Immigrants in Arlington:

Driving Growth, Building Community

August 11, 2026

A Community Learning & Partnership Forum

Hosted by Arlington Community Foundation and Arlington County Government

Arlington COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

ARLINGTON VIRGINIA



Brian Marroquin

Arlington Community Foundation

Spanish Interpretation

Agenda

1:45 PM **Welcome**

Mark Schwartz, *Arlington County Manager*

Brian Marroquin, *Arlington Community Foundation*

1:50 PM **Setting the Stage**

Samia Byrd, *Director of Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD)*

1:55 PM **Introducing G4G & Research Findings**

Stephanie Bello, *Director of Constituent Services & County Ombuds*

Elizabeth Hardy, *Principal Planner & Demographer*

2:15 PM **Q&A**

2:25 PM **Turning Research into Action**

2:35 PM **Community Learning Discussion**

Cynthia Liccese-Torres, *Race and Equity Programs Manager*

Patricia Miguel, *Race and Equity Communications Specialist*

3:20 PM **County Tools and Resources**

3:25 PM **Call to Action & Closing**

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Gateways for Growth (G4G)

G4G is a national initiative led by the **American Immigration Council** and **Welcoming America** that helps communities:

- Better understand their immigrant population through research and data.
- Build partnerships between local government and community organizations.
- Improve access to services and opportunities.
- Strengthen immigrant inclusion to benefit the entire community.

In November 2025, Arlington County was selected as **one of 11 communities nationwide** to participate in the Round VI G4G cohort.

