A CITY OF IMMIGRANTS

Building a Workforce Strategy to Support all New Yorkers

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THE CENTER FOR POPULAR DEMOCRACY

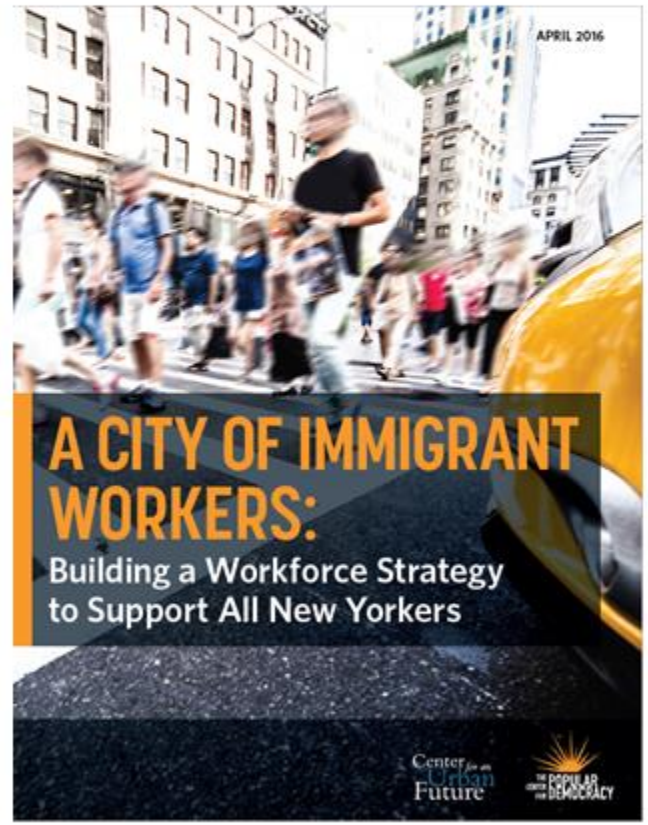
Center for an Urban Future

Overview

Why care?

What's wrong?

Recommendations



Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

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In New York City:

37%

of the population
is foreign born

47%

of workers
are foreign born

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

In New York City:

80%

of foreign born population is between the ages of 18 – 64

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

In New York City:

80%

of foreign born population is between the ages of 18 – 64

2.4 million

working age immigrants

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

In New York City:

80%

of foreign born population is between the ages of 18 – 64

2.4 million

working-age immigrants

700,000

permanent residents
(green card holders)

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

In New York City:

574,000

Undocumented immigrants

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

In New York City:

60,000
eligible for temporary work authorization under DACA and

574,000
Undocumented immigrants

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

In New York City:

574,000
Undocumented immigrants

60,000
eligible for temporary work authorization under DACA and

143,000
may be eligible under Obama's plans under DAPA

Immigrants are an important part of the workforce

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE IN NYC:

66%

Foreign Born

61%

Native Born

Immigrants tend to work in lower-wage jobs

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MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME:

$43,700
foreign born

$54,700
native born

EARNING LESS THAN $25,000 ANNUALLY:

28%
foreign born

14%
native born

Immigrants tend to work in lower-wage jobs

More than half of foreign born population work in just **27** occupations.

Workers with limited English proficiency (LEP) are concentrated in just **19** occupations.

Immigrants tend to work in lower-wage jobs

Table 1: Percentage of Immigrants in Career Pathways Sectors[20]

Construction	Drywall Installers, Ceiling Tile Installers, and Tapers	85%
	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	81%
	Construction Laborers	77%
	Plasterers and Stucco Masons	71%
Food Service	Cooks	80%
	Waiters/Waitresses	61%
	Food Prep Workers	76%
Healthcare	Nursing, Psychiatric and Home Health Aids	76%
	Registered Nurses	58%

Immigrants tend to work in lower-wage jobs

Table 1: Percentage of Immigrants in Career Pathways Sectors[20]

Manufacturing	Pressers, Textile, Garment, and Related Materials	96%
	Sewing Machine Operators	92%
	Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers	83%
Retail	Retail Salesperson	43%
	First-line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	48%
	Cashiers	56%
Tech [21]	Programmers	50%
	Software Developers	48%
	Computer Operators	39%
	Computer Support Specialist	38%

