

RESEARCH

This brief summarizes the findings from research conducted in 2023 by the Urban Institute funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on 'silo-busting' local tables aimed at increasing access to public benefits for immigrant and refugee families in various cities across the US.

FINDINGS

More funding and support are needed to establish a local table led by immigrant-led community-based organizations (ICBOs) in Atlanta to help immigrant families locally and across the state effectively and sustainably access health care and social services.

IMMIGRANTS OF THE ATLANTA METRO AREA

Immigrant communities in the Atlanta Metro Area's 29 county region contribute significantly to the state's economy and safety net infrastructure.

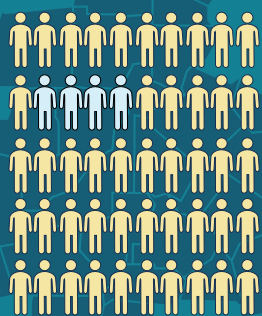
But these communities face barriers to the very safety net services they support.

VITAL TO THE ECONOMY

\$36.8 billion total in spending power

99,300 entrepreneurs generating **\$2.6 billion** in business

71% participate in the labor force (compared to 66% native-born residents)



\$13.4 billion paid total in taxes, including:

- \$4.6 billion paid in federal taxes
- \$8.8 billion paid in state & local taxes

Based on 2023 US Census Bureau statistics for the Atlanta Metro Area

BARRIERS TO GROWTH



Geographic inequity which leaves many counties with fewer resources



Confusing eligibility requirements



Fears about public charge and impacts on immigration status adjustments



Limited language translation and interpretation services



Complex application process requiring digital access and knowledge

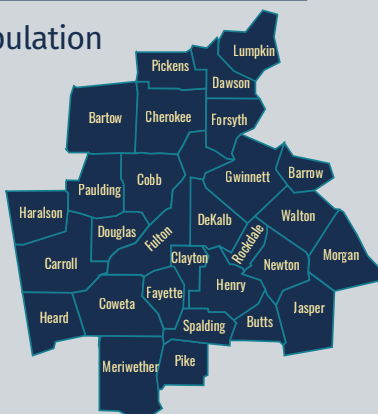


Shame based on negative narratives about immigrant use of safety net support

THE ATLANTA METRO AREA: AN EMERGING GATEWAY FOR IMMIGRANTS

The Atlanta Metro Area's immigrant population

- makes up **80%** of Georgia's foreign-born residents
- is largely suburban across **29 counties**
- has grown significantly and steadily for all status types since 1996 and continues to grow



Though immigrants in the Atlanta Metro Area comprise **80%** of all immigrants in Georgia, **only 7%** reside within the **City of Atlanta**

where access to safety-net resources is greater, meaning the majority of the immigrant population cannot easily access these services.

IMMIGRANT-LED COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (ICBOS) FILL THE GAP

ICBOs have long been noted as an impactful part of the immigrant social safety net, **collectively connecting about \$100 billion dollars' worth in services to low-income individuals a year.**



ICBOs:

- are seen as empathetic service providers, helping reduce fear amongst immigrants when applying for benefits
- provide immigrants direct aid in application to services
- have a robust history of collaborative efforts with lasting results

ICBOS COLLABORATIVE IMPACT IN THE ATLANTA METRO AREA



Over the past decade, collaboration among ICBOs on legislative and policy advocacy has resulted in impactful wins and increased access to safety net services for immigrants.

THE LATINO COMMUNITY FUND (LCF GEORGIA) PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Among its many impacts in 2024 alone, LCF Georgia and its many partners:

secured **12,283** free health screenings supporting **3500+** under-insured or uninsured immigrants statewide

reached **2,275,858** people through a digital civic participation campaign

served **1191** families with food essentials from the Welcoming Atlanta program

tracked **21** bills and championed a language access proposal with bipartisan support in both chambers

For more, see the [LCF Georgia 2024 Impact Report](#)



With additional resources, LCF Georgia and other ICBOs in the Atlanta Metro Area are well-positioned to leverage their trust, specialized insights, experience and strong networks to further increase immigrants' access to safety net services.

EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATION THROUGH A LOCAL TABLE IN THE ATLANTA METRO AREA

LEADERSHIP & PARTICIPATION



LCF Georgia's enduring relationships with local partners and proven ability to organize campaigns enable it to lead a silo-busting table in the Atlanta Metro Area.

A local table would sustain partnerships and bring together

- **community members** representing the diversity among immigrants in the Atlanta Metro Area
- **organizations** that provide a myriad of social services
- **enrollment assisters and navigators** from different organization types, including local businesses, to serve as access points across the Atlanta Metro Area
- **smaller organizations** interested in building their capacity to serve immigrant communities

FUNDING

Increased funding will

- **compensate** participants for their time, energy, and expertise needed to drive the local table forward
- **build capacity** of emerging organizations to provide immigrant-focused supports
- **enable** the participation of smaller organizations who are providing historically under-funded assistance such as legal and housing support
- **expand access points** for immigrants through local partnerships in areas with fewer services

