

Refugees and Immigrants

Between 2000 and 2010, the ethnic and racial diversity of Bellevue increased by 62%. In 1990, the U.S. Census reported 86.5% of Bellevue residents indicated as a single race, White. In the 2010 U.S. Census, this percentage dropped to 59.2%, a higher level of diversity than in King County.¹ Many of these residents from diverse groups are immigrants and refugees.

What's Working?

- In early 2009, Bellevue Police Chief Linda Pillo formed the Diversity Focus Group, a number of concerned and involved community members who are committed to building a positive relationship between the Police Department and the diverse community. The members offer community perspectives, assist in building bridges and sharing ideas, promoting public awareness and educating the public with safety tips.
- Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition (ERIC), formed in 2002 to address gaps in service delivery for refugees and immigrants, launched a new effort in 2010 for non-profit agency leaders to explore how their organizations define cultural competency and how this shapes their client policies and practices. In addition, ERIC members developed a Partnership Pledge for organizations to mutually promote a system of cultural competency support and tools, and develop an advocacy and accountability process regarding discrimination of clients based on perceived race, ethnicity and immigration status.
- Bellevue's Neighborhood Outreach Program sponsors a bi-monthly group for women at Crossroads Community Center called Cultural Conversations. This networking and discussion group began in response to requests from women from

"Cultural Conversations has been a way for me to meet the wise and wonderful women of my community whom I would not have met in any other way. Our meetings break down barriers and let us learn from each other in a safe environment. Every meeting is an education and an invigorating boost."
Participant, Cultural Conversations

diverse cultural backgrounds who wanted to be more connected in their community. Some of the activities at Cultural Conversations this year included exploring probing questions about faiths and cultures in a safe environment and ethnic potlucks, sharing of foods and customs.

Prevalence Specific Race and Ethnicity Characteristics in Bellevue

The following analysis was provided by the City of Bellevue Department of Planning and Community Development using data from the 2010 Census and 2008-2010 ACS:

- Since 1990, the proportion of Non-White people in Bellevue has more than quadrupled from about 14.7% of the population in 1990 to 28.3% in 2000, and finally, 40.8% in 2010. Bellevue's Asians and Hispanics are the fastest growing racial and ethnic groups in the city. The population for both these groups more than doubled between 1990 and 2010.
- Bellevue's Asian population is a substantial portion of the overall City population (27.5%), the highest percentage of any city in the State. While Chinese residents

"There is more diversity and more languages spoken now. We are noticing more people speaking Chinese, more older adults whose families brought them here. Language is a barrier for them."
Community Conversation, King County Library System, Downtown Bellevue Library Branch

make up the largest portion of Bellevue’s Asian population (35%), Asian Indians have had the fastest rate of growth since 1990, increasing in population by over 1,400%.

- In 2010, Hispanics or Latinos comprised 7% of Bellevue’s population, up from 5.3% in 2000. Crossroads and West Lake Hills had the highest proportion of Hispanics with almost 15% each. The largest group of Hispanic/Latino residents is from Mexico (67%).
- The Black or African American community in Bellevue grew at a rate faster than that of the City as a whole. While the Bellevue population grew more than 11% since 2000, the Black or African American community increased 28.6%. According to the 2010 Census, Black or African Americans still make up only 2.2% of the Bellevue population.
- According to the 2008-2010 ACS, nearly 37% of Bellevue residents spoke a language other than English at home. This is a higher percentage than King County (25%), Seattle (21%), and Washington State (18%). About half (49%) of Bellevue’s non-English speakers speak an Asian language; the next highest percentages speak either an Indo-European language (31%) or Spanish (15%).
- During 2008-2010, Bellevue had the second highest estimated number and 16th highest percentage (33%) of foreign born residents out of Washington State’s 281 incorporated cities. Tukwila and SeaTac were the only cities in King County with higher percentages.
- In 2008-2010, about 16% of Bellevue’s households had no one over the age of 14 who spoke English “very well”. This is an increase from about 6% in 2000. These households are considered linguistically isolated. Crossroads and West Lake Hills have the highest percentages of linguistically isolated households.

