Seattle Votes

Survey
Results
Recommendations

April 20, 2018
OIRA Framework
Four Rails of Immigrant Integration

Protecting Residents and Workers

Citizenship and Civic Engagement

Language Access

English as a Second Language (ESL)
Immigrant Integration Spectrum

Steps to Integration

- Advocate / Leader / Volunteer
  - Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)
  - U.S. Citizen
  - Registered Voter
  - Active Voter

Without Authorization / Documentation

- DACA Support
- Legal Consultations
- Legal Defense Network

New Citizen Campaign
- New Citizen Program
- Seattle Votes

OIRA Programs

- Language Access
- Ethnic Media
- Ready to Work
- Immigrant Family Institute
- Community Outreach
- Federal Advocacy
- Immigrant and Refugee Commission

Across the Spectrum

Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
Even though Seattle’s foreign-born population has grown each year, immigrant communities do not register to vote or vote at the same rates as other Seattle residents.

The Task Force was convened in 2013 to identify, analyze, and address the issues that affect civic and political participation by immigrant communities.
Task Force Recommendations

1. Improve civic engagement of immigrant communities. (Seattle Votes Campaign)

2. Address the language needs of new American voters.

3. Ensure that neighborhoods with high concentrations of immigrants have readily accessible ballot drop boxes.

4. Advocate on behalf of immigrant communities.

5. Develop and fund comprehensive civic education for new Americans.
There was a lack of existing data to help us understand barriers to civic engagement.

Seattle Votes is one of the largest surveys examining voter registration, voting, and civic engagement of immigrants.

Findings will inform how we improve voter registration, voting rates, and elections knowledge in immigrant and refugee communities.
Please take a moment to share with the City of Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs your experience as a U.S. immigrant/refugee resident. Please only fill out this survey if you are a foreign-born resident, you currently live in Seattle-King County, and you are at least 18 years of age. Your answers to this survey will be kept anonymous. File via www.seattle.gov/immigrants for more information. Complete the survey by marking the circle like this: X or ☒.

1. In what country were you born?
2. In what year were you born?
3. In what year did you move to the United States?
4. In what ZIP code do you live?
5. What is your preferred language?
6. How well would you say you speak English?
   - Very well
   - Not well
   - Well
   - Not at all
7. What is the most important issue facing your immigrant/refugee community that you think our public officials should address?
8. Overall, how much of a difference do you think you can have in making your neighborhood a better place to live?
   - I can make no difference at all
   - I can make a little difference
   - I can make a moderate difference
   - I can make a big difference
9. How interested are you in the presidential election this year?
   - Very interested
   - Somewhat interested
   - Not very interested
   - Not interested
10. If you wanted to find information about elections, issues, and candidates, which of the following would you most likely use? Check all that apply.
   - Internet
   - Television in English
   - Newspaper in English
   - Radio
   - Library
   - Friends and family
   - My place of worship
   - My school or work place
   - Other
11. How easy is it to find information about elections and candidates in your preferred language?
   - Very easy
   - Somewhat easy
   - It is difficult
   - I have not found any
12. Please tell us if you have done any of the following activities in the past 2 years. Check all that apply.
   - I have signed a letter about a social or political issue
   - I have attended a government or school board meeting in my city
   - I have worked on a project or attended a meeting in my neighborhood
   - I have participated in a demonstration, protest, march, or rally
   - I have contacted a public official through a letter, mail, phone, or in person
   - I have volunteered for an election activity, such as a phone bank or registering people to vote
13. Some people are registered to vote, while others are not. Which of the following best describes you?
   - I am registered voter
   - I am currently not eligible to register to vote
   - I am eligible to register, but have not registered yet

**13 languages**

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Chinese (Traditional)
- Cambodian/Khmer
- English
- Filipino/Tagalog
- Indonesian
- Korean
- Oromo
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tigrinya
- Vietnamese

