



COME IN, WE'RE
HIRING

A publication of the *Making Maine Work* series
from the Maine Development Foundation
and the Maine State Chamber of Commerce

MAINE'S LABOR SHORTAGE

NEW MAINERS AND DIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

“Population changes have a direct impact on the supply side of the economy through their effects on the labor force. Two significant effects on the labor force are an aging workforce and the shrinking of available labor, both of which affect a region’s ability to generate output and income.”¹

As this quote from a 2000 *Maine Policy Review* article demonstrates, Maine has understood the vital connection between its demographics, economy, and quality of life for some time. We have also been aware of our state’s demographic challenges: ranking annually among the oldest and whitest in the nation, our total population is growing slowly, and declining in some areas, especially our rural regions. We are also well aware of the implications, many of which are being felt today – **lower tax revenue, greater demands on services, smaller school populations, and a smaller, less dynamic workforce.**

Making Maine Work: Growing Maine’s Workforce, released by the Maine Development Foundation and Maine State Chamber of Commerce in 2013, explored our state’s demographic challenges and the impact on our workforce and economy. Driven by the increasing participation of women and baby boomers, our workforce grew by 40% from 1980 to 2010. However, as our population ages, our workforce is expected to decline going forward.

The percentage of women participating in the workforce grew from 30% in the 1940s to 50% in 1980 to 75% in 2010. It would be difficult now to imagine our state without this contribution. Yet today, we are largely missing out on the potential contributions of another large population cohort that is helping to drive workforce and economic growth in other regions. *The Maine Policy Review* article cited above goes on to state that **“In many ways migration is the key to Maine’s demographic future.”** Attracting people from beyond our borders is vital to our state. Helping new arrivals participate fully in our economy is good for Maine and good for them, and can help make us a more attractive destination for the others we need to attract.

Growing Maine’s Workforce noted that **we have historically prospered during periods of population growth and diversification**, as “Every new generation of immigrants arrived with new cultures and religions, and often new languages. Each had to gain acceptance from the residents already here. Each contributed to making the Maine that we love today.”² The report outlined two broad strategies, one focused on increasing workforce participation among the existing population (disengaged youth, veterans, older workers, and people with disabilities), and the other on improving our net migration – bringing more people into the state than are leaving. Our demographics mean that we will need a large influx of people to meaningfully grow our population and workforce. The companion report, *Preparing Maine’s Workforce*, addressed the need to provide current and future workers with the education and skills to succeed in today’s economy. This report explores how **newcomers to the state can help expand both the quantity and quality of our workforce.**

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The current situation is no one’s fault. It is the result of demographic conditions which have developed over a number of years. The fact that many other countries (in particular, Japan and a number of European nations) and other U.S. states are also experiencing significant demographic challenges should give us little comfort. In fact, it means that we face tremendous competition in the global challenge to find workers. Other nations and states are aggressively working to address their demographic and workforce challenges. Unless we translate our awareness into action, our workforce challenges will persist, and our economy will continue to struggle. Since *Growing Maine’s Workforce* and *Preparing Maine’s Workforce* were released, **the situation has become more dramatic, and the need to act more urgent.**

1 Deirdre M. Mageean, Gillian AvRuskin and Richard Sherwood, “Whither Maine’s Population,” *Maine Policy Review*, Volume 9, Issue 1, 2000

2 “Making Maine Work: Growing Maine’s Workforce,” Maine State Chamber of Commerce and Maine Development Foundation, October 2013

THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGE

While the U.S. population as a whole grew 3.3% from 2010 to 2015, Maine's population grew only 0.1%. The statistics underlying this minimal population growth paint a troubling picture. The historically higher birth rate of the non-white population has been a leading contributor to population growth in other areas of the country. As a predominantly white state, Maine has in large part lacked this leading driver of population growth.

Maine is perennially among the oldest states in part because people who are currently in their 50s and 60s had few children relative to previous generations.³ A large number of Mainers are now past child-bearing age. **Our aging population and relative lack of diversity are closely interrelated, and lead to a predictable pattern**, as “Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and West Virginia are the least racially diverse states, 94 or 95 percent white; it is no coincidence they are also the oldest states.”⁴

Maine's share of foreign-born population has grown in recent years but remains well below the U.S. and New England averages. Maine ranks last among the New England states in the percentage of our foreign-born population, has the highest median age, and is tied with Vermont for the slowest population growth. In contrast, Massachusetts has the highest percentage of foreign-born population, the lowest median age, and the highest rate of growth. Iowa and Minnesota – two other large, rural states – also have higher rates of foreign-born population and overall population growth, and lower median ages, compared to Maine.

TABLE 1: Selected Demographic Characteristics, 2014

Percentage of Population	Maine	U.S.
Under 5	4.9%	6.2%
Under 18	19.5%	23.1%
65 and Over	18.3%	13.5%
White Alone	93.8%	62.1%
Black or African American Alone	1.4%	13.2%
Asian Alone	1.2%	5.4%
Hispanic or Latino Alone	1.5%	17.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts

TABLE 2: Demographic Data by Region, 2010 to 2015

	Foreign-Born*	Median Age*	Population Change**
United States	13.1%	37.4	3.3%
Maine	3.5%	43.5	0.1%
New England	12.3%	40.3	1.6%
Connecticut	13.7%	40.3	0.6%
Iowa	4.7%	38.0	2.5%
Massachusetts	15.3%	39.3	3.0%
Minnesota	7.5%	37.6	3.5%
New Hampshire	5.6%	41.8	0.8%
Rhode Island	13.1%	39.7	0.2%
Vermont	4.2%	42.2	0.1%

Sources: *U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014, Five-Year Estimates **U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts

3 Glenn Mills, “Maine’s Workforce Challenges” presentation, November 2013

4 James Breece, Glenn Mills, and Todd Gabe, “The Economic Implications of Maine’s Changing Age Structure,” Maine Policy Review, Volume 4, Issue 2, December 2015

The statewide numbers belie the discrepancies among Maine counties. The foreign-born population ranged from a low of 1.7% in Piscataquis and Somerset to a high of 6.3% in Cumberland, and the median age from Androscoggin's low of 40.4 to Lincoln and Piscataquis at just over 49. Cumberland leads the way in population growth from 2010 to 2015 at 2.9%, while Aroostook declined by -4.5%.

