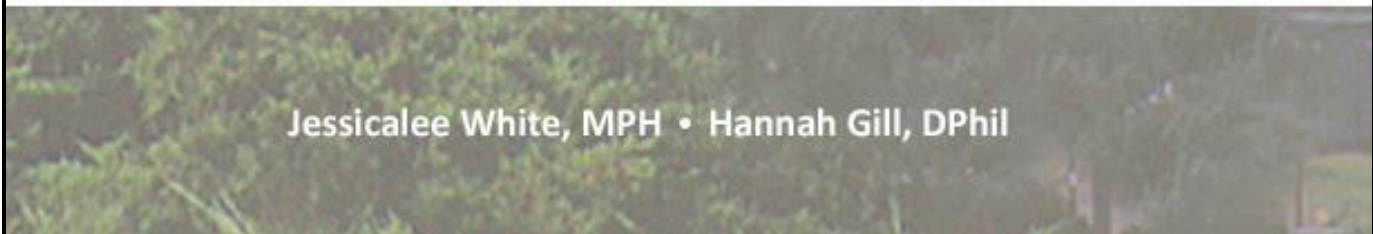


Building Integrated Communities in  
**Winston-Salem and Forsyth County,**  
North Carolina

**Demographics and Perspectives of  
Foreign-Born Residents**

**Executive Summary**

Download full report (English & Spanish) at  
<http://migration.unc.edu/programs/bic>



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## Executive Summary: Local Issues and Recommendations

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An outline, or *profile*, of the diverse foreign-born communities in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County is presented in the report section that immediately follows this summary within the full report (<http://migration.unc.edu/programs/bic>). Readers who are interested in the make-up of the estimated more than 32,000 foreign-born residents in Forsyth County from 2008 to 2012 [1] should review that profile for information such as countries of origin, languages spoken, concentrations of geographic residence, and U.S. residency/citizenship statuses.

Here, we highlight the input of the many local foreign-born community members who took part in this assessment through either resident surveys or resident discussion groups. (Report sections 6 and 7 give full descriptions of resident survey and discussion group activities, the residents who took part in them, and what we learned.) The foreign-born community members who completed surveys, or *survey respondents*, included 211 Forsyth County residents from 23 different countries of origin and Puerto Rico. In addition, about 200 local residents from various world regions took part in a total of six discussion groups. Together, these residents shared valuable information about their experiences living in the city and county, as well as their major challenges and recommendations related to local integration.