**5,566 responses**

- **4,238 (81.1%)** paper surveys
- **988 (18.9%)** completed online

**109 Seattle Votes Partners**
SEATTLE VOTES PARTNERS

4Culture
ACLU of Washington
Administration of Children and Families
Al Karim Islamic Center
APACE Votes
API Chaya
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
BAYAN Pacific Northwest
Casa Latina
Catholic Community Services of Western Washington
Caya Dargado Oromo Seattle
Change Counts! - Financial Empowerment Network | Seattle-King County
Chinese American Citizens Alliance
Chinese Information and Service Center
Chinese Meet Seattle
City of Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission
Coalition of Immigrants Refugees and Communities of Color
Communities in Schools
Consular Association of Washington
Downtown Muslim Association of Seattle
Downtown Public Health Center
East African Community Services
Eco8 Community Builders
El Centro de la Raza
Entre Hermanos
Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle
Ethiopian Community Center
Ethnic Heritage Council
FACES (Filipino Americans Civic Employees of Seattle)
Faith Action Network
Families of Color Seattle
Filipino American Greater Seattle Seventh-day Adventist Church
Filipino Community of Seattle
Goodwill Bellevue
Goodwill Burien
Goodwill Seattle
Goodwill Shoreline
Healthy King County Coalition
Highline Community College
HOLAt (Hispanic or Latino Affinity)
Horn of Africa Services
India Association of Western Washington
International Community Health Services
International Drop-In Center
Iraqi Community Center of Washington
Interim CDA
Japanese American Citizens League - Seattle Chapter
Japanese Cultural Community Center of Washington Seattle
Jewish Family Service of Seattle
Justice for Women, Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center
King County Housing Authority
King County Immigrant and Refugee Task Force
King County Library System
Korean American Bar Association of Washington
Korean American Coalition of Washington
Latino City Employees
Latino Community Development Fund
Literary Source
Low Income Housing Institute
Lutheran Community Services Northwest
Mexican Consulate in Seattle
Museum of History and Industry
Muslim Community Resource Center
Muslim Housing Services
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum Seattle
NEA Center for Organizing
Neighborhood House
OCA Asian Pacific American Advocates
Office of Arts and Culture
Office of Intergovernmental Relations
OneAmerica
Oromo Community of Seattle
Puget Sound Training Center
Rajana Society
Renton Technical College
Refugee Women's Alliance
Residence Inn Seattle Downtown/Lake Union
Sea Mar Community Health Centers
Seattle Central College
Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority
Seattle CityClub
Seattle Counseling Services Immigrant Outreach Project
Seattle Education Association
Seattle Housing Authority
Seattle Public Library Civic Engagement Committee
Seattle University College of Arts and Sciences Nonprofit Leadership Program
Seattle University International Student Center
SeattleChinaRen.com
SEIU 775
SEIU Local 6
Simposio de Mujeres Latinas
Somali Community Services of Seattle
Somali Health Board
St. James Immigrant Assistance
St. Pius X Catholic Church
The Greater Seattle Chinese Chamber of Commerce
Tongan Wesleyan Church of America
TRAC Associates
UFCW 21
Ukrainian Community Center of Washington
Unite Here! Local 8
University of Washington
Voices of Tomorrow
Washington Bus
Washington Chinese Arts & Culture Committee
White Center Community Development Association
Win/Win Network
• Not a random sampling.

• Utilized a community organizing model.

• OIRA’s bilingual staff had deep relationships in community.

• “Face-to-face” approach worked best.
130 countries and territories were represented in the survey.

These 6 national origin groups constituted 66% of the sample.
WHAT WE LEARNED
Top Issue Priorities for Immigrant and Refugee Respondents

- Affordable Housing: 19%
- Employment: 17%
- Education/General Education Resources: 13%
- Help Youth/Youth Services: 8%
- Naturalization/Immigration Assistance: 8%
- Language Assistance: 7%
- Discrimination: 6%
- Access to Health Care: 6%
- Improve Safety/Reduce Crime: 6%
Almost half the respondents did not know how and where to register to vote.
54% were registered to vote.

But...68% of Mexican and Chinese respondents said they were currently not eligible to register to vote.
A lack of information was the main reason given for not registering to vote.
Language presents a significant barrier.
Lack of English proficiency is a barrier to voter registration and leads to lower levels of political interest.
A lack of information on the election and candidates in their language of origin increased the probability of non-voting.

Only about 1/3 said it was "very easy" to find information about the candidates and the election in their preferred language.
Language isolation impacts feelings of community empowerment.
Ethnic media plays an important role in reducing isolation and engaging immigrants and refugees.
Access to ethnic media varied across different immigrant groups.

Mexican and Vietnamese survey-takers were the highest consumers of ethnic media.
Ethnic media plays a key role in reducing isolation.

Limited English proficiency increases feelings of powerlessness. Yet Mexicans, who have the highest rates of linguistic isolation felt the highest levels of empowerment. Access to ethnic media may explain this paradox.
Candidates, political parties, or other organizations did not contact non-English speakers.
Seattle Votes  Reports by Community

- Asian American
- East African
- Latino
Asian American Community Report

Highlights
The internet is the top source of information on politics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television in English</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends and family</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic newspapers</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic television</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers in English</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My community organizations(s)/Service provider(s)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio in English</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Radio</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost half stated they never vote in state and local elections.