Definition of Refugee

- Refugees are people who, based on a well-founded fear of being persecuted for

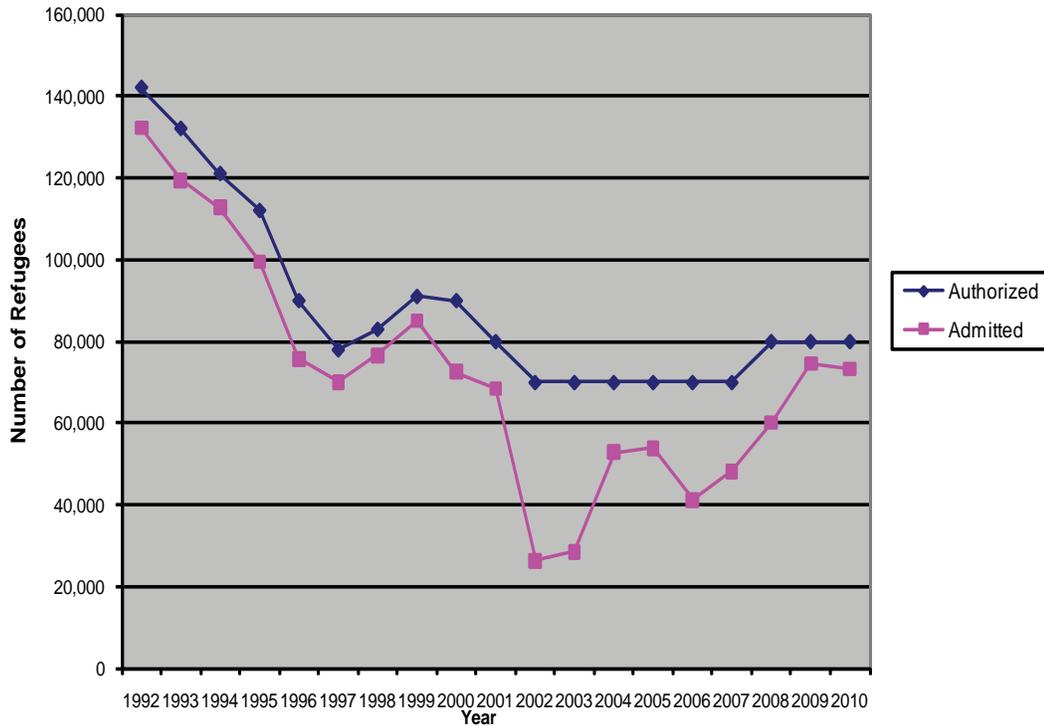
reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group, leave their native country and apply to another country for residency. A refugee is granted legal status and protection before entry into the U.S. In some cases when the President can allow some countries to process refugees in their country of origin. In 2010, nationals of Cuba, the republics of the former Soviet Union and Iraq were processed in this manner.²

World and National Refugee Trends

- According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), at the end of 2010 there were some 43.7 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, the highest number in 15 years. This total includes 15.4 million refugees, 837,500 asylum seekers, and 27.5 million people uprooted within their own countries. Afghan and Iraqi refugees accounted for almost half of the refugees under UNHCR’s responsibility worldwide.³
- At the beginning of each fiscal year, the President works with Congress to establish the number of refugees who may be admitted in the coming year, with a quota from each of the regions of the world. The graph below indicates the shortfall between how many refugees were authorized for admission compared to how many were actually admitted. As depicted in the graph above, numbers of refugees being

Year	Ceiling	Number of Refugees Admitted
2002	70,000	27,029
2003	70,000	28,422
2004	70,000	52,868
2005	70,000	53,813
2006	70,000	41,150
2007	70,000	48,218
2008	80,000	60,108
2009	80,000	74,602
2010	80,000	73,293

Refugee Admission Shortfalls FY 1992-2010



legally admitted in the U.S. have generally declined over the past fifteen years, reaching an all time low of 27,029 in FY

2002, subsequent to the 9-11-01 attack. Between 2002 and 2007 refugee admissions ceilings were set at 70,000/year,

yet much lower numbers were actually admitted. In federal fiscal year 2008, the refugee admissions ceiling was increased to 80,000, due to the expected resettlement of Iraqi, Bhutanese, and Iranian refugees in the Near East/South Asia region. The ceiling for 2009 and 2010 remained at 80,000 as well.⁴ The ceiling for the

Refugee Arrivals by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2008 to 2010

(Ranked by 2010 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2010		2009		2008	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0	60,107	100.0
Iraq	18,016	24.6	18,838	25.3	13,822	23.0
Burma	16,693	22.8	18,202	24.4	18,139	30.2
Bhutan	12,363	16.9	13,452	18.0	5,320	8.9
Somalia	4,884	6.7	4,189	5.6	2,523	4.2
Cuba	4,818	6.6	4,800	6.4	4,177	6.9
Iran	3,543	4.8	5,381	7.2	5,270	8.8
Congo, Democratic Republic	3,174	4.3	1,135	1.5	727	1.2
Eritrea	2,570	3.5	1,571	2.1	251	0.4
Vietnam	873	1.2	1,486	2.0	1,112	1.9
Ethiopia	668	0.9	321	0.4	299	0.5
All other countries, including unknown	5,691	7.8	5,227	7.0	8,467	14.1