TABLE 4: Projected Working-Age-to-Senior Ratio*

	2017	2032
Maine	3.2	2.1
Androscoggin	3.8	2.6
Aroostook	2.8	2.0
Cumberland	3.7	2.2
Franklin	3.1	2.2
Hancock	2.6	1.7
Kennebec	3.4	2.2
Knox	2.5	1.8
Lincoln	2.1	1.4
Oxford	3	1.9
Penobscot	3.8	2.7
Piscataquis	2.3	1.5
Sagadahoc	2.9	1.8
Somerset	3.1	2.0
Waldo	2.8	1.8
Washington	2.5	1.8
York	3.2	2.0

*Derived by dividing population ages 15 to 64 by the 65 and over population
 Source: Calculated from the Maine Office of Policy and Management's State and County Population Projections 2032

TABLE 3: Demographic Data by Maine County, 2010 to 2015

	Foreign Born*	Median Age*	Population Change**
Maine	3.5%	43.5	0.1%
Androscoggin	2.8%	40.4	-0.4%
Aroostook	4.5%	46.1	-4.5%
Cumberland	6.3%	41.7	2.9%
Franklin	2.3%	44.4	-2.5%
Hancock	3.0%	47.0	0.4%
Kennebec	2.4%	43.6	-1.8%
Knox	3.0%	47.1	0.3%
Lincoln	3.0%	49.1	-1.4%
Oxford	1.9%	45.3	-1.1%
Penobscot	2.7%	40.8	-0.8%
Piscataquis	1.7%	49.2	-3.4%
Sagadahoc	2.3%	45.0	-0.4%
Somerset	1.7%	44.6	-2.1%
Waldo	2.2%	44.8	1.0%
Washington	3.6%	46.5	-3.7%
York	3.2%	43.7	2.0%

Sources: *U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014, Five-Year Estimates **U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts

Maine's comparatively high working-age-to-senior ratio is felt to varying degrees in every county. Our overall ratio is projected to decline from an already-low 3.2 in 2017 to 2.1 in 2032, which will further strain resources and services.

WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

Our demographic situation has serious repercussions for our workforce and economy. The Maine Department of Labor's focus has shifted from finding jobs for people to **finding people for jobs**. Mainebiz reported in May 2016 that the shortage of skilled workers in the construction industry is forcing some contractors to turn down emerging projects,⁵ and a May 2016 MaineBiz survey found that more than three-quarters of respondents were having difficulty finding qualified workers.⁶ The boat-building industry is seeing increased demand, but companies are competing for a limited pool of qualified workers.⁷ At a 2015 MaineBiz forum, Michelle Hood of Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems, Adam Lee of Lee Auto Malls, and Charles "Wick" Johnson of Kennebec Technologies spoke about the challenges in their industries. The January 2015 edition of MaineBiz noted that "Wherever we go in Maine, we hear CEOs talk about the difficulty of finding workers ... We've heard it in boatyards, high-tech labs, restaurants, law firms and from building-and-excavation contractors."

According to the Portland Press Herald, Sunset Beach, a 60-room motel in East Boothbay, recently closed for the season nearly two months early due a shortage of workers. According to the paper, "While extreme, the situation Sunset Beach found itself in this summer reflects an increasingly tight labor pool for Maine's tourism industry."⁸ Greg Dugal of the Maine Innkeepers Association notes that Maine's low unemployment and an upswing in travel and tourism have combined with Maine's low in-migration and aging population to create challenges for many hospitality businesses. The industry is particularly affected by federal visa programs (see Appendix A on page 17).

There are exceptions, but **finding workers is a real challenge for many employers** throughout the state and throughout the economy.

"We no longer have positive natural change,
a trend that is expected to worsen
as baby boomers advance in age.
It is crucial that we attract young people
to stay and others to relocate here."

Glenn Mills, Chief Economist, Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research
and Information, "Maine Workforce Conditions and Outlook," January 2013

Our workforce challenges are expected to become more severe in the future. Many of the state's 370,000 baby boomers are still in the labor force but will be approaching retirement. Maine's civilian labor force is projected to decline from 696,000 in 2014 to 689,700 in 2024. The number of labor force participants from age 45 to 54 is projected to decline by -32,100, and the number from age 55 to 64 by -10,300, from 2014 to 2024, as baby boomers transition through their working years. Meanwhile, the number of workers who will be 65 and over, and nearing retirement, is projected to grow by 26,000.⁹ If current conditions persist, **we will not have enough young workers to maintain, much less grow, our workforce** in the years ahead.

Just as the demographic picture varies by county, so too does the workforce situation vary by industry. As seen in Table 5, a handful of broad industry sectors are expected to gain significant numbers of jobs through 2024. Table 5 also shows the wide discrepancies among industry sectors in the percentage and number of workers age 55 and older; the manufacturing sector has almost seven times as many older workers than the

5 "Aging workforce, lack of skilled workers leads to worker shortage in construction," MaineBiz, May 19, 2016

6 MaineBiz Poll Results, May 25, 2016

7 Laurie Schreiber, "Boat Business Rebounds, but Workforce is Elusive," MaineBiz, February 22, 2016

8 Edward D. Murphy, "Hospitality industry grapples with seasonal worker shortage," Portland Press Herald, August 14, 2016

9 "Maine Workforce Outlook 2014 to 2024," CWRI, July 2016

TABLE 5: Projected Employment Change and Share of Workers Over 55 by Maine Industry

	Current Share of Workers Age 55 & Older	Current Number of Workers Age 55 & Older	Net Employment Change, 2014-2024	Percent Employment Change, 2014-2024
Accommodation and Food Services	10%	7,501	2,129	3.9%
Administrative and Waste Services	17%	6,591	3,203	10.9%
Construction	20%	6,642	225	0.9%
Retail Trade	21%	19,412	317	0.4%
Finance and Insurance	21%	5,647	-141	-0.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	22%	3,186	321	3.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	23%	1,838	-208	-3.3%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	24%	1,976	219	2.4%
Wholesale Trade	24%	5,192	-576	2.9%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	24%	4,915	370	1.6%
Information	25%	2,208	-688	-9.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	25%	28,771	8,853	8.8%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	25%	6,959	1,424	5.7%
Manufacturing	27%	15,010	-6,485	-12.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	29%	2,274	118	1.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	29%	5,740	38	0.2%
Utilities	33%	988	-151	-9.7%

Source: "Maine Policy Review", Volume 24, Issue 2, December 2015 and Maine Job Outlook 2014 - 2024, Maine Department of Labor Center for Workforce Research and Information

information technology sector. Nearly one-third of current workers in the utilities and public administration sectors are 55 and older, while the accommodation and food services workforce is appreciably younger, with only 10% of workers 55 and older.