2026 Awardees



Arlington County, VA



Charlotte, NC



Fort Bend County, TX



Johnson County, KS



Mahoning County, OH

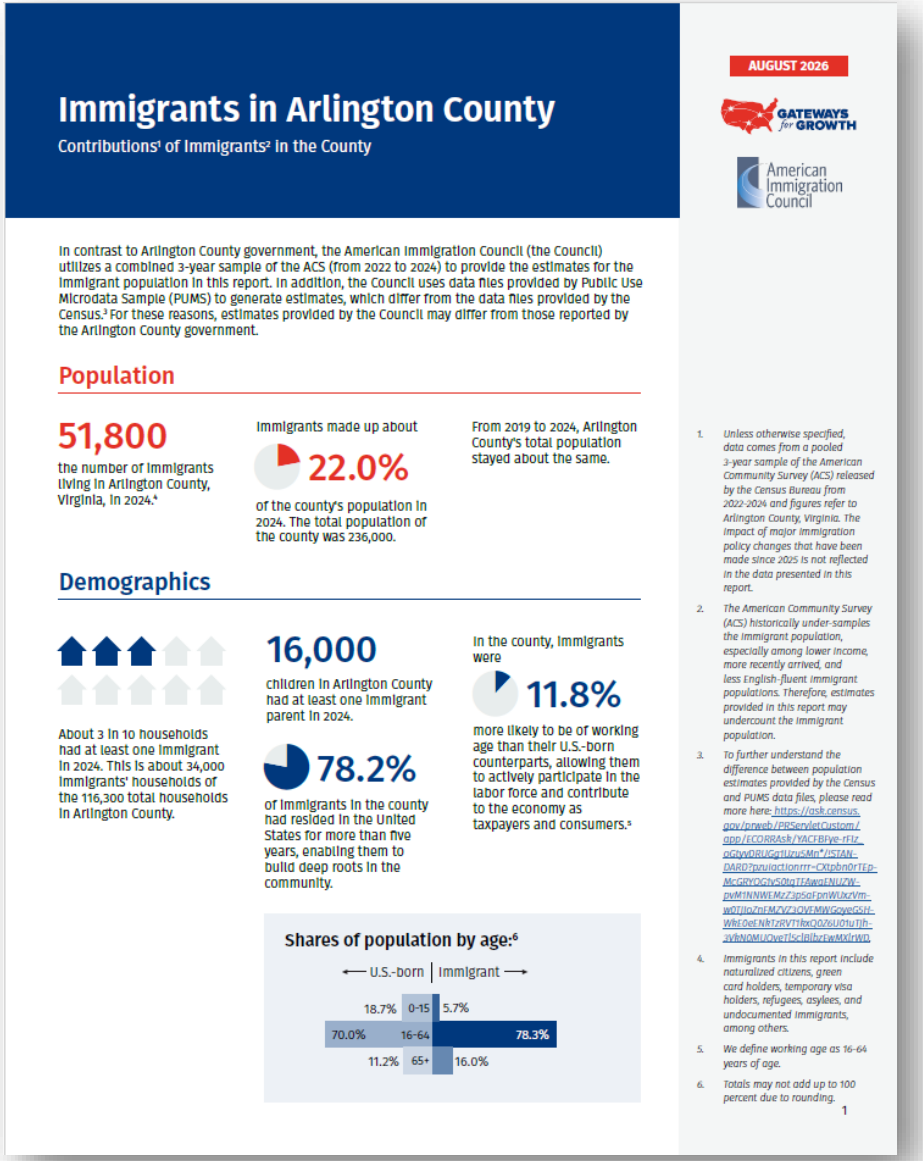


St. Louis, MO

G4G Report

Key Takeaways

QR Code to link to the report



AUGUST 2026

GATEWAYS for GROWTH

American Immigration Council

Immigrants in Arlington County

Contributions[1] of Immigrants[2] in the County

In contrast to Arlington County government, the American Immigration Council (the Council) utilizes a combined 3-year sample of the ACS (from 2022 to 2024) to provide the estimates for the immigrant population in this report. In addition, the Council uses data files provided by Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) to generate estimates, which differ from the data files provided by the Census.[3] For these reasons, estimates provided by the Council may differ from those reported by the Arlington County government.

Population

51,800
the number of immigrants living in Arlington County, Virginia, in 2024.[4]

Immigrants made up about **22.0%** of the county's population in 2024. The total population of the county was 236,000.

From 2019 to 2024, Arlington County's total population stayed about the same.

Demographics

About 3 in 10 households had at least one immigrant in 2024. This is about 34,000 immigrants' households of the 116,300 total households in Arlington County.

16,000
children in Arlington County had at least one immigrant parent in 2024.

78.2%
of immigrants in the county had resided in the United States for more than five years, enabling them to build deep roots in the community.

In the county, immigrants were **11.8%** 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.[5]

Shares of population by age:[6]

1. *Unless otherwise specified, data comes from a pooled 3-year sample of the American Community Survey (ACS) released by the Census Bureau from 2022-2024 and figures refer to Arlington County, Virginia. The impact of major immigration policy changes that have been made since 2025 is not reflected in the data presented in this report.*
2. *The American Community Survey (ACS) historically under-samples the immigrant population, especially among lower income, more recently arrived, and less English-fluent immigrant populations. Therefore, estimates provided in this report may undercount the immigrant population.*
3. *To further understand the difference between population estimates provided by the Census and PUMS data files, please read more here: https://ask.census.gov/prweb/PRServletCustom/app/ECORRAsk/YACFBEye-rFIz_oGtyvDRUGgtUzuSMn*/!STAN-DARD?pzuiactionrrr=CXtpbn0rTEp-McGRVDGtySOtqTTAwqENUZW-pvM1NNWEMzZlpSoFpnWUkzVm-w0TjIoZnEMZVZJOVEMWGQyeGSH-WktE0eENktzRVTHxQ0ziUOtuTjh-JVlnN0MUOveTlscIBlbzEwMXlrWD.*
4. *Immigrants in this report include naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others.*
5. *We define working age as 16-64 years of age.*
6. *Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.*

1

Arlington's immigrants are a major part of the community...

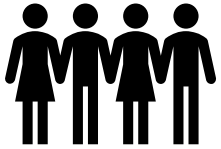
Immigrants are not a niche population – they are embedded in households, families, and neighborhoods.