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).

current federal fiscal year 2011 (10/1/10-9/30/11) is 80,000.⁵

- The annual average number of refugee arrivals declined from approximately 100,000 during the 1990s to 50,000 during the 2000 to 2006 period. This decline is partly due to changes in security procedures after 9/11 and admission requirements resulting from the USA Patriot Act of 2001 and the Real ID Act of 2005. Following this decline, the total number of refugees admitted to the United States increased by 25 % from 48,218 in 2007 to 60,104 in 2008, and 74,602 in 2009. In 2010, there was a decrease of 1.8 % from 2009, to 73,293. In 2010, the leading countries of nationality for refugee admissions were Iraq (25 %), Burma (23 %), and Bhutan (17 %). Approximately 64 % of refugees were from these 3 countries. Other leading countries include Somalia (6.7 %), Cuba (6.6 %), Iran (4.8 %), Democratic Republic of Congo (4.3 %), and Eritrea (3.5 %).⁶

Definition of Immigrant, Asylee and Refugee

- Immigrants are people who have petitioned to enter the United States to become lawful permanent residents from countries that have not been designated by the U.S. as having refugee eligibility. Immigrants have chosen for a variety of reasons to leave their homes to go to another country. By comparison, refugees are those who feel forced to leave their homes due to persecution. Asylees are foreign nationals currently residing in the U.S. who have the same fear of persecution and death as refugees if they return to their country of origin. Different application processes and rules apply to those who are seeking asylum in the U.S.⁷
- The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigrant Services (BCIS), formerly the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, under the Department of Homeland Security, implements immigration policy passed by Congress, including establishing quotas by

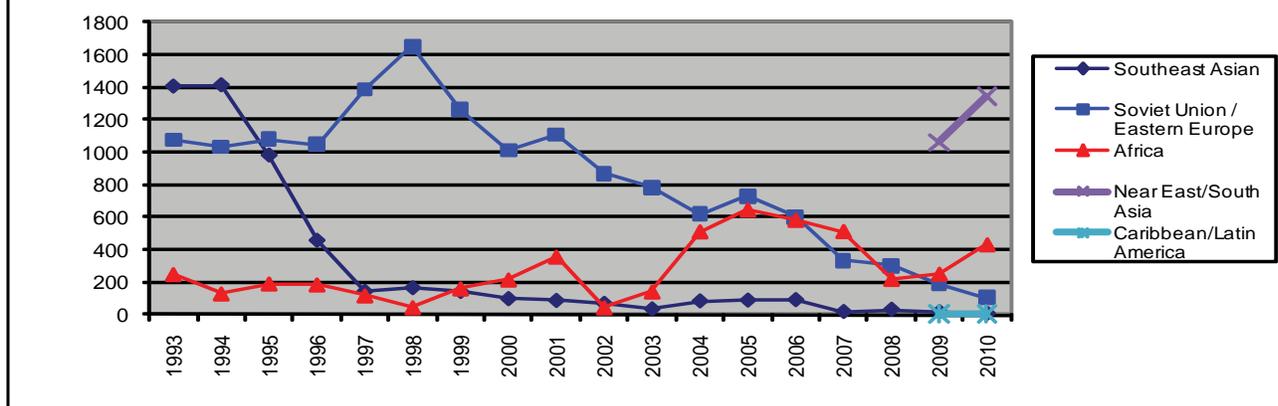
country for the number of new immigrants allowed to settle in the U.S. annually as well as rules regarding their treatment and benefits. Unlike refugees, immigrants are not entitled to medical and cash benefits for up to eight months after their arrival in the United States.⁸ In 2010, the U.S. admitted 1,042,625 immigrants obtaining legal permanent resident status, a 6 % decrease compared to 2008.⁹

- The Personal Responsibility Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) passed by Congress in 1996 reformed the federal welfare system. It also drastically reduced or eliminated entitlements such as Social Security and food stamps for all immigrants who entered the country after August 22, 1996. The ongoing cuts of benefits on both the state and federal level has continued to deeply impact human services agencies as they struggle to find other sources of funding to serve immigrants.