In manufacturing, 27% of current workers are 55 and older, but employment is expected to decline by almost 13% by 2024. In contrast, one-quarter of current health care and social assistance workers are 55 and over; the sector will need an influx of workers to provide the nearly 9,000 additional workers projected to be needed by 2024. There is also considerable variation among occupations within and across industries. In the health care industry, for example, a high share of practitioners and technicians are older, while support occupations have a much younger workforce. Clearly, "there's no one-size-fits-all impact of aging on the Maine workforce."¹⁰

Maine's workforce challenges have farther-reaching effects as well. The projected shortage of health care and social assistance workers comes at a time when our aging population will require more and more services. Police and fire departments are already struggling to fill their ranks. And in the 2014-2015 academic year, more than 5,000 Maine teachers and instructors, nearly a third of the state's total, were age 55 and older.¹¹

10 James Breece, Glenn Mills, and Todd Gabe, "The Economic Implications of Maine's Changing Age Structure," Maine Policy Review, Volume 4, Issue 2, December 2015

11 Maine Department of Education Data Warehouse

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Given our workforce constraints, “Businesses will continue to pursue productivity gains through automation and more efficient work practices as a response to slow labor supply growth.”¹² The output of Maine workers has increased in recent years (by 7.3% from 2009 to 2014), but lagged the U.S. average by 26% and the New England average by 29% in 2014, due in large part to Maine’s preponderance of low-productivity industries and relative lack of high-productivity industries.¹³ Worker productivity is vital to a region’s economic competitiveness, but improving productivity can only go so far. Maine businesses face a number of challenges in competing in the global economy. **It is vital to their success and the success of our economy that they have the workforce to capitalize on opportunities when and where they arise.** A pool of available, skilled, and educated workers is also a key factor in growing and attracting employers.

Many experts have spoken in recent years to the connection between our population, workforce, and economy. According to the Maine Department of Labor’s Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI), “Lack of working-age population growth can significantly impact business’ abilities to attract the staff they need to meet demand for their products and services.”¹⁴ State Economist Amanda Rector has frequently noted that our aging population and lack of population growth will limit employment and income growth going forward. The overall message is clear: **we are facing a workforce shortage that, if current conditions continue, will become more severe in the years ahead.** This will in turn constrain the success and growth of existing businesses and make it difficult to attract and develop new ones, **constraining our economic growth.**

“Even if we kept all of our young people here,
we simply do not have enough of them in the state now
to replace the retiring baby boomers.
We must attract more workers to the state
if we are going to have enough people
to fill the jobs that will open up as the older workers retire,
and we’ll have to attract even more
if we want businesses to be able to grow.”

State Economist Amanda Rector

¹² “Trends in the Maine Labor Market,” CWRI

¹³ “Measures of Growth 2016,” Maine Economic Growth Council and Maine Development Foundation, April 2016

¹⁴ “Maine Workforce Outlook 2012 to 2022,” CWRI, December 2014

NET MIGRATION AND MAINE'S WORKFORCE

"Maine is old. Our childbearing population is too small.
We can't birth our way to growth even if
every young person who was born here stayed here ...
We are losing population precisely because we are so white.
To grow, Maine has to become more racially diverse."

From "Hispanics Help Washington County Grow," Island Institute, April 2015

Increasing the workforce participation among our existing population can help with our workforce challenges. However, the Maine Office of Policy and Management projects modest population declines through 2017, followed by accelerating declines through 2032 – hardly a recipe for economic growth and vitality.¹⁵ Considerable attention has been devoted in recent years to the importance of retaining more young people, but this only begins to address the problem. According to retired University of Southern Maine economics professor Charlie Colgan, "People assume that if we could just keep more of our young people here, it would solve the problem ... there are not enough of them because **not enough young people are born here**. We have to get people from other places to move here. We've got to get more people in."¹⁶ The Maine Office of Policy and Management notes that "Without the capacity to grow our population through births, Maine must rely on migration to provide population growth."¹⁷ CWRI concludes that, "**Without positive natural change, Maine will depend on net in-migration to maintain our population and workforce.**"¹⁸

Every one of the top 50 U.S. metropolitan areas that saw overall population growth between 1970 and 2013 saw growth in their immigrant populations. New immigrants and their children are expected to account for 83% of the growth in the U.S. workforce from 2000 to 2050.¹⁹ We need to grow our population and workforce to grow our economy, and we need to look beyond our borders and attract people from other states and countries to grow our population and workforce. To do so, we need to be receptive to the fact that many of the people who will grow our population, workforce, and economy will look different than most of us and have different backgrounds and cultures.

"Maine desperately needs immigrants, immigrants of
all shapes, sizes, ages, colors and points of origin."

Charles Lawton, "Maine Must Welcome Immigrants," Portland Press Herald, March 2015

15 "Maine State and County Population Projections," Maine Office of Policy and Management
16 Christopher Cousins, "Economist: Without Huge Changes, Maine's Aging Population Could Lead to Financial Ruin," Bangor Daily News, September 10, 2013
17 "Maine Population Outlook to 2030," Maine Office of Policy and Management, February 2013

18 "Maine Workforce Outlook 2012 to 2022," CWRI, December 2014
19 "The Role of Immigrant Integration in Meeting Our Skilled Workforce Needs," National Skills Coalition, May 2014

WORKFORCE SKILLS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A skilled and educated workforce helps existing businesses thrive and is a key to attracting new employers. Higher levels of skill and education are required in jobs throughout the economy. Maine also needs people with the innovative capacity and entrepreneurial skills to create opportunities for themselves and others. Immigrants bring more than just numbers to an economy; they also bring **needed skills, knowledge, education, talent, innovational capacity, entrepreneurial spirit, and international connections**. In Maine, immigrants make up approximately 3.5% of our workforce but 10.1% of advanced degree workers, 12.9% of physicians, and 25.3% of science, technology, engineering, and math graduates, an area of high demand and short supply.²⁰ Maine’s foreign-born population has higher levels of educational attainment than the U.S. foreign-born population, and the percentage of our foreign-born population with bachelor’s, graduate, and professional degrees is higher than the state average.

