NATIVITY
NEW YORK CITY, 1970 TO 2010

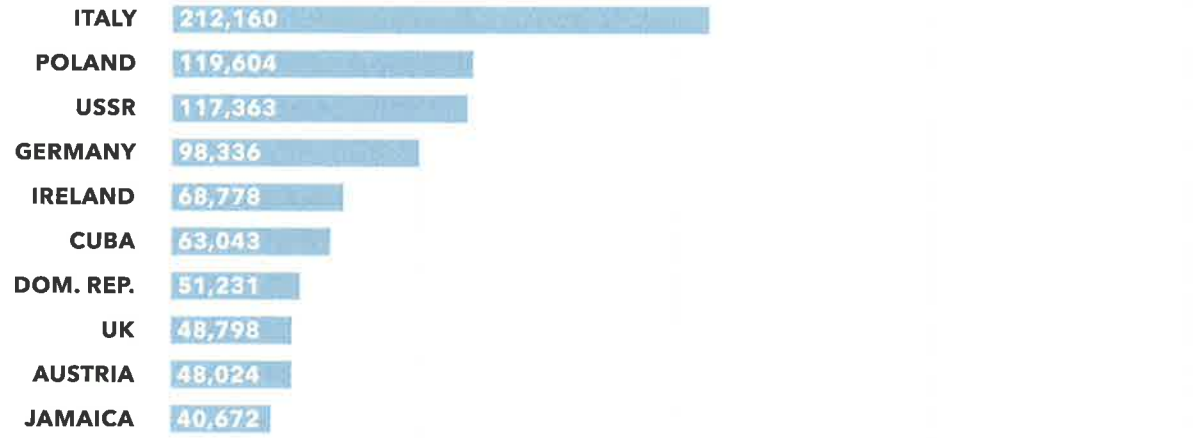


Source: Population Division, New York City Department of City Planning

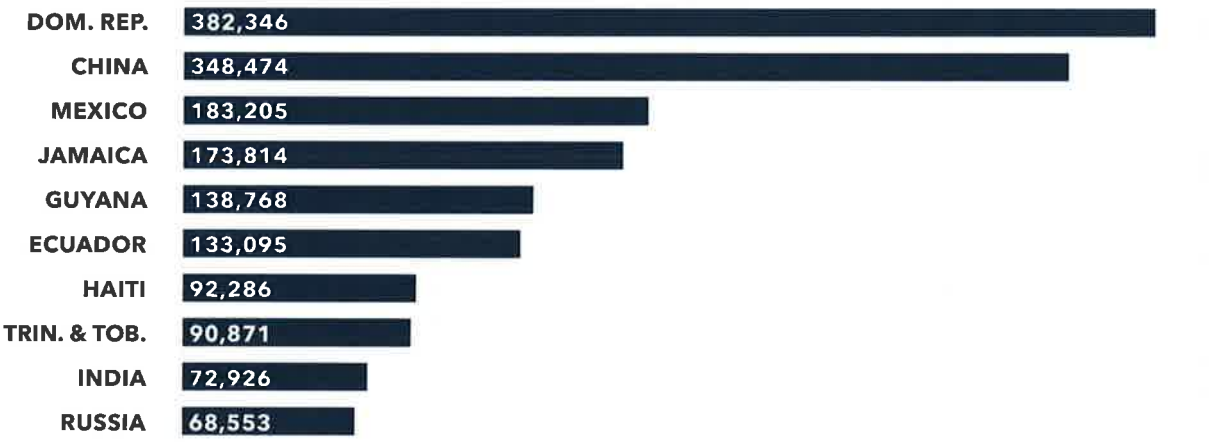
Top Source Countries of New York City's Foreign Born Population, 1970 and 2010

The reality of changing demographics was one of the motivating factors behind the decision to establish an Office of Immigrant Affairs in the City of New York. Although immigration to New York–and to the United States as whole–has been on-going for centuries, the top source countries of the foreign born population have changed dramatically over time, necessitating a commitment to closely observing and understanding immigration patterns and trends and how they may impact the City.

1970



2010



Source: Population Division, New York City Department of City Planning

HISTORY AND TIMELINE*

1984

MAYOR EDWARD I. KOCH ESTABLISHES THE OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

In recognition of both the importance of immigrants to New York City and the challenges created by changing demographics, the Koch Administration established an Office of Immigrant Affairs within the Department of City Planning. The selection of City Planning reflected the Administration's acknowledgement of the need to better understand the changing demographics of New York City as a basis for improving and coordinating service delivery.

1990

MAYOR DAVID N. DINKINS ESTABLISHES THE OFFICE WITHIN THE MAYORALTY

Following Mayor Koch's lead, Mayor Dinkins reaffirmed and strengthened the City's commitment to immigrants by establishing a Commission on Latino Affairs and shifting the Office of Immigrant Affairs from City Planning to the mayoralty, a landmark and highly celebrated move by that Administration.