Washington State and King County Trends

- Exact figures on the total population of both immigrants and refugees are generally unavailable, since most sources do not account for the high levels of internal migration. The 2008-2010 ACS estimates that 13 % of Washington State residents are foreign-born, with 1,109,549 Washington residents speaking a language other than English at home.¹⁰ Both refugee and immigrant numbers are probably higher as language barriers, cultural considerations, and other factors make both groups more difficult to quantify than U.S.-born citizens. In 2010, Washington ranked eighth in the U. S., resettling 3,004 refugee arrivals, representing about 4.1 % of total new refugee arrivals to the U.S. in 2010. Between 2009 and 2010, Washington increased refugee arrivals by 16 %.¹¹
- Between 2008-2010, Voluntary Agencies (VOLAGS)¹² in Washington State assisted an average of 2,000-3,000 new refugees

King County Immigration Trends: Refugee Health Screening Reports 1993-2010



Source: Public Health - Seattle & King County

with their physical, social, cultural and economic needs. Washington's largest arrivals have shifted to more diverse groups from Southeast Asian, such as Burmese and Bhutanese. Refugees from the former Soviet Union and Somali are still a large portion of the total. Larger numbers of Eritreans and Iraqis are also arriving. This growing demand for services puts a strain on existing community resources to meet basic needs including housing, employment, and health care.¹³

- For those refugees arriving directly in King County, Public Health-Seattle & King County provides figures based on initial health screenings required of all refugees. As the chart above shows, data from 1995 through 2008 indicate a declining trend of arrivals, particularly during 2002 and 2003, when totals were barely over 1,000, less than half compared to the mid 1990s. In 2003, the largest group of refugees continued to be from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, with 795 arrivals. The next largest group came from Africa, primarily from Somalia. The last were arrivals from the Near East/South Asia, which includes Burma, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq. In 2004, the total number of refugees screened increased to 1,264. The most dramatic individual increase in 2004 as shown on the chart above is the number of refugees from African countries, with 510 arrivals, just slightly less than the

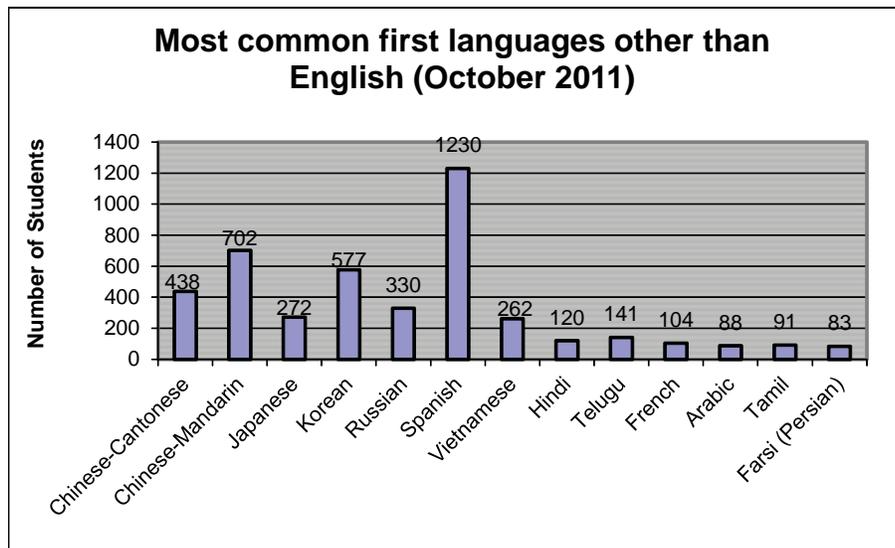
traditional leaders, those from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe who had 619. Between 2003 and 2004, the number of refugees from Africa resettling in King County increased by 210%. In 2005, there were 1,538 people screened, with the largest number from the former Soviet Union, and in 2006, 1,383. In 2007 and 2008, there was a slight decrease overall, with 1,159 and 1,194, respectively. In 2007, the largest groups were from the former Soviet Union, Somalia, and Burma. In 2008, 196 Bhutanese refugees were resettled here coming from camps in Nepal. The other large groups were from the former Soviet Union, and Burma. In 2009, 1,526 refugees were screened, in 2010, 1,894, the largest increase since 1998, in King County. The largest group was from Iraq (452) followed by people from Burma.¹⁴

Refugee and Immigrant Groups in Bellevue

- In Bellevue, anecdotal information from providers' surveys and key informant interviews indicate that the largest groups of refugees encountered for human services are still from the former Soviet Union. The largest group of immigrants in Bellevue using services tends to be Hispanic/Latino, primarily from Mexico, followed by Chinese, Koreans and people from East Indian countries.