TABLE 6: Educational Attainment

	Foreign-born, U.S.	Foreign-born, Maine	Total, Maine
Less than high school graduate	30%	18%	8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	23%	21%	32%
Some college or associate’s degree	19%	25%	30%
Bachelor’s degree	17%	22%	19%
Graduate or professional degree	12%	14%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2014, One-Year Estimates

Nationwide, immigrants start businesses at twice the native-born rate, and in 2011, 28% of all U.S. companies had immigrant founders. More than 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Immigrants also generate patents at higher rates than the native-born population. Immigrants have founded nearly half of the nation’s top venture-funded companies,²¹ and a quarter of new high-tech companies with more than \$1 million in sales were founded by immigrants.²²

From 2006 to 2010, there were 2,711 new immigrant business owners in Maine, generating a total of \$120 million in net income, accounting for 3.3% of total net business income in the state. In 2010, 3.2% of all Maine business owners were foreign-born.²³ Immigrant entrepreneurs are creating jobs and revenue throughout our economy.

Immigrants make up a growing percentage of the U.S. population and represent an important domestic market. They also **bring important connections** that can help businesses and people connect to the world beyond our borders. Charlie Colgan has noted that, “As the United States becomes more ethnically and linguistically diverse, and as we integrate into a more global society, it’s important that we have experience dealing with people from other backgrounds.”²⁴ For students, **ethnic and cultural diversity can enhance the educational experience**, but with some notable exceptions, it is generally lacking in our state’s educational institutions. International students bring valuable

20 Partnership for a New American Economy, www.renewoureconomy.org/issues/entrepreneurship

21 Partnership for a New American Economy, www.renewoureconomy.org/issues/entrepreneurship

22 David Brooks, “The Easy Problem,” *New York Times*, February 1, 2013

23 “New Americans in Maine: The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians in the Pine Tree State,” American Immigration Council, January 2015

24 Robert Long, “Maine Slowly Gaining Cultural Diversity, but Three Largest Cities Still Some of the Whitest in US,” *Bangor Daily News*, September 10, 2012

diversity and contribute to Maine's economy: during the 2014-2015 school year, 1,354 international students attended one of Maine's higher education institutions, contributing \$50.3 million to the economy.²⁵

In 2013, foreign companies in Maine employed approximately 32,400 workers. In 2015, international trade supported approximately 180,500 Maine workers, we exported a total of \$2.7 billion to 187 international markets, nearly 100 Maine companies were owned by a foreign parent company, and 71 foreign companies invested directly in the state.²⁶ A recent example of the value of our connections to the global economy is the news earlier this year that Chinese patients will be a major part of the \$50 million "medical tourism" project in Auburn, which has brought a number of potential investors and patients to the city.²⁷

"Diversity of all kinds, both inherent and acquired, is the secret ingredient for today's highest-performing, most creative, and most innovative communities and organizations."

Jess Knox, State Coordinator, Maine Accelerates Growth

25 Maine International Trade Center

26 Maine International Trade Center

27 Edward D. Murphy, "Flow of 'medical tourists' from China to start early," Portland Press Herald, February 26, 2016

CASE STUDIES OF MAINE EMPLOYERS

- According to LuAnn Ballesteros, director of **The Jackson Laboratory's** Office of Government Relations, "Maine employers rely on the accessibility of an international workforce. The Jackson Laboratory employs individuals from more than 25 countries, hiring 40 individuals with employment-based or education-based visas in 2015. The Laboratory utilizes a number of on-boarding activities to welcome new arrivals and their families, including on-site classes for English as a Second Language. **The goal is to quickly and compassionately engage new hires in the cultural, social and performance aspects of their employment.** These efforts are invaluable, leading to improved employee satisfaction, increased productivity and greater organizational success."
- Interviewed for the *Growing Maine's Workforce* report, Paul Delva, senior vice president, general counsel, and corporate secretary for **Fairchild Semiconductor**, noted that the company has many temporary foreign workers who are typically here for six months or a year, many of whom are transfers from Fairchild's facilities in other countries. Many employees are first-generation Mainers. A disproportionate number of Fairchild's technology workers who have master's or doctorate degrees are from other countries, helping to address the lack of graduates in the U.S. pipeline. **Many foreign workers have some type of family connection to the state, and others are attracted by our numerous recreational opportunities.** The lack of critical mass in the industry is a challenge for technology professionals, as there are few options to change employers in search of advancement or in the event of layoffs. Finding opportunities for a trailing spouse is another challenge.
- **Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences** recruits internationally, casting a wide net to get the right people, particularly for senior scientist and management positions. Finding employment for trailing spouses is an important, but often difficult, aspect of recruiting. Companies can also share the relocation costs for employees. Navigating cumbersome and expensive immigration procedures can be a deterrent, and Bigelow Laboratory has the assistance of a professional immigration lawyer for this purpose. Maine has pockets of high-tech research but is not known for it, which can be an obstacle in recruiting. **The Laboratory has 16 senior scientists from five different countries**, with approximately 80% of the rest of the scientific staff coming from outside the state, and 10-15% from outside the U.S. (mainly from Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Korea, and China). Executive Director Graham Shimmiel, who provided insights for this report, is himself an O-1 visa holder from Scotland.
- According to Kate Harrigan, director of human resources for Portland's **Press Hotel**, "In general there is a lack of steady, reliable workers willing to perform tasks in our industry in this market to support all of the downtown hotels. What we are able to gain from programs and many other resources that support our new Mainers is **an opportunity to tap into a new workforce that is ready and willing to work.** Many of the new Mainers have gone through basic workforce training that helps prepare them for our industry ... we plan to continue supporting the new Mainers' workforce for many years to come."
- Wendy Estabrook, director of human resources for **L.L. Bean, Inc.**, notes that, "We are facing hiring challenges at both the professional and operational areas of our business. At the professional level, we have an ongoing need for people with a variety of job skills, including digital, IT and design, and often have to recruit for these positions outside the state. With the improving economy and low unemployment in southern Maine, we also face challenges in hiring our peak seasonal workers. **New Mainers are vital to our workforce**, and we welcome them."
- Migrant farm workers play an important role in commercial agriculture. **Wyman's** makes extensive use of migrant farm workers in its wild blueberry operations. According to the

company's website, Wyman's provides **free housing for seasonal workers**. In August 2013, Down East Magazine noted that, "From mid-July to August 1, hundreds of migrant farm workers stream northward after harvesting other crops in Louisiana, Florida, and North Carolina ... Despite being isolated at the Wyman's compound, nearly 10 miles from the nearest town center, seasonal workers from Mexico, Honduras, and other Central American points are increasingly finding themselves and their cultures integrated into Down East life."²⁸