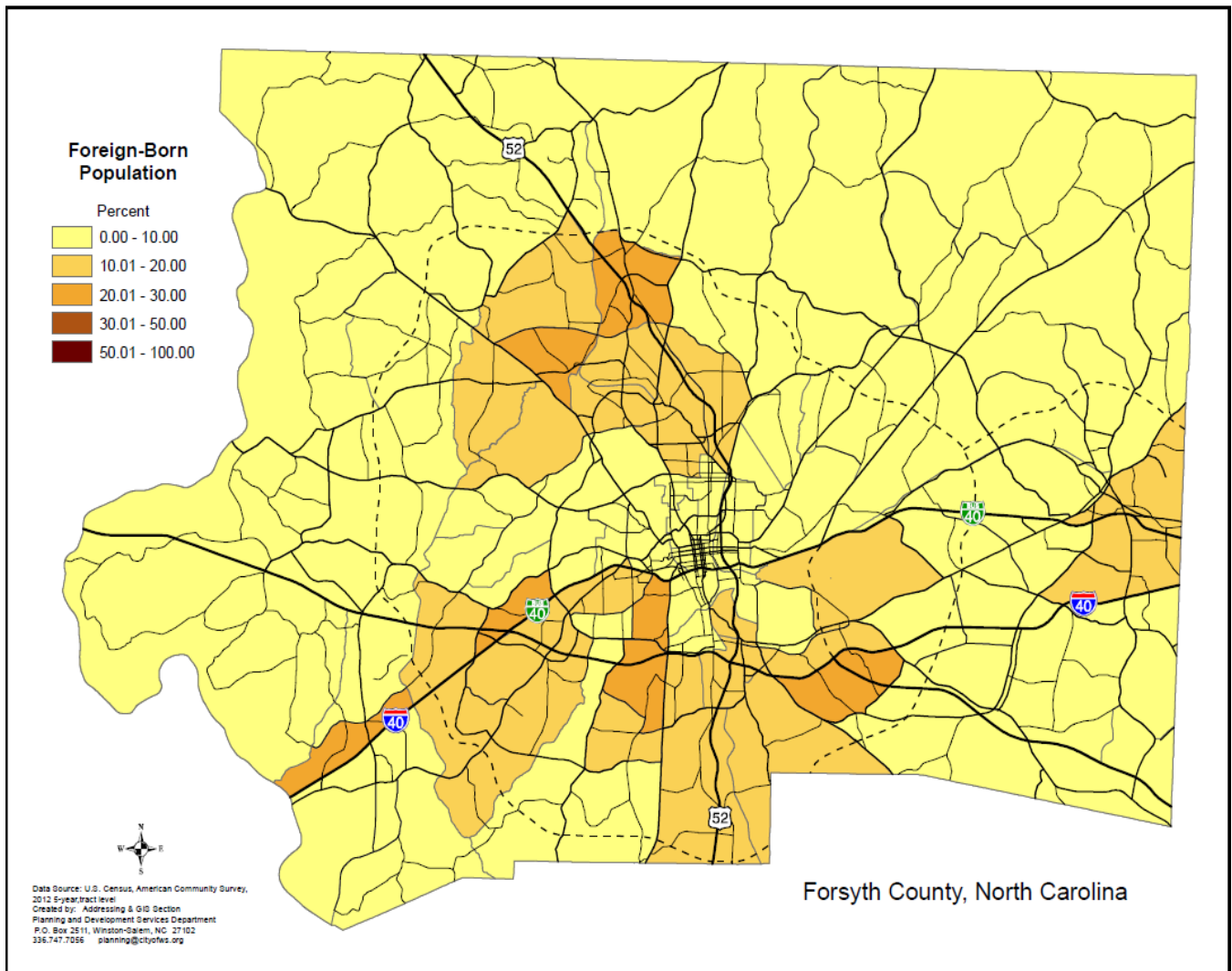
Resident survey respondents described many positive qualities about living in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, including peaceful living in their city and local neighborhoods; friendly people and neighbors; the closeness of essential resources such as jobs, highways, schools, good hospitals, grocery stores, and shopping centers; economic affordability and work opportunities; and the local education system with “the best educational opportunities.”

Resident survey respondents also described several major issues that affect local foreign-born communities (*see Table 6.2, pp. 36-37*). With the exception of “neighborhood crime,” all of these issues were again named by most resident discussion groups as “the greatest challenges” facing local foreign-born communities (*see Table 7.1, pp. 45-47*). Below, we describe these issues and add in residents’ recommendations for improving integration as well as other types of data from this report, such as mapped demographic and social/educational data, a survey of local organization members, and other existing reports. We describe public transportation issues first because they were the most commonly reported concerns among resident survey respondents, including foreign-born residents of non-Hispanic/Latino origin, and because they were identified as major challenges by all of the resident discussion groups; all other issues are described in alphabetical order.

- **Public Transportation** – Public transportation problems were of overwhelming concern to both discussion groups and resident survey respondents. Residents’ comments focused on an overall lack of public transportation, as well as a specific need for greater geographic coverage and bus frequency in and between immigrant neighborhoods, downtown areas, and beyond city limits. Survey respondents provided many specific recommendations for how to improve local public transportation that are outlined in this report (*see Section 6, p. 40*).

This input is supported by the findings of a recent, unaffiliated participatory assessment with the Winston-Salem Latino/Hispanic population that was led by FaithHealthNC CHAMP. That assessment showed that low-income areas need more bus routes that should go to health and other community services, and it recommended that transit authorities increase the number of routes on the city bus system [2]. The mapped concentrations of foreign-born population percentages provided in this report may provide a starting place for identifying exact geographical gaps in service coverage to foreign-born residents (see Figure 3.1, p. 13 and Figure 3.5, p. 20).