- Though some providers are beginning to see a small increase in East and West African refugees living in Bellevue, these communities tend to exist in larger numbers in South King County and Seattle. Jewish Family Service (JFS) reports that new refugees arriving to King County in the next year will be primarily from Burma, Iraq, Bhutan, Iran and Somalia. The largest groups resettling in East King County will likely be Iranians and Iraqis. The overall number of refugee arrivals is forecast to increase in 2012 with slightly more than 2,000 refugees resettling in Western Washington. JFS plans to resettle up to 220 refugees in the next year, with most residing initially in South King County.¹⁵

her level of English proficiency-as determined by ELL screening assessments.¹⁷



Source: Bellevue School District

Service Trends

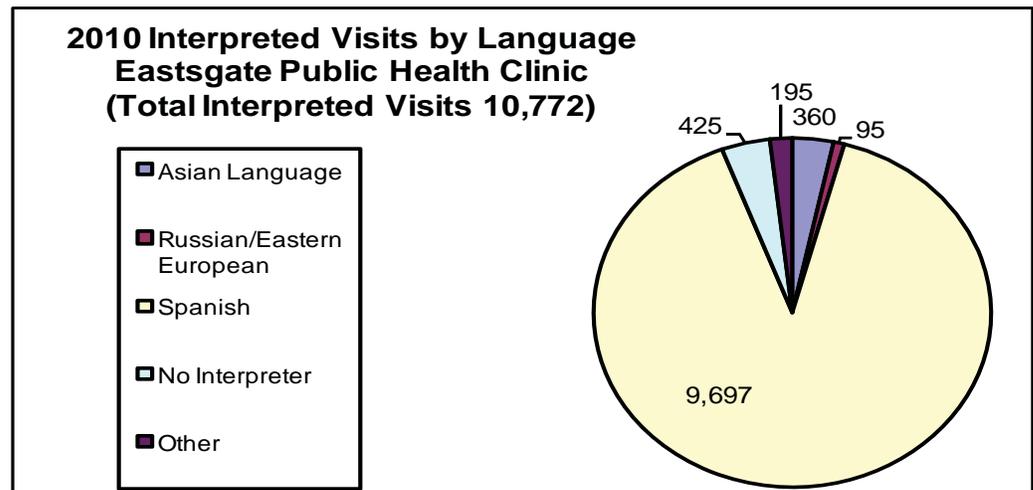
Need for English Language Learners (ELL) Classes for Children and Adults

- As of October 2011, 82 languages and dialects were spoken by Bellevue School District (BSD) students. The top languages are Spanish, Chinese-Mandarin, Korean, Chinese-Cantonese, Russian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Telugu, Hindi, French, Tamil, Arabic, and Farsi (Persian).¹⁶
- Many children of refugees and immigrants are not enrolled in the schools' English Language Learners programs because they are bilingual, so the number of children from families whose first language is not English is probably much higher than the ELL enrollment numbers indicate. Thirty-one percent of BSD students speak a language other than English (either the "home" language or "first language)." A student might be considered "bilingual" but still might be in ELL, depending on his/
- Hopelink's Eastside Literacy Program provides beginning ESL classes at three different levels for those who have little or no English skills, or are not literate in their own language. Staff report that they have about ten inquiries per week for beginning level classes; about three of those are eligible. They are seeing more requests from the East Indian community as well as continued high levels of people who speak Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese, with more people coming to increase literacy skills as they are laid off from their jobs.¹⁸ Hopelink's Family Development Program provides case management and advocacy support to immigrant and refugee populations. Language has been a significant barrier to finding employment, so staff refers their clients to ESL and employment support.¹⁹
- Jewish Family Service (JFS) also provides vocational ESL classes. JFS reports a significant increase in the number of clients seeking employment referral services.²⁰ Social service needs also have increased; frequently referrals are requested for energy assistance, temporary shelters, and transitional housing.
- Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) reports that language barriers are the biggest is-

sue for newcomers trying to get a job in a down economy. ReWA provides ESL programs and employment support with career training.²¹

- Jubilee REACH, a family center in the Lake Hills neighborhood, offers free ESL classes and Talk Time with child care provided, alleviating one barrier frequently mentioned by parents. They also offer a number of programs that are welcoming to people new to this culture, such as International Luncheons, and the Golden Age Social Club for Chinese elders.²²

were in Spanish (86%), compared to 95% in 2006. The declining trend in the county for interpreted visits also affected Eastgate Public Health. In 2009, the visits dropped 8% to 11,913, and in 2010, the number fell another 10%, to 10,772. As the chart below indicates, the largest percentage of interpreted visits is in Spanish.²⁴