51,800
immigrants living in Arlington County in 2024



3 in 10
households have at least one immigrant



22%
of Arlington's total population



16,000
children have at least one immigrant parent

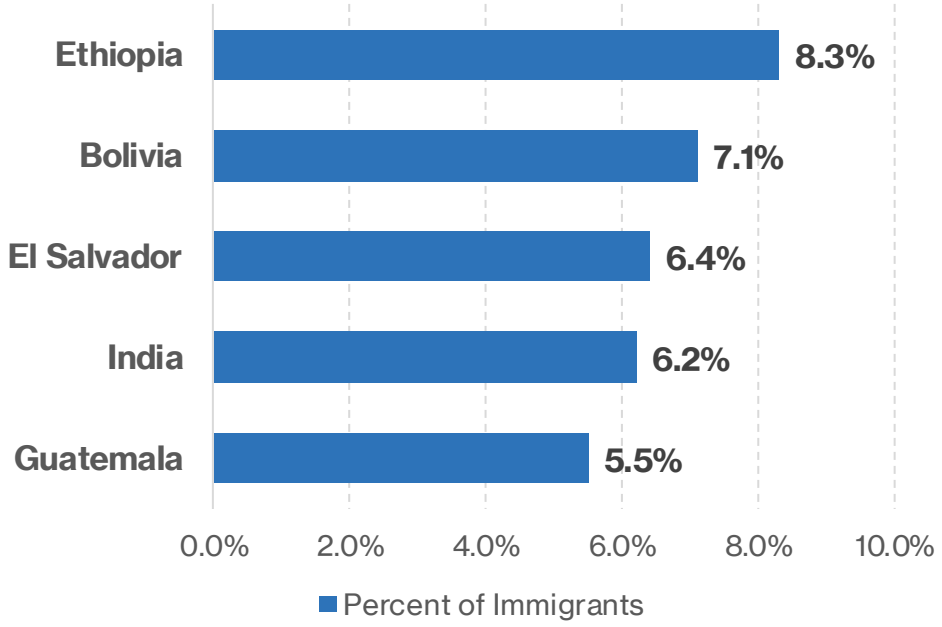
Takeaway: Every organization already serves immigrant residents. The question is whether services are easy to find, understand, trust, and navigate.

Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

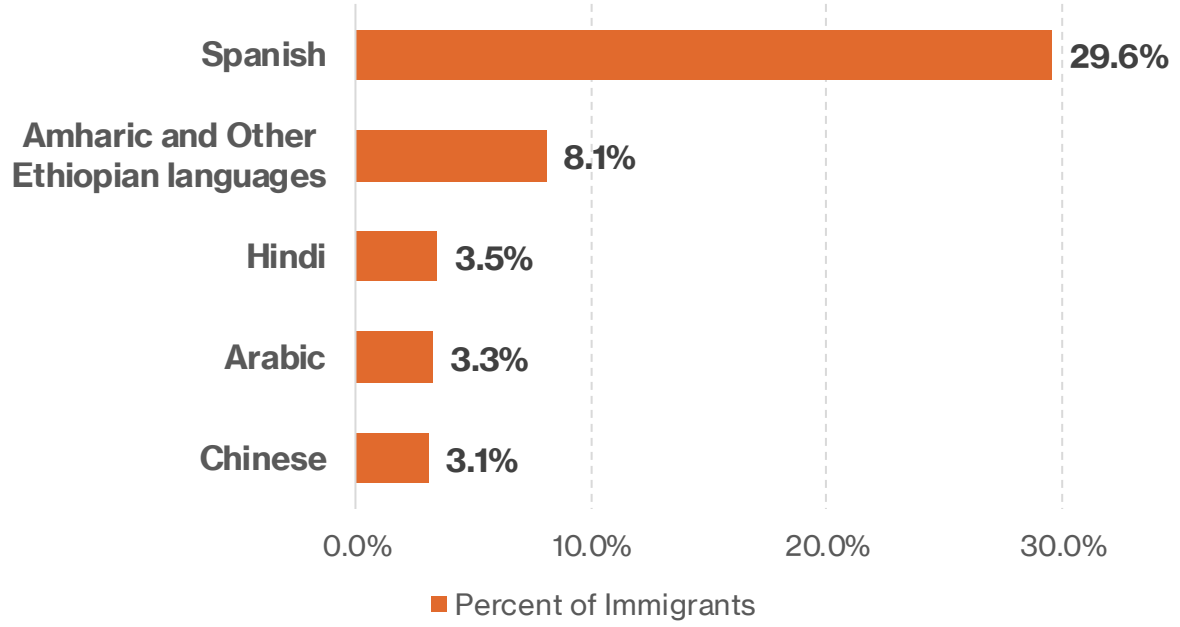
Arlington's immigrant communities are diverse.