- As reported by the Portland Press Herald, Westbrook metal and glass fabricator **Sigco** has been growing rapidly in sales and employees, but, according to Sigco human resources manager Cindy Caplice, "Like everyone in Maine, we've been desperately looking for good employees who want to work." The company is **recruiting asylum seekers by working with Portland Adult Education**, which teaches candidates basic technical skills and English comprehension. Caplice notes that Sigco provides additional on-the-job training to immigrant workers, who have proven to be loyal and appreciative, and sees the program getting stronger.²⁹

THE GREATER PORTLAND REGION

The **Greater Portland region** has a higher level of diversity than most of the state and has a number of resources in place to help new Mainers integrate into the workforce and economy. The **New Mainers Resource Center** (NMRC), which was created by the Legislature in 2013 and is a program within Portland Adult Education, plays a key role. NMRC offers programs at all levels of the educational spectrum (including a skilled professional program for those with bachelor's degrees or higher, workplace English and job readiness courses for intermediate and high-level English speakers), assistance navigating the job search and hiring process, and employer support and resources such as candidate referral and training assistance. Because **foreign degrees often do not correspond directly to U.S. degrees**, the center helps new Mainers maximize their existing education with a minimum of additional education and training. The support of employers is vital to the center's work. Helping new employees move from entry level to higher positions within an organization can help the individual maximize their talents and fill a need for the employer. NMRC works with a number of other organizations involved in workforce training and education and immigrant integration.³⁰

The **Greater Portland Workforce Initiative** developed from projects in and around Portland that sparked interest in a broader, more systemic effort. The initiative is a strategy to **link and build upon the existing work and experience** of community organizations and the public workforce system to improve the delivery of workforce services. Stakeholders include representatives from education, workforce service providers, state and city agencies, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, funders, foundations, and others, each of whom brings unique strengths and abilities to develop a unified continuum of services for marginalized job seekers and the region's employers.³¹

A number of organizations and programs intersect with the region's immigrant population, including **Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.'s Make It in America**, **Project Login's Tech Hire**, the **City of Portland's ConnectED**, and the **Maine CareerCenter's Competitive Skills Scholarship Program**. The City of Portland offers immigrant businesses commercial lending and technical assistance in navigating the permitting and licensing processes. Among the more high-profile efforts in the Portland region are large-scale projects focused on the health care, entry-level information technology, and textile sectors.

28 Richard Thackeray Jr., "Battle on the Barrens," Down East Magazine, August 13, 2013. <http://downeast.com/battle-barrens/>

29 Edward D. Murphy, "Word With the Boss: Westbrook metal, glass fabricator helps immigrants make it," Portland Press Herald, March 31, 2016

30 Sally Sutton, Program Coordinator, NMRC, and NMRC "Draft Report for the Commissioner of Education Regarding the Welcome Center Initiative to Report to the Joint Standing Committee of the Legislature Having Jurisdiction Over Education"

31 Kim Moore, Coordinator, Greater Portland Workforce Initiative

INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

Maine has approximately 45,000 immigrants who come from a variety of countries – 28% from Asia, 24% from Europe, 12% from Africa, and 9% from Latin America and the Caribbean – and have **a variety of backgrounds, experiences, skill sets, and education levels**.³² Newcomers, whether from another state or another country, face some type of transition in integrating into the society and workforce. Understanding the challenges involved in this process is an important part of making the transition as smooth as possible to create a positive experience for the individual and maximize the benefits for the state.

Foreign immigrants typically face **challenges in understanding the job search and hiring process, workplace culture, and the transfer of educational and professional credentials and licensures**. They frequently **lack professional networks** and do not know what resources are available or how to connect with them. For immigrants who are seeking to start a business, navigating licensing and permitting processes, developing business plans, accessing start-up capital, and understanding competition and advertising can be challenges.

According to Catharine MacLaren, vice president of human resources for talent and diversity at **Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems**, “There is a shortage of qualified health care workers in Maine at the moment ... The challenge for new Mainers is that they may have great experience but if they do not have the specific credentials to be able to fill a position they will not be considered ... Currently there are many **new Mainers with a great deal of experience and expertise working in entry-level positions for this reason**.” The application process can be very difficult for those who come from other cultures and speak little or no English. On the employer side, “Some hiring managers will discount those who don’t obviously have the specific qualifications or experiences that they are looking for without looking for comparable experience from the applicant’s experiences in their country of origin, which sometimes makes it less likely that the applicant will even be granted an interview.” Incumbent workers also may struggle to adjust to increased diversity in the workplace. Helping employers learn how to overcome these obstacles can help them to find and fully utilize qualified applicants.

Lara Maloney, director of **Arwo Learning Center** in Portland, notes that when the center opened in April 2015, she worked with Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI) to hire as interns a few individuals from other countries who would bring diversity to the new multi-cultural center. A **lack of experience** with the state’s child care rules and regulations was an expected challenge on which progress has been made by having lead teachers act as **mentors**. Another area of concern has been **professionalism**, with the Center experiencing a lack of reliability on the protocol around missing work or tardiness. Arwo continues to educate its staff on the job and for the most part has had success and been happy with their employees.

32 “Celebrating Immigration,” World Affairs Council of Maine

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINE

STATEWIDE CONSENSUS AND LEADERSHIP

Maine's demographics represent a serious challenge. The effects are being felt today and will become more pronounced as time goes by. Urgent action is needed. Yet, Maine currently lacks a statewide consensus on the importance of our demographic challenge and how to address it and its impacts. **Attracting and engaging people from beyond our state to grow our workforce and economy requires a multifaceted approach.** Developing a full understanding of the vital role of immigration and diversity in this effort is essential to our success.

1 Bring together stakeholders to establish a statewide goal for growing Maine's workforce that explicitly connects population growth to economic development.

Agreement on a statewide goal and the reasons for it will help increase understanding of the importance of the attraction and engagement of immigrants as a key component of our overall economic development strategy. The effort should include a comprehensive assessment of the current economic contributions of new Mainers. The overall goal should also include a statewide benchmark for the attraction and retention of international students.

2 Bring together a group of business leaders to champion the effort to attract and engage new Mainers.

The business community is critical to highlighting our workforce challenges and the opportunity presented by expanded immigration and diversity. Bringing together a coalition of engaged business leaders will put them at the forefront of our efforts. This group can also take the lead in connection with in-migrants and service providers to ensure new Mainers are acquiring the skills sought by employers, and improve understanding in the business community of the obstacles to integration.