Immigrants tend to work in lower-wage jobs

Table 2: Percentage of Limited English Proficient Workers in Career Pathways

Food Service	Dishwashers	80%
	Food Prep Workers	65%
	Combined Food Preparation and Service Workers, including Fast Food	58%
	Cooks	63%
Construction	Painters, Construction & Maintenance	63%
	Construction Laborers	61%
Manufacturing	Pressers, Textile, Garment and Related Materials	93%
	Sewing Machine Operators	86%

Immigrants contribute to the city's economy

Immigrants contribute to the city's economy

$210 billion

Immigrants' contribution to the city's economy in 2011

Between 2000 & 2011,

63%

growth in foreign born contribution to NYC's GDP.

versus

53%

growth in native-born contribution to NYC's GDP.

Undocumented immigrants pay **$1.1 billion** in local and state taxes annually.

Immigrants are not working to their full potential

Immigrants are not working to their full potential

590,000

of immigrants have a college degree or higher

280,000

of them received the degree abroad

26%

of those with college degrees are working lower-skill occupations

Barriers to Advancement

Barriers to Advancement

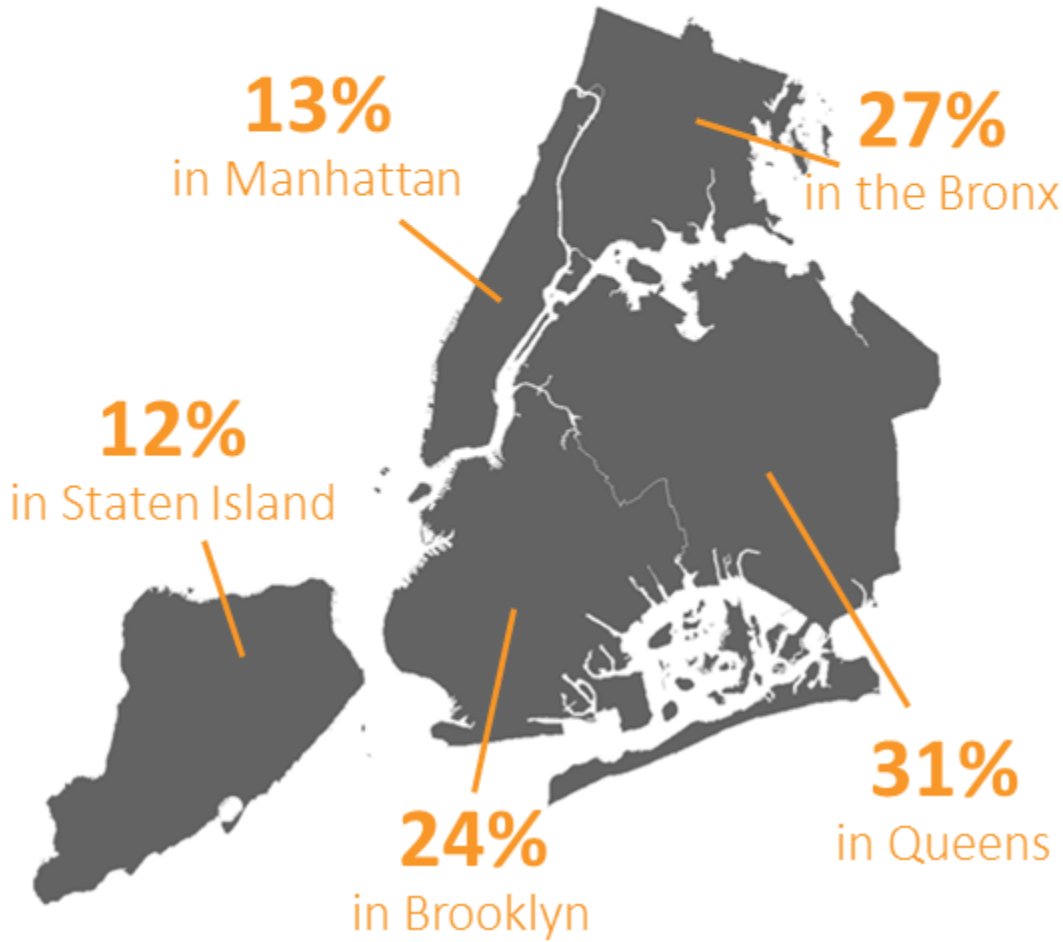
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Lower average levels of formal education
- Difficulty transferring and translating foreign credentials
- Vulnerability to workplace exploitation, especially for undocumented immigrants
- Lack of familiarity with the U.S. job market
- Lack of access to, and awareness of workforce, adult education, and social support services