The research challenges any single-story view of immigrant residents.

Top countries of origin



Top languages spoken at home other than English



Takeaway: Language access and outreach must extend beyond Spanish and adapt to different communities, cultures, and trusted networks.

Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

KEY TAKEAWAY

1

Immigrants are a major driver of Arlington's economic productivity, consumer spending, and tax base.

Arlington's immigrant population is primarily an economic engine, not a dependent population.

Immigrants make up

22%

of Arlington's population

$8.3 billion in Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

$3.2 billion in income

$1 billion contributed to taxes

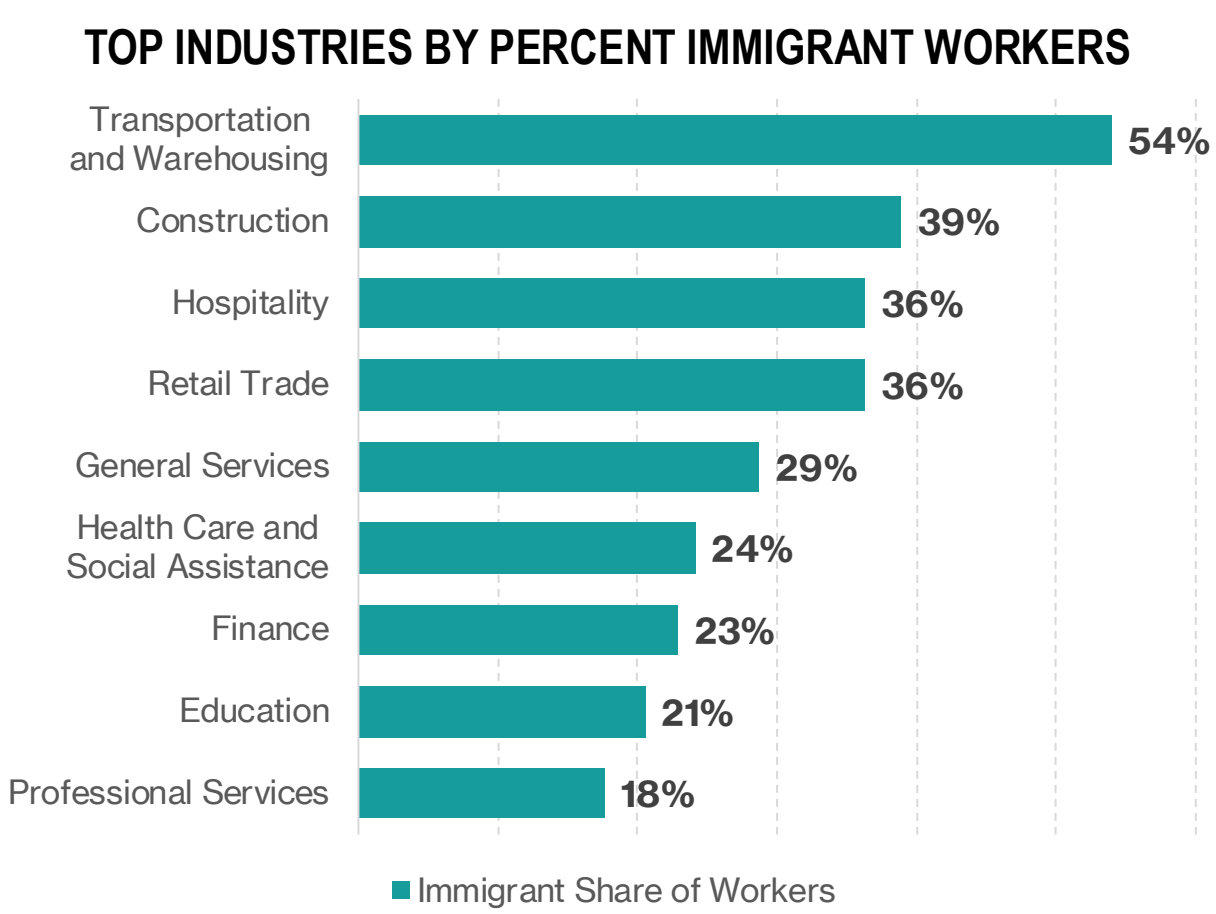
Fact: Immigrants in Arlington also contributed $324.9M to Social Security and $89.7M to Medicare in 2024.