3 Encourage each industry sector to undertake its own analysis of challenges and solutions.

The workforce challenge is economy-wide, but will affect different industries in different ways. It is important that employers within key industry sectors understand their specific challenges and actively engage in finding solutions to them. A sector approach enables employers to target solutions to their specific industry needs and enables collective action by affected stakeholders.

INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION OF EFFORTS

Many positive and valuable efforts are currently underway in the state. Improving their integration and coordination, while being mindful of their specific missions, will help **maximize impact, improve efficiency, minimize duplication, and make clear what gaps still exist.**

4 Ensure adequate funding for existing programs.

Existing programs are achieving meaningful results, and it's important that we maintain continuity in the services that have been, and will continue to be, provided. See Appendix B on page 18 for a partial list of programs and organizations in Maine.

5 Ensure that attracting and helping new Mainers engage in our economy is woven into existing workforce development and community development efforts.

Numerous programs and organizations are already working to address our workforce challenges. Rather than re-inventing these efforts to address the needs of the immigrant population, we should make use of these existing resources to help new Mainers succeed in our workforce.

6 Build upon and replicate the success of Portland's New Mainers Resource Center and the region's other services for new Mainers.

The New Mainers Resource Center plays a pivotal role in integrating new Mainers into Greater Portland's economy and society. The region has a number of other organizations and programs whose work is specifically targeted to, or whose targeted populations include, new Mainers. Many of these efforts are evolving and adapting to changing needs and circumstances. While there is still more that can be done, and while each region's particular circumstances, challenges, and resources will differ, the Portland region's efforts offer a template that may be helpful for other regions. See the discussion on page 10 and Appendix B for further information on programs and organizations in Greater Portland.

7 Ensure that English language training is offered at all levels and accessible to immigrants.

English proficiency is regarded as an essential element for new Mainers to engage in the economy, regardless of their background, experience, and education. Offerings should accommodate the needs of as many new Mainers as possible, include a variety of levels and paces, and include classes with a contextual economic focus, such as medical or engineering.

EVALUATION OF SPECIFIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

8 Investigate activities and programs in other regions and adopt appropriate elements.

Many areas in the U.S. and elsewhere are working proactively to address their demographic challenges. “There are now hundreds of models for welcoming, attracting, and retaining talent ... there are many good examples to follow and lessons to learn by looking at the experiences of other similarly-situated places,” said Dan Wallace of the Partnership for a New American Economy. While some have much larger immigrant populations and more resources, these efforts offer a plethora of options to borrow from in developing our own strategies. See Appendix C on page 19 for a partial list of programs in other areas.

9 Examine the feasibility and potential impact of specific programs and policies.

As a state, we should consider some specific programs, policies, and approaches to help us fully capitalize on the potential of new Mainers. These include:

- **Expanded understanding of the various federal employment or investment-based visa programs for both permanent and temporary workers.**

Many of the existing federal visa programs are intended to help employers acquire the talent and number of foreign employees they need to succeed or to encourage foreign investment and entrepreneurship. However, these programs, enacted decades ago, may not meet the needs of today’s economy. An improved understanding by employers and policymakers of federal employment-based temporary and permanent visa categories and processes may enable better use of some of these existing programs. See Appendix A on page 17 for a partial list of federal programs and policies.

- **Assistance to highly-qualified foreign professionals in navigating the professional licensure and certification process, and to others in attaining credit for foreign education and experience.**

Understanding the professional licensure and certification process can be difficult for those who come from other countries and cultures or speak different languages. Helping new Mainers navigate this process and acquire any needed education or training can help them fill the needs of employers.

Similarly, new Mainers frequently have difficulty gaining recognition for foreign degrees and other learning and experience, both formal and informal. Alongside our efforts to help Maine people achieve recognition for prior learning, providing prior learning assessments and technical assistance or funds to help new Mainers gain credit for their learning and experience should offer a positive return on investment.

- **Assistance to employers in adjusting their hiring practices and workplace culture to find and accommodate new Mainers.**

Immigrants may face intentional and unintentional biases in the hiring process and workplace. Foreign degrees and credentials may not be as valued as those obtained in the United States. Employers may overlook less formal skills and experience acquired by current and new Mainers, particularly when automated screening processes are used. Helping employers to understand the limitations of their current processes and adopt new practices can help them engage new Mainers to fill their needs.

CONCLUSION

“Maine’s small but growing immigrant population presents a labor pool that, if supported accordingly, could positively contribute to the state’s workforce and to moving Maine’s economy forward.”

Coastal Enterprises, Inc., “Building Maine’s Economy: How Maine Can Embrace Immigrants and Strengthen the Workforce,” March 2016

Maine’s history is a history of immigration. Through the years, newcomers from a number of places, including white immigrants from Europe and Canada, faced initial opposition, but ultimately **made important contributions to our society and economy**, bolstering the workforce that fueled our natural resource industries. Maine once had a higher rate of foreign-born population than the nation as a whole, but our rate has declined while the national average has grown.

While Maine overall is very homogenous, there are pockets of diversity around the state. The influx of Somali immigrants to Lewiston in recent years has **brought new energy and vitality to the community**. Unity’s small Amish community is bringing diversity to that region. Many seasonal workers, mostly Hispanic, have made Milbridge their permanent home, and the positive effects are being felt. According to **Sunrise County Economic Council** Executive Director Charles Rudelitch, “It is not that the new immigrants have fixed everything in the economy, but there are more businesses downtown, more lights on at night, more people in the grocery store, and more kids in school than there would be without them.”³³

“To remain globally competitive and deal with an aging workforce, the state should identify ways to maximize the potential contributions of people, native and non-natives alike, who locate here, and to appreciate the competitive gains that can be achieved through increased diversity and cultural competency.”

Maine Center for Economic Policy, “Asians in the Maine Economy: Opportunities for Growth,” April 2011

Many other U.S. states and other countries with aging populations, declining birth rates, and little or no population growth are **looking at immigrants as a solution to their challenges**. Our aging population and lack of diversity make our challenge particularly acute. Yet while bolstering our population and workforce is essential, some of us see more people as more cars, or more sprawl, or more competition for jobs and resources. The issue of general assistance for asylum seekers has brought a number of issues to the forefront, but in the long run, we need to forge a consensus around the **importance of new Mainers in growing our workforce and economy**.