**(EXCERPT) FIGURE 3.1: FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION PERCENTAGES, FORSYTH COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS, 2008-2012**



SOURCE: City-County Planning and Development Services Department, Winston-Salem and Forsyth County

- **Discrimination by Police**— Survey respondents and discussion groups alike highlighted their perceived mistreatment by police through discriminatory racial profiling and police harassment of Latino/Hispanic and non-White residents. They referred to individual street harassment as well as

driver checkpoints in Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods. They also reported that police who arrive in response to calls involving Hispanic/Latino residents do not speak Spanish or offer language assistance. Report maps of foreign-born population percentages (*see Figure 3.1, p. 13 and Figure 3.5, p. 20*) as well as neighborhood-specific racial and economic data (*see Table 3.2, p. 21*) may provide useful information for addressing these issues.

- **Documentation Status** – From 2008-2012, an estimated almost 20,000 Winston-Salem residents did not have U.S. citizenship [1]. These nearly 20,000 city residents include foreign-born residents with permanent legal residency and those with legal temporary work status, as well as asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants [3]. Resident survey respondents of Hispanic/Latino origin, as well as discussion groups, identified their inability to obtain documentation of lawful U.S. citizenship or residency status as an overwhelming problem for their communities and for integration in general. They explained, for example, that documentation is required to obtain many types of local aid and assistance. Additionally, multiple BIC Committee members from local services agencies have observed that local foreign-born residents without documentation must often work at jobs that only pay “under the table”; they have no workplace protections such as sick days or guaranteed hours; and those who are women suffer extreme sexual harassment and abuse by their local employers (BIC Planning Meeting, June 18, 2015).
- **Domestic Violence** – Two resident discussion groups identified domestic violence as a major challenge for local foreign-born residents. They shared compelling narratives that demonstrated the gravity of the issue for both Hispanic/Latino communities and other foreign-born communities (*see Table 7.1, p. 47*).
- **Driver’s Licenses and Alternative Identification (ID)** – Current N.C. state law bars residents without proof of U.S. citizenship or residency status from obtaining driver’s licenses [4]. Resident discussion groups, as well as survey respondents of Hispanic/Latino origin, reported that their inability to obtain driver’s licenses is a major problem. Residents explained that the lack of a license results in their inability to drive to work, health providers, and other necessary places, as well as harassment and frequent, costly ticketing by police. Survey respondents also explained that a lack of both driver’s licenses *and* public transportation leaves local foreign-born residents without any means to travel where needed.

In addition to a driver’s license, resident survey respondents of Hispanic/Latino origin also specifically named an alternative ID as a primary way that local governments can encourage their communities’ integration (*see Figure 6.2, p. 39*). Similarly, members of organizations that represent and/or provide services to local foreign-born residents also named alternative ID, in addition to driver’s licenses, as one of the most needed resources that can be offered to encourage local integration (*see Section 8, p. 51*). Resident discussion groups explained that a county or other local ID would help to “open doors” such as creating bank accounts.

The recent assessment by FaithHealthNC CHAMP concluded that a lack of ID affects many aspects of residents’ health and well-being, including their ability to seek healthcare [2]. A proposal from a connected working group describes the many ways that a city or community ID card would benefit

local foreign-born residents as well as the overall city and county (*see Section 4, p. 22 and Appendix C*). This municipal/community ID card concept has been endorsed by Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center, the Winston-Salem Police Department, and Forsyth County's Sheriff's Office and Health Department [5].

- **Educational Support** – The comparison of Forsyth County's "immigrant neighborhoods" with other neighborhoods suggests that residents of "immigrant neighborhoods" are less likely to hold a college degree than residents of other neighborhoods (*see Table 3.2, p. 21*). Resident survey respondents, as well as surveyed members of local organizations, named additional educational services as one way through which local governments can encourage integration of foreign-born residents (*see Figure 6.2, p. 39 and Section 8, p. 51*).

More specifically, both survey respondents and discussion groups reported a need for more educational support for youth from foreign-born communities, particularly with respect to college preparation. Discussion groups recommended more investment in Hispanic/Latino youth by school guidance counselors; more services to help students explore university programs; education for non-English speaking parents about how they can support their own children; and more bilingual school reception staff. Additionally, resident survey respondents and discussion groups commented about the difficulty of accessing continued and higher education, indicating that a gap exists despite any aid offered by private colleges. They referred to the out-of-state tuition required of undocumented college students as well as the need to present documentation for local technical programs in fields that require licensure.