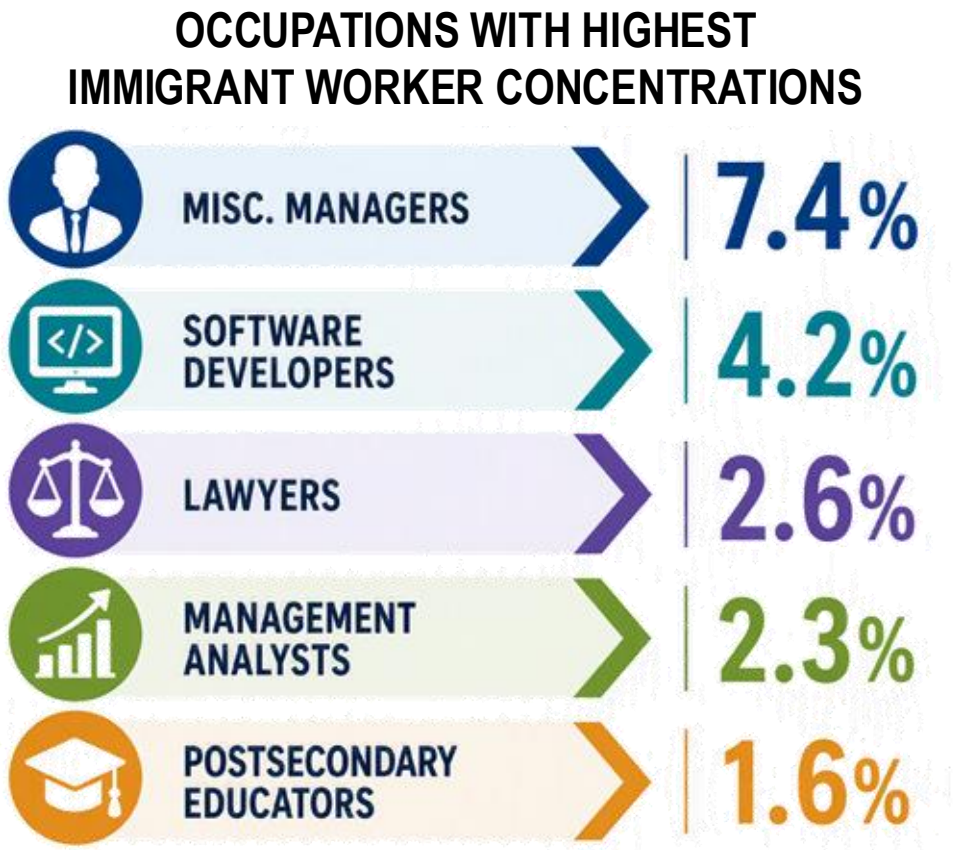
Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

KEY TAKEAWAY

② Immigrants are a critical part of Arlington's workforce, contributing across nearly every sector.

Arlington's immigrants fill both ends of the labor market – from highly skilled professionals to essential service workers.





Fact: Arlington's competitiveness depends on attracting, retaining, and supporting immigrant talent and business owners.

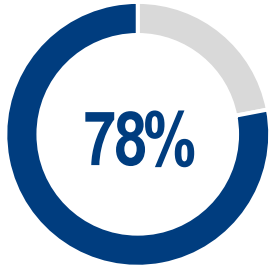
Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

KEY TAKEAWAY

3

The immigrant population should be recognized as a lasting and integral part of Arlington's social and economic fabric.