1994

MAYOR RUDOLPH W. GIULIANI MERGES TWO OFFICES TO CREATE THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

Mayor Giuliani enhanced the services of the Office by merging the Offices of Immigrant Affairs and Language Services into a single office in 1994.

2001

NEW YORK CITY VOTERS ADOPT, BY REFERENDUM, THE OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS WITHIN THE CITY CHARTER

In 2001, New York City voters adopted, by referendum, the Office of Immigrant Affairs within the City's Charter, making it the first and only chartered office dedicated to serving immigrants in the country. Before that, neither the Charter nor the Administrative Code required the City to protect immigrants' rights to access City services. This change established the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs as a Charter agency to assist in the development and implementation of City policies and programs dedicated to immigrants, and incorporated into the Charter protection of immigrants' rights to access City services.

2002

MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG APPOINTS THE OFFICE'S FIRST COMMISSIONER

The appointment of a Commissioner to lead the Office of Immigrant Affairs reflects the Administration's prioritization of immigrant affairs and commitment to ensuring that the needs and concerns of the City's immigrant communities are communicated to other cabinet-level officials.

*As uncovered through detail in public records and historical documents.

2010
TO PRESENT

NYC'S ONGOING COMMITMENT TO IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

Since 2010, more than forty unique initiatives and policy efforts have been launched citywide to support immigrant New Yorkers, including:

- The NYC Language Gateway and the NYCertified program to leverage the City's human capital and other existing assets and build capacity to provide quality language access services
- The Immigrant Financial Services Study, conducted in coordination with the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment, to assess and better understand banking and financial practices in target immigrant communities
- Three Immigrant Entrepreneur Initiatives, designed to support immigrant small business owners and entrepreneurs and connect them with services and professional networks
- Empowerment, Access and Success for Immigrant Youth (EASiY), launched in partnership with the NYC Department of Education and local law schools to train law students to facilitate workshops in public high schools that provide immigrant students information about immigration benefits for which they may be eligible, the importance of accessing and carrying proper identification, interacting with law enforcement and preparing for college and career success

In June 2010, Mayor Bloomberg launched the Partnership for a New American Economy, bringing together a bipartisan group of mayors from across the country and business leaders from all sectors of the economy and all 50 states to raise awareness of the economic benefits of sensible immigration reform. The Partnership for a New American Economy is active in the 2013 immigration reform debate, recently launching the March for Innovation, a Virtual March on Washington, D.C. to push for smart immigration reform to attract and keep the best and brightest to fuel innovation and American jobs.

Since 2010, MOIA has offered expertise and technical assistance to local, state, national and international government bodies and agencies to support the development and enhancement of immigrant integration efforts globally. MOIA has provided guidance to Mayor's Offices and senior-level government officials in Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Seattle, as well as government representatives from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Spain and Italy.

CORE PRIORITIES AND FUNCTIONS

ENSURE AND ENHANCE ACCESS: PROMOTE USE OF CITY SERVICES BY IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS

COMPONENTS:

+ Research, recommend and implement policies that facilitate access to services
+ Educate public and promote awareness of the availability of programs and services

EXAMPLES:

Confidentiality. In 2003, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg issued Executive Orders 34 and 41, also known as the City's "Confidentiality Policy," that ensures access to City services for all New Yorkers. The Executive Orders mandate City workers to protect as confidential broad categories of information belonging to people seeking City services, including a person's immigration status.

Language Access. In July 2008, Mayor Bloomberg signed the Citywide Language Access Policy, Executive Order 120, requiring every City agency that provides direct services to take reasonable steps to ensure access to services for limited-English proficient New Yorkers by providing interpretation and translation services in at least the top six languages spoken in the City.

Open Communication. In April 2007, and again in 2011, Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) President Alan D. Aviles and the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs joined together to issue a reassuring message about the City's confidentiality policy to immigrant New Yorkers who may be avoiding accessing health services for fear of having their immigration status disclosed to federal authorities. The message was delivered in an open letter and written in 12 different languages.

Know Your Rights and Responsibilities Forums. Since April 2011, Know Your Rights and Responsibilities Forums have engaged more than 65,000 immigrant New Yorkers in conversations about the policies, programs and services that exist to assist and protect them, as well as their responsibilities as City residents and community members.

BUILD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: LIAISE WITH AND PROMOTE COLLABORATION BETWEEN CITY AGENCIES AND IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

COMPONENTS:

- Identify, engage, and support community and faith leaders to help immigrant communities navigate government, voice their concerns, and strengthen their contributions
- Work in coordination with City agencies to engage immigrant communities and promote effective service delivery
- Leverage public-private partnerships to support opportunities for community engagement and empowerment
- Serve as direct link between immigrant New Yorkers and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to assist and support immigrants in navigating the complex U.S. immigration system

EXAMPLES:

Listening Tour. Following her appointment in 2009, Commissioner Fatima Shama met with City government officials, community based organizations, immigrant communities and other key stakeholders around the City to better understand challenges and opportunities within New York City's immigrant communities, which resulted in an agenda for the Office of Immigrant Affairs.