Source: Public Health - Seattle & King County

Other Language-Related Needs

- Beginning in 1998, Public Health-Seattle and King County noted a dramatic increase in the need for interpreters for its clinics. Although this may be partly attributed to newly arrived refugees and immigrants, Public Health cites internal (within the U.S.) migration as the primary source of this increase. In 1998, county-wide, over 38,000 encounters with clients (not including the Women, Infants & Children - WIC Program) required interpreter services. By 2006, this number grew to over 71,000. In 2008, there were almost 77,000 interpreted visits. In 2009 and 2010, however, the number of interpreted visits declined (75,543 and 64,353, respectively) due to a number of factors, but largely due to budget cuts to Public Health programs, including immunization and Maternity Support Services.²³
- At the Eastgate Public Health Clinic, where many Bellevue residents go for services, 12,947 interpreted visits were provided in 2008, similar to 2006. Of these 11,138

Need for Information about Resources

- The City of Bellevue has been working on many ways to make access to information by English Language Learner residents easier. In 2003, a Spanish webpage was added to the City's website with information for resources such as police, fire, and health and human services. In 2007, the City added Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russian web pages to their website; recently, a Korean option was added. The City has a Language Line available that will provide interpreters who speak over 150 languages and dialects within minutes to assist employees in speaking with customers that do not speak English. The Bellevue Fire

"Many of the immigrant population need to know how to navigate the systems here. We need to help empower them to figure out how to use these systems so they will know the next time they need them."

City of Bellevue Neighborhood Outreach Program staff.

Department created and released multiple outreach videos and public service announcements (PSA) in Spanish, Russian, and English. The PSAs are not just for television; for example, videos in Spanish giving information about the City, are also used at public events. In the case of an emergency, general information about what to do during and immediately after is available in English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese and Russian. Bellevue is also working with the King County Joint Information Center to translate emergency communications into several languages in addition to English. Other City departments, such as Police, Utilities and Transportation are translating their materials into multiple languages, including Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Hindi, and Korean on topics such as recycling safety, and driving techniques when there is ice and snow. A number of Bellevue Police officers are multilingual.²⁵

- The City of Bellevue's Cultural Diversity Plan, an update to the one completed in 1993, will lay the foundation for the role of the city's cultural diversity program. It will also outline the city's role in leveraging and nurturing diversity in the community, and increasing civic engagement, effective service, and greater participation from diverse residents in programs and events.²⁶
- The Eastside Cultural Navigator Program uses bilingual/bicultural staff stationed at several key sites around East King County, including Crossroads Mini-City Hall and the Together Center, formerly known as the Family Resource Center in Redmond, to be liaisons and advocates, helping refugee and immigrant populations to better navigate complex systems, such as health-care and publicly funded social services, to better utilize existing resources. Chinese Information and Service Center is the lead agency for this program which began in December 2006, with staff available who speak Spanish, Mandarin and Cantonese, Russian and several East Indian dialects. They serve many low-income residents of

the city who have difficulty accessing other services because of language and cultural barriers. Some of the ways Navigators assist include helping a new resident register their child for school, signing up for energy assistance, or finding housing resources.²⁷

- The Crisis Clinic Community Information Line 2-1-1 reports a significant increase in foreign language calls. In East King County in 2007, 182 calls were received from people needing assistance in a language other than English; 89 were handled by a 211 Language Specialist, and 93 were helped by the Tele-Interpreter Service. In 2010, the number more than doubled, to 405 calls; 271 were handled by a Language Specialist, and 134 were helped by the Tele-Interpreter Service.²⁸

Employment

- As the economy continued to be weak and job growth slow, refugee and immigrant communities were one of the hardest hit, according to feedback obtained from a number of Community Conversations and key informant interviews. People who do not speak English as their first language are competing with the native born unemployed workforce for fewer jobs at lower pay.
- The goal of the Washington State Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA), which began in 1975 to help refugees successfully resettle here, is to promote economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. It provides funds to non-profit agencies and community colleges for English Language Learner instruction, employment services and job placement.²⁹ During the 2010 and 2011 State Legislative Sessions, due to budget cuts, levels of assistance have been decreasing. Also affected in the state budget was the Food Assistance Program, which was cut in half, and reductions in funding for medical interpreters for refugees and immigrants. In 2012, some of these programs may be totally eliminated due to State budget cuts.³⁰
- The Preparing for Work program at Bel-

Bellevue College (BC) served almost 145 Bellevue residents in 2010. Staff helps English Language Learners (ELL) develop their language and networking skills to assist them in their job search. Students write resumes, practice interviewing and get small group coaching with business professionals. Staff comments that in this economic climate, finding jobs for ELL students is especially challenging.³¹