The immigrant community is largely established and rooted in Arlington.



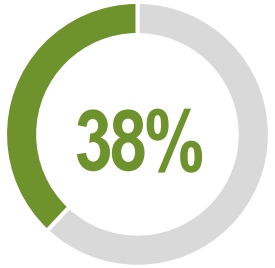
of immigrants have lived in the U.S. for more than 5 years.



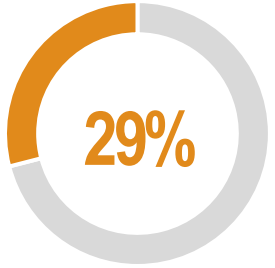
of immigrants are naturalized U.S. citizens.



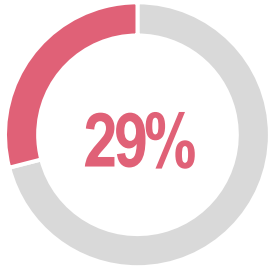
of households include at least one immigrant.



of children have at least one immigrant parent.



of immigrants own their own home.



of entrepreneurs in the County are immigrants.

Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

KEY TAKEAWAY

4

Investments in English-language and workforce training could yield significant economic benefits for both immigrants and employers.

Language proficiency is the strongest barrier to full economic integration.

20% **of immigrants have limited English proficiency.**

↳ **37%** **of immigrants with limited English proficiency do not have a high school diploma.**

Reflected in…

- Higher concentrations in lower-wage occupations.
- Greater reliance on public health insurance.
- Lower homeownership rates.
- Lower broadband access.

compared to U.S. born population.

At the same time, Arlington employers show demand for bilingual workers, particularly in education, healthcare, public administration, and professional services.

Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

KEY TAKEAWAY

5

Housing affordability, access to healthcare, and opportunities for asset building remain among the most significant challenges for Arlington's immigrants.

Immigrants contribute substantially to Arlington's prosperity but are not sharing equally in wealth-building opportunities.

Economic Contributions

- Generate billions in earnings.
- Hold $6 billion in property value.
- Produce $112.5 million in entrepreneurial income.

Noticeable Gaps

- Less likely to own homes (29.1% vs. 43.6% for U.S.-born residents).
- Less likely to hold a bachelor's degree (56.1% compared to 84.6% for U.S.-born residents).
- More likely to be uninsured (14.1% vs. 2.2% among U.S.-born residents).

Access strategy: Pair language access with plain language, in-person navigation, trusted messengers, and mobile-friendly services.

Source: American Immigration Council analysis of ACS 2022-2024 samples; Arlington County G4G research.

Summary

Immigrants are permanent and essential.

Arlington's immigrant population is largely settled, working-age, and deeply connected to the County's long-term social and economic success.

Immigrants are drivers of Arlington's economic vitality.

Through high labor force participation, entrepreneurship, tax contributions, and workforce diversity, immigrants strengthen nearly every sector of the local economy.

Immigrants can experience challenges.

While many immigrants experience strong economic outcomes, challenges remain in areas such as English proficiency, homeownership, and asset-building.

We have opportunities to better include immigrants.

There are opportunities to build services that are easier to find, understand, access, and trust. Immigrant inclusion is an operational excellence issue – not only an equity issue.

Q&A

Turning Research into Action

TURNING RESEARCH *into Action:*
A Planning Tool for Better Decision Making



HOW CAN YOU USE THIS RESEARCH?

COUNTY GOVERNMENT
- Improve service design
- Strengthen language access
- Plan equitable outreach
- Inform policy & budget decisions
- Evaluate equity in service delivery

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
- Strengthen grants & proposals
- Identify unmet needs
- Develop programs
- Build partnerships with County government
- Connect residents to available services

SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES
- Expand trusted outreach
- Improve navigation to resources
- Support multilingual communication
- Partner on community education

BUSINESS COMMUNITY
- Support immigrant entrepreneurs
- Understand workforce trends
- Improve access to resources
- Strengthen local economy

EVERYONE
- Use data—not assumptions
- Listen before designing
- Collaborate across sectors
- Center residents' experiences

Use these data insights to design better decisions, create more accessible services, and build a stronger, more inclusive Arlington for all.