Immigrant Entrepreneurship. In collaboration with the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) and the NYC Small Business Services Department (SBS), MOIA surveyed and assessed the needs of immigrant entrepreneurs in target communities across the City and developed targeted multilingual workshops to help them start and grow businesses.

Financial Empowerment. In partnership with the City University of New York, the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) and MOIA provided scholarships to eight community-based organizations to complete consumer finance courses and become Financial Empowerment partner agencies, increasing immigrant New Yorkers' access to financial counseling and safe banking opportunities.

Civic Engagement. In April 2011, MOIA launched One NYC One Nation, which brings together New York City's philanthropic, public and community leadership to strengthen immigrant communities by collaborating and leveraging resources, programs and opportunities throughout the City.

PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: SERVE AS A KEY RESOURCE REGARDING IMMIGRANTS

COMPONENTS:

- Offer technical assistance and expertise to City agencies to ensure their programs and policies meet the needs of their service population
- Form and maintain direct ties with immigrant communities and community based organizations to identify opportunities for collaboration and inform City agencies about the impact of local, state and federal actions on immigrant communities
- Conduct research, convene stakeholders, survey communities, and assist agencies with development and implementation of programs
- Serve as internal experts on immigrant communities and cultural and linguistic competencies and track local, state, national and global trends in immigration and immigrant integration

EXAMPLES:

Serving Vulnerable Youth. In 2007, the Administration for Children's Services, in collaboration with MOIA, created better systems to quickly identify undocumented youth in the foster care system in order to assess their eligibility for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) or other applicable immigration benefits and refer them to appropriate legal service providers for assistance and representation.

Public Health. In October 2010, MOIA collaborated with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Tobacco Control Program and the Taxi Driver Alliance to conduct specific outreach to Southeast Asian drivers. In March 2011, the program led a Citywide Nicotine and Patch Giveaway campaign targeting Russian and Asian Americans.

Universal Pre-Kindergarten. In 2012 and 2013, MOIA worked with NYC Department of Education to support a targeted outreach campaign to help immigrant parents understand and access the new Universal Pre-K program.

CELEBRATE CONTRIBUTIONS: COORDINATE PROGRAMS CELEBRATING IMMIGRANT CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT HERITAGE

COMPONENTS:

+ Organize and coordinate celebrations recognizing the contributions, diversity and history of immigrant New Yorkers
+ Highlight the importance of immigrants to New York City's civic, economic and cultural vibrancy through strategic partnerships to promote the recognition of immigrant communities as assets

EXAMPLES:

Immigrant Heritage Week. In April 2009, Mayor Bloomberg signed Executive Order 128 to permanently establish Immigrant Heritage Week, an annual citywide event that began in 2004 to celebrate the immigrant experience and honor the many contributions immigrants have made to make New York City the most diverse and vibrant city in the world. This week-long event hosts a number of cultural and educational events in all five boroughs.

Community Stories Campaign. The Community Stories Campaign is a partnership between the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and WNET/Thirteen, the flagship public television station of the New York City tri-state area and the most-watched public television channel in the nation. WNET created a set of interstitials showcasing the immigrant history of community leaders, government officials and everyday New Yorkers and highlight the rich diversity of the City. Viewers are invited to share their family immigration stories online. Through this process, WNET has formed key partnerships in emerging immigrant communities.

StoryCorps. In 2011, MOIA partnered with StoryCorps and the New York Community Trust to record interviews with immigrant New Yorkers in various locations across the City, including libraries and other community organizations, to provide them with a chance to discuss their heritage, to recognize the value and power of their stories, and to highlight the rich and diverse backgrounds of New Yorkers.

CITIES FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION aims to support the expansion of programs and policies that facilitate the economic, civic and cultural integration of immigrants across the United States. The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) has provided and will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance to other municipalities in their efforts to support immigrant communities and encourages local governments to network and share best practices in this important field.

Blueprints for Immigrant Integration, as well as additional tools and resources, are available on **nyc.gov/integration** and will continue to grow over the coming months. Please feel free to write us and share feedback by contacting **integration@cityhall.nyc.gov.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work highlighted in this document was made possible with the support and guidance of many talented colleagues in New York City and across the United States. The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs would like to thank Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg for his visionary leadership on immigration, as well as our partner agencies, organizations, and funders, who share our commitment to supporting and investing in the well-being of immigrant New Yorkers.

MOIA and the City of New York are grateful to the staff at the Population Division of the NYC Department of City Planning for their partnership and work highlighting the diversity of New York City and informing policy decisions with expert demographic analysis.

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Community Development

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NYC
Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

Office of
Immigrant Affairs
Fatima Shama
Commissioner

Rockefeller Brothers Fund
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