33 Charles Rudelitch, “Washington County’s Population Challenges Point to Immigration,” The Working Waterfront, Island Institute, January 21, 2016

Economists often comment that “demography is destiny.” Our current demographics present a real threat to our economy and quality of life. **Fortunately, our demographics are not set in stone.** Attracting more people from beyond our borders and helping them engage in our economy to their utmost ability offers a path forward. This requires a widespread and concerted effort over the long-term. Most importantly, **it requires us to get started immediately. Further delay only compounds our problems.**

The common Maine saying “from away” speaks to a sense of pride in our state, but also to an unnecessary and damaging division, implying that those from elsewhere can never truly be a part of our state’s social fabric and economy. It also ignores the fact that many Mainers are themselves “from away,” or are descendants of people who came “from away.” This does us a disservice as we look to grow our population, our workforce, and our economy. The simple truth is that **we need more people contributing to our economy** to their maximum potential, regardless of when or how they got here or where they came from. Maine is an attractive destination for many people from elsewhere for a variety of reasons; we need to help those who are here reach their highest potential, maximizing their contribution to our economy and helping to attract more of the people that we will need going forward.

The well-known saying that **“the best way to predict your future is to create it”** aptly describes Maine’s current situation. We can create the future we want for our state. We need to act now to do it.

APPENDIX A: FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The federal government controls the United States' immigration policy, and some federal programs offer potential avenues to bring people from other countries to work in specific positions, or to invest in local economies.

- The **EB-5 Visa Investor program** allows foreign nationals to obtain permanent residency (the “green card”) for investing at least \$1 million (or \$500,000 in targeted rural or high-unemployment areas) in a new commercial enterprise in the U.S. that creates at least 10 full-time jobs within two years. Most EB-5 investments are administered through regional centers. Two private groups are federally designated to operate regional centers in the state, although neither has secured foreign investment.³⁴ The Maine Department of Economic Development, Maine International Trade Center, and Finance Authority of Maine have submitted a joint application for a state-run EB-5 regional center.
- The **H-1B visa program** allows employers to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialty or professional occupations. With some exceptions, the number of H-1B visas for foreign-born workers with a bachelor's degree is capped at 65,000 per fiscal year nationwide, with an additional 20,000 H-1B visas available for those having at least a master's degree. Demand for these visas greatly exceeds supply nationwide. In 2012, Maine ranked 39th nationally in employer requests for H-1B visas per 1,000 employees.³⁵
- The **H-2A visa program** provides agricultural employers with a method to bring temporary agricultural workers in from certain countries to meet their temporary seasonal labor needs, after first receiving certification from the U.S. Department of Labor that the employer's good faith recruitment efforts have failed to find qualified, available, and willing U.S. workers to fill the jobs. There is no cap on the number of H-2A visas available.³⁶
- The **H-2B visa program** allows employers who meet specific regulatory requirements to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary non-agricultural jobs. Nationally, the total number of foreign nationals who can receive H-2B visas is capped at 66,000 per fiscal year, with 33,000 available in the first half of the year, and the remainder available for the second half.³⁷ As a practical matter, demand for these visas far outstrips supply nationwide.
- The **J-1 Exchange Visitor visa** allows foreign citizens participating in work-based exchange programs approved by the U.S. government to work temporarily in the U.S. in a variety of jobs. These visas are often used in place of the H-2B visa program to help meet non-agricultural employers' seasonal hiring needs.³⁸ In 2014, Maine had a total of 5,701 J-1 visas.³⁹
- The **Optional Practical Training Program** enables those with foreign student visas who attend U.S. colleges and universities, following completion of their studies, to engage in up to three years of employment with U.S. employers in a position directly related to their major. The length of time that they can work depends on whether their degree was in a science, technology, engineering, and math field, and on whether the employment is structured to be an experiential learning opportunity furthering their education.⁴⁰
- **Other visa programs** are available through which certain very narrowly defined categories of foreign-born workers may be approved to work in the U.S. These include visas for

34 Audrey Singer, “The EB-5 Program for Immigrant Investors,” *Communities & Banking*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, Winter 2015

35 Robert Clifford, “Demand for H-1B Visas in New England: An Analysis of Employer Requests for Highly Skilled Guest Workers,” *New England Public Policy Center*, October 2014, and 8 USCA §1184(g)(1)(A)(vii); 8 USCA §1184(g)(5)(C).

36 8 USCA §1101 (a) (15) (H) (ii) (a); 8 CFR §214.2(h)(5).

37 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, www.uscis.gov

38 8 USC 1101 (a) (15) (J).

39 <http://j1.visa.state.gov/basics/facts-and-figures/>

40 <https://federalregister.gov/a/2016-04828>

managerial, executive, or specialized knowledge level “intracompany transferees,” professional athletes and artists, certain ministers of religion, and workers with extraordinary abilities or international acclaim in their fields, among others. Due to their specificity, these are less frequently used than the visa programs listed above.

- A \$4.85 million **Job-Driven National Emergency grant** was awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor in July 2014 to the Maine Department of Labor’s Bureau of Employment Services to build on and expand existing successful industry partnerships and establish a customized approach to training for the long-term unemployed and new Mainers.⁴¹

APPENDIX B:

MAINE PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The following is a partial list of organizations, initiatives, and programs working with immigrants and new Mainers.

- **Catholic Charities of Maine’s Refugee and Immigration Services** (<http://www.ccmaine.org/refugee-immigration-services>) runs several programs focused on helping refugees and other immigrants settle in the state. These include job counseling, mentorship, and interpretation services for refugees, and corporate training to help businesses understand the situation of refugees.
- **Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI)** coordinated focus groups and interviews with immigrant job seekers and students, and labor intermediary groups, including employment case managers, staffing agencies, higher education counselors, and human resources recruiters. The research culminated in the report, “*Building Maine’s Economy: How Maine Can Embrace Immigrants and Strengthen the Workforce*,” available online at <http://www.ceimaine.org/news/cei-report-immigrants-can-strengthen-maines-economy/>. CEI’s StartSmart program provides business development and financing assistance to approximately 150 immigrants and refugees annually.
- The mission of **Community Financial Literacy (CFL)** (<http://cflme.org/>) is to empower Maine refugees and new immigrants by providing financial skills. CFL helps immigrants and refugees learn how to save for college, work toward home ownership, purchase a vehicle, or start a business.
- The University of Maine’s **Flagship Match Program** (<https://go.umaine.edu/apply/scholarships/flagship-match/>) allows prospective students from six targeted Northeast states to pay the same tuition and fee rate as their home state’s flagship institution. Qualifying students receive a grant to offset the cost of non-resident tuition and fees. The goal of the program is to improve diversity and provide an enriched academic experience for students.
- Through contacts with Coastal Counties Workforce Inc., **Goodwill Industries** (<https://goodwillnne.org/services/workforce/adult-services/job-connection-services/>) provides on-the-job trainings, subsidized employment opportunities, credential evaluation, and classroom training for newcomers. Goodwill works to match employers with new Mainers looking for work and helps new Mainers grow their skills and become familiar with workforce demands. Goodwill’s Job Connection program combines best practices from social work and workforce development to assist immigrants and other target populations with a holistic approach that includes assistance with life factors that impact successful employment.
- **Growing Portland** (growingportland.com) is a program of the City of Portland and the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce that is working with the Greater Portland Workforce Initiative to identify people who want to work and build careers but need assistance to do so.