Barriers to Advancement

LIMITED ENGLISH

1.7 million

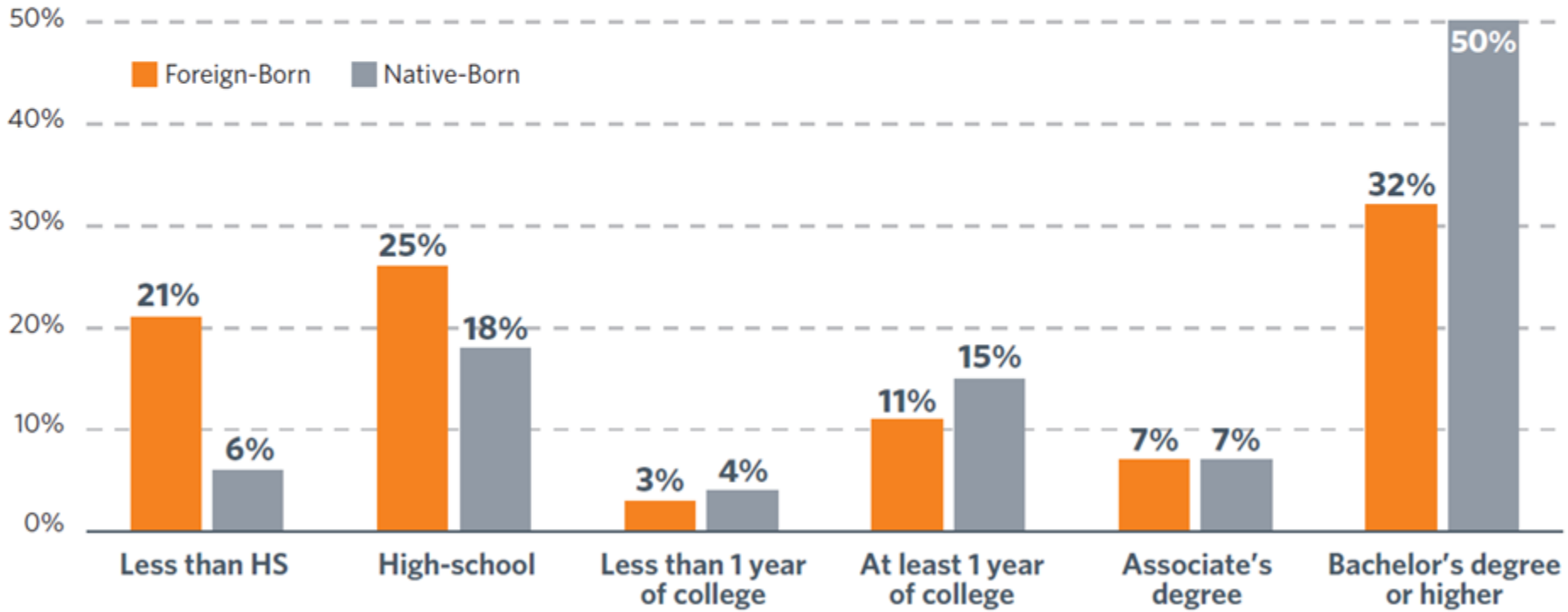
New Yorkers have limited English proficiency.



Barriers to Advancement

LESS EDUCATION

Educational Achievement of Foreign- and Native-Born Workers in New York City, 2011



Source: IPUMS ACS, 2007-2011

Barriers in Connecting to Workforce Services

- City-funded workforce services are often not tailored to the needs of immigrants
- Organizations that serve immigrants rarely have expertise in workforce development services
- Organizations that do exist to serve immigrants with workforce development services generally operate at a small scale
- As a result, many turn to for-profit employment services agencies, a substantial number of which are dishonest in their dealings

Barriers Specific to Undocumented Immigrants

- Ineligible for most publicly funded services
- Particularly vulnerable to exploitation by criminal employers who may threaten workers with deportation if they report abuses like lack of safety standards, paying less than the minimum wage, withholding pay, and others.