- Cultural Navigators report that more of their clients are recently out of work and are asking for help for the first time. The biggest need initially is for jobs and job training to become employable in a new field. A number of these job-seekers are highly skilled, and here with specific work visas (H1-B) that will expire if they do not find other work within a certain period of time.³²

Culturally Specific Nutrition

- Refugee Women's Alliance provides outreach to English Language Learners who may be eligible for the Basic Food Plan, formerly known as food stamps. Staff provides information in Russian/Ukrainian, Somali and Spanish to people who did not know they could receive this State benefit. In 2010, 66 households were assisted in completing the application.³³ Emergency Feeding Program offers several culturally-sensitive food bags designed specifically for Latino, Asian and East African families. Staff reports an increase in the number of requests for these food bags.³⁴
- As of August 2011, 34% of the clients served at the food bank at the Hopelink Bellevue Center have limited English proficiency, up from 29% in 2010. While the percentage of those with limited English proficiency are increasing from 2010 to 2011, they are decreasing over the last four year period as fluent English speakers seek assistance in relatively greater numbers than in past years. The number of clients that speak Spanish as a first language has dropped slightly. In 2011, 46% of limited English proficiency clients spoke Span-

ish as a first language, down four percent from 2010. In contrast, 30% of limited English proficiency clients spoke Russian, up two percent from 2010. The number of clients speaking Southeast Asian languages (Burmese, Cambodian, Indonesian, Lao, Thai, and Vietnamese) remained constant at 4%, and the number of limited English proficiency speakers of African languages (Amharic, Mandinka, Somali, and Tigrigna) remained at less than one percent.³⁵

Culturally Specific Child Care and Family Friend and Neighbor Care

- In 2000, Child Care Resources (CCR) reported that there were 118 bilingual providers on the Eastside out of the 338 listed in their database. Due to increased support and training efforts, as of July 2011, the number has grown to 252 providers offering bilingual care, out of a total of 522. Among child care providers listing one language in addition to or other than English, the largest groups were: Farsi/Persian, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Other, which includes Vietnamese, Somali, Japanese, Chinese and French. CCR also has a Child Care Careers Program which helps refugee and immigrant women develop skills to work in the field of early childhood development. Even with this increase, there still seems to be a gap for such services for parents who want their children to be cared for by people from their own cultures.³⁶
- Many families from diverse cultures prefer to have their children cared for by Families, Friends or Neighbors. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups, a program of Child Care Resources, are organized play groups for young children and the people who take care of them – grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, other family members, friends and parents. At Kaleidoscope Play & Learn, young children and their caregivers participate in fun, educational play activities and get to know other people in their neighborhood. In East King County, there are ten Play and Learn

groups, with several conducted in Chinese and Spanish.³⁷

- An Early Childhood longitudinal study revealed that disparities based on factors such as race and income do have a measureable effect on child outcomes as early as nine months of age. Infants and toddlers from racial/ethnic minority groups, whose home language was not English, and/or who had mothers with low maternal education scored lower on cognitive and positive behavior ratings. One of the implications suggested from this study was to start early supporting and encouraging families, and to increase the quality of early care in both home based and center based settings.³⁸

"Some Latino clients have not been using resources such as food banks and emergency services, such as utilities assistance, due to the fear of being reported and deported."
Community Conversation, Cultural Navigators

Issues for School-Aged Children and Youth from Diverse Communities

- In Community Conversations and interviews with leaders in diverse communities in Bellevue, it was frequently mentioned that young adults and teens from these communities are faced with identity problems, caught between two or more cultures. They may live in traditional homes, but do not always identify with their parents and cultural traditions. *(Note: For more information, see the School-Aged Children and Youth section in this report.)*

Legal Issues

- The need for free or low-cost legal assistance for immigration and family law issues provided in languages other than English continues to grow. Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) reports an increased demand for services in languages other than English. ELAP has two specialized clinics for this population—the immigration clinic that deals with immigration law issues and the multilingual clinic that provides assistance on any civil legal issue

with bilingual interpreters in Spanish and Russian. Staff is working with the Cultural Navigator program to extend their outreach to diverse communities.³⁹

- Community Conversation participants, including Healthy Start, Bellevue School District, and Cultural Navigator program staff, reported the concerns of their clients about potential anti-immigration sentiments and discrimination due to the economic downturn and high unemployment rates. Staff also reports an increase in deportations for clients who are undocumented, primarily the male wage earner in the family. This often precipitates a major crisis for the mother and children, who may become homeless.⁴⁰