Of note, surveyed organization members described the local public school system and community colleges as institutions that have been active resources in the community's current efforts to address the challenges faced by local foreign-born residents (*see Table 8.2, p. 51*).

- **English Language Education** – The estimated portion of Winston-Salem residents who speak English "less than very well" remained between 6% and 7% from 2005 to 2011 [6], and surveyed organization members described local foreign-born residents as actively engaged in English language learning (*see Table 8.2, p. 51*). However, both resident survey respondents and discussion groups identified a need for more accessibility in English learning opportunities, such as easier registration processes and more publicity of English classes. Survey respondents specifically named increased access to English classes as a way that local governments can encourage integration of foreign-born residents, explaining that language barriers inhibit their communities' integration and contribute to isolation (*see Figure 6.2, p. 39*).
- **Government Communication** – Survey respondents and discussion groups emphasized a need for improved communication of information regarding city and county regulations, general civic information, local resources, and business start-ups. Survey respondents also specifically named communication improvements as ways that local government can encourage integration of foreign-born residents (*see Figure 6.2, p. 39*). Survey respondents' concrete suggestions for improving the reach of government communication are outlined at length in this report (*see Section 6, pp. 40-41*).

- **Healthcare Access** – Survey respondents, as well as surveyed members of organizations representing and/or serving local foreign-born residents, specifically named community-based health clinics and affordable medical care as resources that local governments can provide to encourage integration (*see Figure 6.2, p. 39 and Section 8, p. 51*). Both survey respondents and discussion groups identified a lack of access to healthcare as a major problem that results from their inability to obtain health insurance and/or the lack of affordable medical, mental, and dental health services for residents with low financial resources. Discussion groups also reported a specific need for more on-site, bilingual medical staff.

The different cultural competency practices and programming that were reported by local organization members who were surveyed for this assessment—including interpretation and translation—represent some of the local resources and infrastructure that might be used to address these issues (*see Table 8.3, p. 53*).

- **Neighborhood Crime** – Survey respondents described crime as a major problem in their neighborhoods. Specific issues that were reported include home robberies, assault and gun violence, vandalism, and a perceived lack of safety for themselves and their children.
- **Recreational Resources** – Both resident survey respondents and discussion groups indicated that a lack of affordable recreational activities and youth centers represents a major challenge for them. Survey respondents specifically stated that more recreational spaces, parks, and multicultural sports groups would make their communities better places to live (*see Section 6, p. 38*).
- **Workplace Discrimination** – Resident survey respondents and discussion groups identified unequal wages and *wage theft*, or employers' failure to pay wages that have been earned, as major problems. They explained that it is hard to find a job that does not pay them less because they are immigrants, and that they are afraid to address unequal wages due to employers' threats of job loss and/or reporting to immigration officials. The surveyed members of local organizations representing and/or serving local foreign-born residents specifically named workers' rights education as one of the most needed resources that can be offered to encourage integration (*see Section 8, p. 51*).

## Selected References

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3. Massey, D.S. and K. Bartley, "The Changing Legal Status Distribution of Immigrants: A Caution". *International Migration Review*, 2005. 39(2): p. 469-484.
4. State Laws on Driver's Licenses for Immigrants: July 2015. July 1, 2015; Map of enacted laws regarding driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants. Available from: <http://www.nilc.org/driverlicenseemap.html>.
5. "Proposal for a Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Municipal/Community ID Card". White paper distributed at a June 18, 2015 presentation by the Hispanic League, the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, and the FaithHealth Division of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.
6. Demographic Shifts in Forsyth County, NC (1990-2010). 2013, Forsyth Futures.



This assessment was conducted in 2014 and 2015 as part of Winston-Salem Building Integrated Communities (BIC), a collaborative initiative of the City of Winston-Salem, community residents and organization leaders, and the Latino Migration Project (LMP) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Information from this assessment will guide the collaborative creation and implementation of a city-wide action plan for the integration of foreign-born residents in 2015 and 2016. Residents who are interested in participating in the ongoing initiative are encouraged to contact LMP staff either by phone at 919-966-1484 or by email at [HGill@email.unc.edu](mailto:HGill@email.unc.edu) and [JL4@email.unc.edu](mailto:JL4@email.unc.edu). (*Hablamos español.*)

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