1 WHO WE SERVE



22% of Arlington residents are immigrants

WHY IT MATTERS
Immigrants are part of Arlington's everyday customer base—not a special audience.

ASK YOURSELF
Who is this service designed for?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Include immigrant residents in planning
- ☑ Test materials with community partners
- ☑ Invite diverse voices into advisory groups

2 COMMUNITY



1 in 3 households includes an immigrant

WHY IT MATTERS
Most County services already serve immigrant families.

ASK YOURSELF
Would an immigrant family easily find and understand this service?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Simplify instructions
- ☑ Reduce government jargon
- ☑ Improve navigation

3 LANGUAGE ACCESS



10,300 residents have Limited English Proficiency

WHY IT MATTERS
Language shouldn't determine whether someone can access County services.

ASK YOURSELF
Where could language become a barrier?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Translate high-demand materials
- ☑ Promote interpretation services
- ☑ Train frontline staff

4 LANGUAGE



Top Languages
- Spanish
- Amharic
- Hindi
- Arabic
- Chinese

WHY IT MATTERS
Translation priorities should reflect Arlington—not assumptions.

ASK YOURSELF
Are our language priorities based on Arlington's data?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Use local language data
- ☑ Partner with community organizations
- ☑ Recruit bilingual ambassadors

5 LONG-TERM RESIDENTS



50% are U.S. citizens

WHY IT MATTERS
Many immigrants are long-term residents, homeowners, voters, and leaders.

ASK YOURSELF
Are we treating immigrants only as newcomers?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Invite residents into leadership
- ☑ Expand civic engagement opportunities
- ☑ Build long-term relationships

6 COMMUNITY TRUST



78% have lived in the U.S. for more than five years

WHY IT MATTERS
Trust is built over years—not one outreach event.

ASK YOURSELF
Are we building relationships or just conducting one-time outreach?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Invest in partnerships
- ☑ Return to communities regularly
- ☑ Close the feedback loop

7 ECONOMIC IMPACT



$8.3 BILLION contributed to Arlington's GDP

WHY IT MATTERS
Immigrant inclusion is also economic development.

ASK YOURSELF
How are we talking about immigrants?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Share contribution data
- ☑ Include business partners
- ☑ Highlight strengths—not only needs

8 ENTREPRENEURSHIP



29% of entrepreneurs are immigrants

WHY IT MATTERS
Small businesses help Arlington thrive.

ASK YOURSELF
Is it easy to start or grow a business here?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Simplify permitting & licensing info
- ☑ Offer multilingual business workshops
- ☑ Support business networks

9 HOUSING



71% rent their homes

WHY IT MATTERS
Most immigrant households are renters.

ASK YOURSELF
Does our housing outreach reflect this reality?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Tailor tenant education
- ☑ Simplify tenant information
- ☑ Partner with apartment communities

10 DIGITAL ACCESS



Broadband access is lower among immigrant households.

WHY IT MATTERS
Not everyone can access information online.

ASK YOURSELF
Could someone without reliable internet still access this information?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Use printed materials
- ☑ Offer phone support
- ☑ Host in-person outreach

11 HEALTH ACCESS



14% are uninsured

WHY IT MATTERS
Healthcare access begins with trusted information.

ASK YOURSELF
What barriers might prevent someone from seeking care?

TRY THIS:
- ☑ Partner with clinics
- ☑ Connect residents to enrollment help
- ☑ Simplify healthcare navigation

The research and data used in the creation of these personas was conducted by the American Immigration Council in collaboration with Arlington County Government and the Arlington community Foundation.