Recommendations

Create labor force opportunities for immigrants

Create labor force opportunities for immigrants

- Invest in quality ESOL and adult basic education for immigrants with low educational levels
- Create thoughtful assessment strategies to identify highly skilled immigrants who can be readily connected to sector-specific career pathways
- Invest in bridge programs for all immigrants
- Connect immigrants to wraparound services for which they are eligible

Create labor force opportunities for immigrants

INVEST IN QUALITY ESOL

In 2013,

29,000

seats in state ESOL programs

but only

1.7 million

New Yorkers with limited English proficiency

For **20 Years**, funding for EPE has been flat.

14%

increase in the number of New Yorkers who speak English less than very well between 2005-2013.

Create labor force opportunities for immigrants

ASSESS HIGH-SKILL IMMIGRANTS

NYCEDC

Immigrant Bridge Program

Create labor force opportunities for immigrants

INVEST IN BRIDGE PROGRAMS

Connect to the workforce system

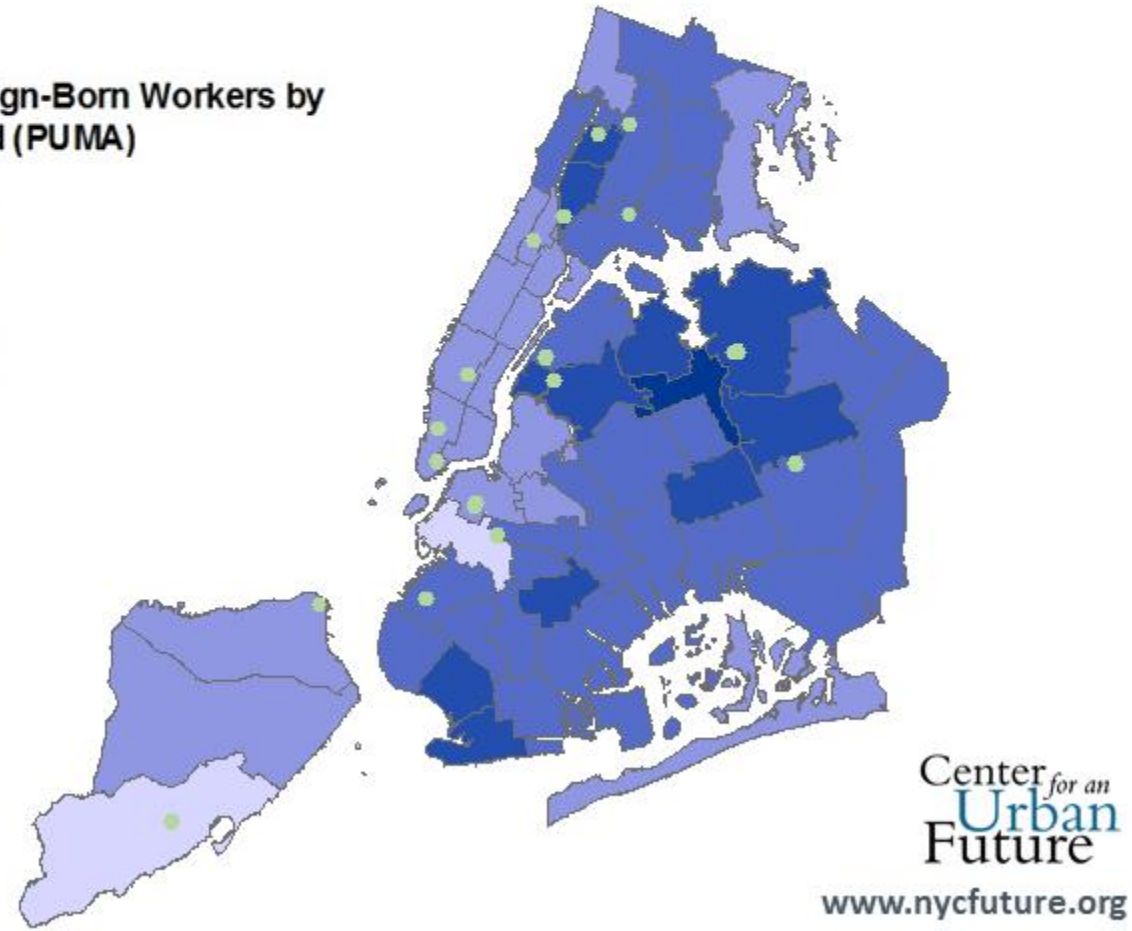
Connect to the workforce system

- Fill service gaps in immigrant neighborhoods
- Build referral networks or subcontractor relationships between workforce development providers and immigrant-serving organizations
- Coordinate public and private funds in order to allow undocumented workers to access workforce programs