(Q18) How often have you voted in state and local elections?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Often</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Sometimes</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Rarely</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Never</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A majority stated they had not been contacted by a candidate, party, or other organization.

(Q19) Have you ever been contacted and encouraged to vote by a candidate, political party, or other organization?

- **YES!** 35%
- **NO.** 54%
- **I DON'T REMEMBER** 11%
East African respondents report a lack of empowerment.

(Q8) Overall, how much of a difference do you think you can have in making your neighborhood a better place to live?

26% Big Difference
19% Moderate Difference
23% Small Difference
32% No Difference
Engaging in a child’s education is a primary focus for civic engagement.

(Q12) Please tell us if you have done any of the following activities in the past 2 years. Choose all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I attended a PTA meeting or other volunteer group at my child’s school</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attended a government or school board meeting in my city</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have worked on a project or attended a meeting in my neighborhood</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participated in one or more demonstrations, protests, marches, or rallies</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I volunteered for an election activity such as a phone bank or registering people to vote</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have signed a letter about a social or political issue</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sent a message on Facebook or other social media about a social or political issue</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have given money to an organization or candidate</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I contacted a public official through a letter, email, phone, or in-person</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Few are contacted by political groups or candidates to vote.

(Q19) Have you ever been contacted and encouraged to vote by a candidate, political party, or other organization?

- YES! 34%
- NO. 54%
- I DON’T REMEMBER 12%
Latino Community Report

Highlights
The internet and television (both in-language and English) are the top sources of information on politics.

(Q10) If you wanted to find information about elections, issues, and candidates, which of the following would you most likely use?

- Internet: 59%
- Ethnic Television: 52%
- Television in English: 35%
- Friends and family: 30%
- My community organizations(s)/Service provider(s): 24%
- Ethnic radio: 23%
- Ethnic newspapers: 20%
- Radio in English: 17%
- Newspapers in English: 17%
- Library: 16%
Engaging in a child’s education is a primary focus for civic engagement.

(Q12) Please tell us if you have done any of the following activities in the past 2 years. Choose all that apply.

<table>
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<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I attended a PTA meeting, or other volunteer group at my child’s school</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participated in one or more demonstrations, protests, marches, or rallies</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attended a government or school board meeting in my city</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have signed a letter about a social or political issue</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have worked on a project or attended a meeting in my neighborhood</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sent a message on Facebook or other social media about a social or political issue</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have given money to an organization or candidate</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I contacted a public official through a letter, email, phone, or in-person</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I volunteered for an election activity such as a phone bank or registering people to vote</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most Latinos reported feeling a sense of agency.

(Q8) Overall, how much of a difference do you think you can have in making your neighborhood a better place to live?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big Difference</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Difference</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Difference</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Difference</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RECOMMENDATIONS
Recommendations (All)

• Full census count campaign.

• Promote civic education, particularly about the role of government.
  ▪ Adult basic civics education

• Expand partnerships and use a relational framework to promote civic engagement.
  ▪ Co-hosting ballot parties
  ▪ Annual civic engagement summits
  ▪ Deputy registrar system

• Research impact of electoral reforms that promote more engagement.
  ▪ Ranked-choice voting?
  ▪ Multi-member districts?
  ▪ Eliminate odd year elections?
Recommendations

Asian American
Research how Asian Americans use the internet to understand public affairs.

East African
Support the development of more East African ethnic media outlets.

Latino
Support the development of more digital content for public affairs.
VOTER REGISTRATION PILOT
Theory

Could we match or exceed the industry average for direct mail response if we accounted for language and relationship with the City?

Methodology

• Develop direct mail piece to 1,572 individuals with City of Seattle logo under Cuc’s name, pre-filled voter registration form, and registration instructions in 9 languages.
• Not enough phone numbers to test the impact of a robo call or live call.
Results

• 5 percent return rate, equaling the industry average of 3–5 percent.

• Return rate could have been higher if we had been able to include a robo and live call.
PROGRESS TO DATE AND NEXT STEPS
Next Steps

- Support King County Election’s efforts to improve voter registration and participation rates among immigrant communities and communities of color.
- Educate and engage stakeholders.
- Share report widely, locally and nationally.
Removing Barriers to Voting

- Increasing drop boxes
- Additional languages
- Voter Education Fund: partnerships to engage underrepresented communities
- More inclusive state voter registration laws
- Prepaid postage
- Online resources and tools
Voter Education & Outreach

Do you want to help citizens to register to vote? And share the importance of voting?

- Tools and Resources
- Training
- Voter Education Fund
Thank you! Questions?

Cuc Vu, Director
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(206) 233-3886