ARLINGTON VIRGINIA

How Communities Have Used This Research

Research is most valuable when it becomes a catalyst for action. Communities across the country have used their Gateways for Growth findings to:

- **Start meaningful conversations** to align partners around shared priorities and launch regional welcoming efforts (e.g., Grand Rapids → Welcome Plan West Michigan → Welcoming Plan Coordinator)
- **Support policy discussions and tell the community's story** by using data and lived experiences to illustrate the contributions, needs, and experiences of immigrant communities, helping inform local decision-making and build public understanding (e.g., San Antonio and Santa Fe).
- **Build cross-sector partnerships** by bringing together local government, nonprofits, businesses, faith organizations, and educational institutions.
- **Educate different audiences** by tailoring findings for residents, community organizations, elected officials, and County staff to inform policies, programs, and service delivery.
- **Launch or strengthen welcoming initiatives**, including task forces, strategic plans, and dedicated staff positions. (e.g., Baltimore's New Americans Task Force)
- **Support decision-making** by using data and community stories to inform policy discussions, funding priorities, and community engagement. (e.g., Using Data to Further Immigrant Integration in Your Community – Catholic Legal Immigration Network)

Key Takeaway: Research is not the end goal – it is a tool to foster collaboration, inform decisions, and translate insights into meaningful action.

Community Learning Discussions

Cynthia Liccese-Torres

Race and Equity Programs Manager

Patricia Miguel

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ARLINGTON VIRGINIA

Discussion Questions

What stood out?

- What finding or statistic surprised you the most, and why?
- Does this research help clarify any common misunderstandings about immigrants in Arlington?

So, now what?

- What are the greatest barriers for immigrant residents when accessing County services?
- What strengths should the County continue to build on?

How can we work together?

- Where are there opportunities for stronger collaboration between County departments and community organizations?
- What is one practical change that would make it easier for immigrant residents to access County services?

County Tools and Resources

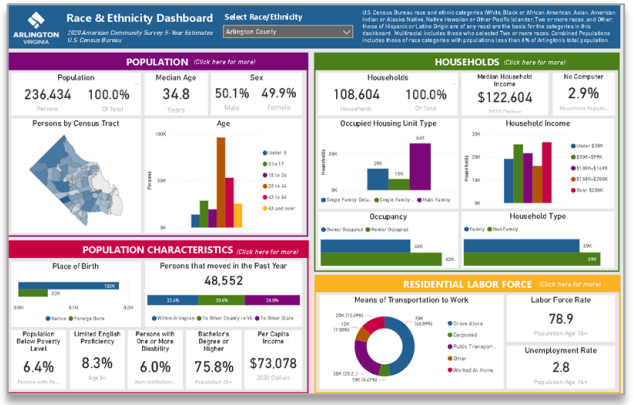
Arlington County Profile

Annual statistical factbook



Race and Ethnicity Dashboard

Key demographic variables by race and ethnicity

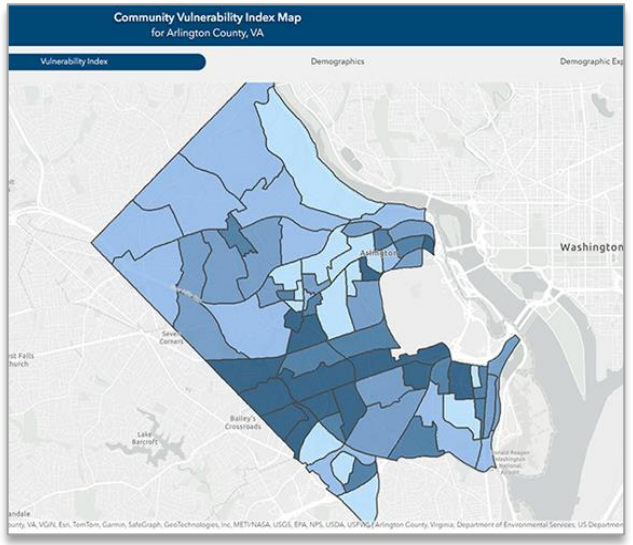


Census Tract Demographic Dashboard

Subcounty level demographics

Community Vulnerability Index Map

Geographic layer that identifies concentrations of Arlington's vulnerable populations



www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Data-Research/Demographics

Call to Action & Closing

Thank You

TOGETHER, WE BUILD A STRONGER ARLINGTON.

Your partnership, insights, and commitment
help us create a community where *everyone*
can thrive.