Connecting to the workforce system

BUILD REFERRAL NETWORKS

Workforce1 Centers



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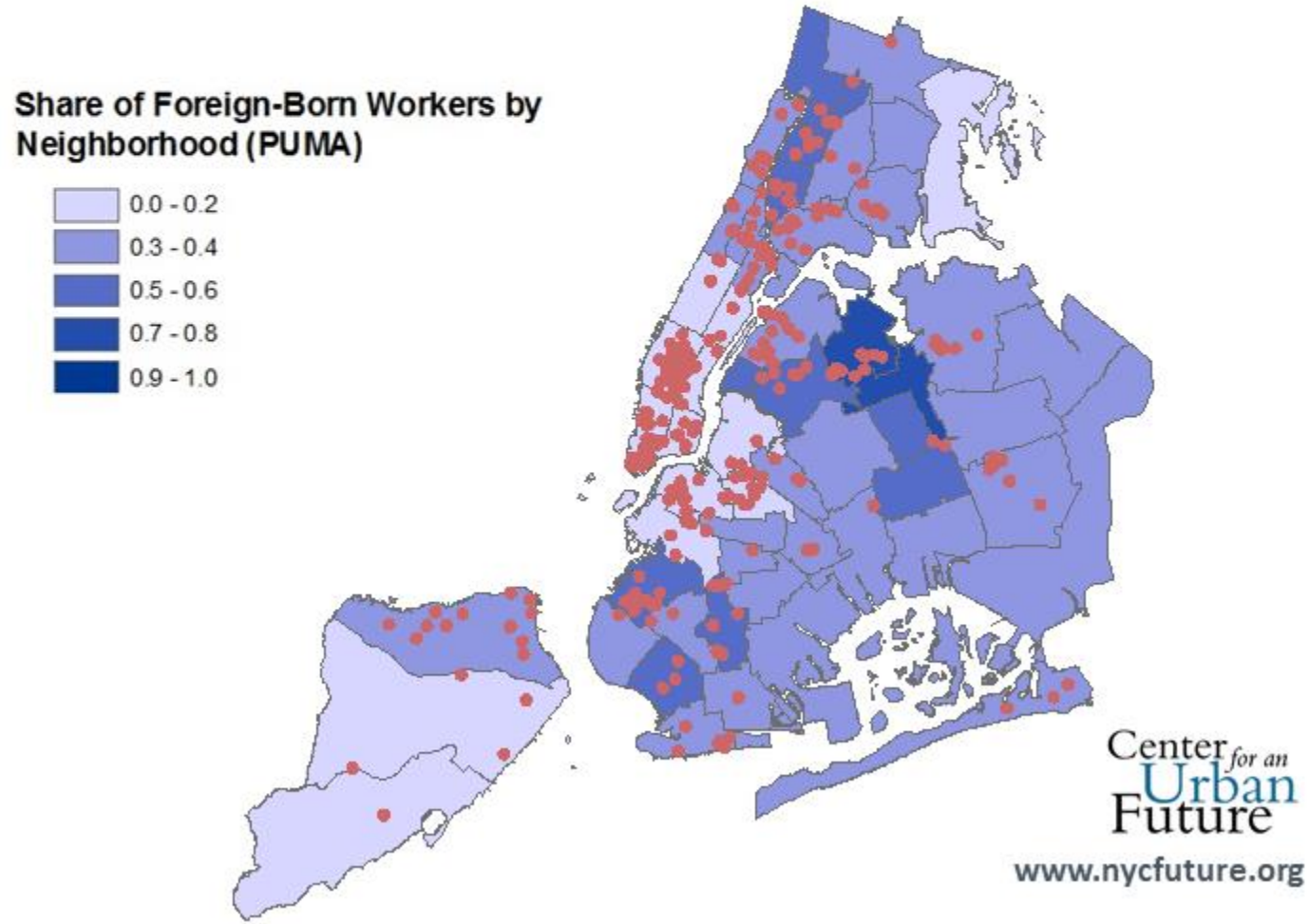
Connecting to the workforce system