41 “USDOL Awards Maine \$4.85 Million Grant to Expand Training for Jobs in Demand,” www.maine.gov/labor/news_events

- **The Maine Association for New Americans** brings together new Mainers with cross-cultural networking, education and career tracking, and referrals to community partners, with the goal of maximizing their well-being, success, and self-sufficiency.
- **Maine Career Connect** (<http://www.mainecareerconnect.org/>) is a consortium of professional and executive hiring employers committed to the recruitment and retention of professionals. They help newly relocated professionals and their families integrate into their communities by assisting with dual career support, community and cultural transition assistance, and other services.
- **Mano en Mano** (<http://www.manomaine.org>) works with diverse populations in Downeast Maine to provide educational and affordable housing opportunities, remove barriers to health and social services, and advocate for social justice. Mano en Mano offers programs in a number of general areas, including access to essential services, advocacy, migrant education, community bridges, affordable housing, and scholarships.
- **The Office of Multicultural Affairs** (<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oma/>) of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services was established to improve services to the state's racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority populations. The office provides support to state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community partners to develop sustainable projects and initiatives to address the needs of minority populations.
- The **Portland Jobs Alliance** (<http://portlandjobsalliance.org/>) is a CEI-led partnership of community education and employment practitioners utilizing a comprehensive approach to prepare skilled immigrants and refugees, single parents, and people with low to moderate incomes to successfully find and keep quality jobs while meeting the growing needs of Portland area businesses.
- **StudyMaine** (<http://www.studymaine.net/>), a program of the Maine International Trade Center, is a consortium of high schools, colleges, and universities, which showcases the state's academic and extracurricular opportunities and helps international students find a match for their interests and ambitions. Institutions share best practices and are provided with resources ranging from research on new markets to in-country contacts and missions abroad. The Center also acts as an informal clearinghouse for many foreigners seeking to relocate to the state.

APPENDIX C:

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES IN OTHER REGIONS

- Among its programs, the **Global Detroit Initiative** (<http://www.globaldetroit.com/>) supports microenterprise training, retention of international students in science, technology, engineering, and math fields, and a coordinated online network of immigration service providers. Partner initiatives provide training in business planning and re-credentialing for foreign-born professionals.
- **The Michigan Office for New Americans'** (<http://www.michigan.gov/ona/>) mission is to help grow the state's economy by attracting global talent and promoting the skills, energy, and entrepreneurial spirit of the state's immigrant communities. The Michigan International Talent Solutions Program focuses on connecting employers with foreign-born professionals, particularly in fields related to science, technology, engineering, and math.

- **Minnesota State University at Mankata** (<https://www.mnsu.edu/international/scholarship/instate.html>) offers all incoming international students a “cultural contribution scholarship” for the difference in the cost between in-state and out-of-state tuition. The amount was reduced to 90% of the tuition difference in January. The scholarship has helped the University double the number of international students in the past five years.
- New Brunswick, Canada’s **Population Growth Secretariat** (<http://www.welcomenb.ca/content/welbien/en.html>) was created in 2007 in response to a rapidly aging population, outmigration of young people, and declining birth rates. Focus areas include recruitment of potential international immigrants and the settlement of immigrants and promotion of diversity and multiculturalism. The initiative set specific targets for overall population growth and attraction of international and domestic immigrants. New Brunswick created a new skills accreditation process to expedite the process of recognizing foreign degrees and training. The province also identified specific nations to target as sources of skilled labor and of entrepreneurs. According to the Maine Center for Economic Policy, “New Brunswick ... has opened its arms to immigrants by working alongside industry to target foreign workers with specific skills, upgrade language programs and provide housing and employment opportunities.”⁴²
- The **New Hampshire Immigrant Integration Initiative** (<http://www.endowmentforhealth.org>) aims to foster the integration of immigrant and refugee community members into economic, social, political, cultural, educational, and other areas of community life. The initiative is working with long-time residents and immigrant leaders to create welcoming communities in Concord, Laconia, Manchester, and Nashua.
- The **Partnership for a New American Economy** (<http://www.renewoureconomy.org/>) was founded in 2010 and brings together more than 500 mayors and business leaders who support immigration reform as a way of creating jobs for Americans today. The Partnership provides a wide range of data and research on issues related to immigration and the integration of new Americans into the U.S. economy.
- The **St. Louis Mosaic Project’s** (<http://www.stlmosaicproject.org/>) goal is for the region to be the fastest growing U.S. metropolitan area for immigration by 2020. The project’s focus areas include engaging business leaders to hire international talent; engaging local and federal government leaders to reduce barriers for foreign workers and their families; attracting and supporting international students for earlier and deeper integration into the community; connecting services to give immigrants access to information; and, reinforcing a community culture of inclusion and welcome.
- **Welcome Dayton** (<http://www.welcomedayton.org/>) is a community initiative with a 27-point plan that focuses in part on promoting the city as immigrant-friendly and helping immigrant and refugee families navigate regulations on buying homes and starting businesses. The Initiative inspired the Cincinnati Task Force on Immigration, Global Cleveland, Welcome Toledo, the Columbus New American Initiative, and Welcome Springfield, and factored in Ohio passing a law to help attract and retain international students.
- **Welcoming Cities and Counties** (<http://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/member-municipalities>) is a national program of Welcoming America. The initiative works with 63 local and regional governments to help immigrants and long-time residents find common ground and shared prosperity.

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