BUILD REFERRAL NETWORKS

All Adult Workforce Programs

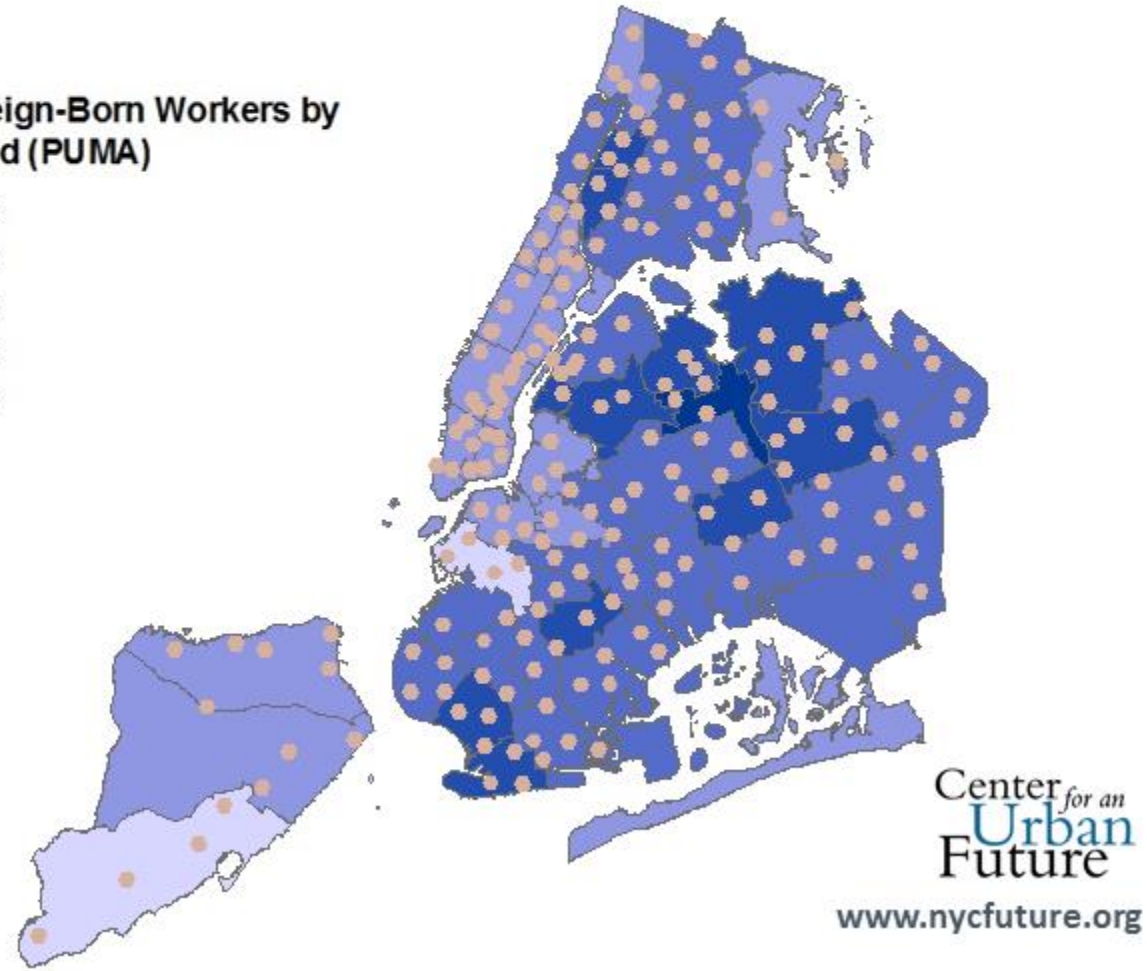
(Not including Public Libraries, CUNY, and SUNY.)



Connecting to the workforce system

BUILD REFERRAL NETWORKS

NYC's Public Library Branches



Improve job quality for all immigrants

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- Hold employers accountable for violations of worker rights through a strengthened NYC Office of Labor Enforcement
- Engage employers on job quality issues through Industry Partnerships
- Support initiatives to develop leadership skills and organizing power among workers such as labor centers, worker-owned cooperatives, and worker rights education

Thank You!

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