Human Trafficking

- Human Trafficking, which includes labor and sex trafficking, is a modern day form of slavery. Approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims annually are trafficked across international borders and include women, men and children. Some victims are native born U.S. citizens, as well. Victims are coerced to prostitute or to work without pay and often subjected to physical and psychological dangers, such as severe beatings, rape, drug addiction and other forms of violence.
- In Washington State, which is one of the top human trafficking destinations in the U.S. due to the easily accessed public ports and proximity to Asia, the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN) provides a 24-hour urgent response hotline, and access to safe housing and immigration advocacy and legal assistance.⁴¹
- Bellevue Police Department staff report that sex and labor trafficking does occur to some extent on the Eastside and in Bellevue. Such arrests have been made in both private residences and in hotels in Bellevue.⁴²

Health and Mental Health Services

- Disparities exist and continue to broaden the divide between many minorities and Whites in King County. According to *Communities Count 2011, Social and Health Indicators across King County*, in East King County there was a significant increase in the average stress score in 2011, as measured by asking people four questions on a survey about how often they have experienced certain symptoms of stress. In 2007, the stress score was 7.3 on a scale of 5 (low) to 20 (high), while in 2011, it was 8.2. The survey countywide showed that some of the groups who experienced higher stress levels overall include: people of color, people whose primary language is not English, people with incomes less than \$50,000, people with less than a college degree, and people age 18-24.⁴³
- During the 2011 State Legislative session, there were changes in Medicaid, the health insurance plan funded with federal and state dollars for low-income people, severe cuts to the State's Basic Health Plan, and decreased funding for Public Health. One group of residents who are especially affected by these cuts to health care is adult immigrants, including those who are in this country legally and those that are undocumented.⁴⁴ According to providers surveys and Community Conversations, this gap puts tremendous pressure on health care providers, including mental health agencies, dentists, medical clinics and hospital emergency rooms to provide uncompensated care.
- HealthPoint reports an increasing number of clients who need uncompensated care, many of whom are English Language Learners. Their Redmond and SeaTac clinics have seen a significant increase in patients who speak languages other than English particularly African, Middle East, and Asian languages. At the Red-

"Many families need medical attention. They don't have insurance and don't go to the doctor for lack of money. They sometimes use their own remedies which may make things worse."

Community Conversation, Latino HEAT and Mamas Unido

mond clinic, the top languages other than English are Spanish and Farsi.⁴⁵ Sea Mar Community Health Clinics experienced an increase in uninsured clients, especially in the dental clinic, located in South Seattle.⁴⁶ (For more information, see Goal #3).

- Mental health services are becoming less accessible to many consumers, but especially those in minority communities at a time when more people are reporting more stress and anxiety. Consejo reports that they are turning away clients due to Medicaid funding cuts and other funding shortfalls.⁴⁷ Therapeutic Health Services' Eastside Recovery Center offers substance abuse counseling in Russian provided by a counselor from that culture.⁴⁸ Staff from Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) reported that more of their clients are experiencing stress due to the economic downturn, including job loss, substance abuse, homelessness, and domestic violence. ACRS is receiving an increased number of referrals for counseling from Bellevue.⁴⁹
- Many group participants from Community Conversations discussed the difficulty of getting health insurance, and navigating through the health care system to determine if they were eligible. Key informants interviewed who are members of diverse communities in Bellevue, such as Chinese and East Indian, mentioned health care as the number one human services need.

Parent Support

- According to conversations with staff from agencies that work with children, youth and their families, such as CISC, and the City of Bellevue Wraparound Services Program at Stevenson and Lake Hills Elementary Schools, many limited-English speaking parents and guardians describe encountering barriers when communicating with teachers and staff. Bilingual staff members are not always available and translated materials are not always suffi-

cient for the needs.

- Local agencies and organizations are addressing the need for families who want additional assistance and support when parenting in this culture. CISC provides parenting classes for Chinese parents and Play and Learn Groups. Kinderling Center provides support groups and parenting classes for parents who speak Spanish. Asia Pacific Language School Learning Center provides parenting education for its large percentage of Asian families. In addition, through a collaboration with a number of local providers, the Healthy Start program offers home visiting, parent education and support to young, first-time parents with children prenatal through age three; because over half of the young parents in this program are Latino, a number of staff speaks Spanish.⁵⁰

Community Perceptions

- In the 2011 phone/online survey, Bellevue's immigrant population is significantly more likely than non-immigrants to say that they personally or someone in their household has experienced problems- 78% compared to 52%, respectively. As the chart on page 135 shows, 48% of immigrants have 3 or more household problems, compared to 30% of non-immigrants. While Bellevue's immigrants are more likely than non-immigrants to say they are experiencing problems, those having problems are significantly less likely to ask for help, 24% vs 43%. Over one-third of immigrants respond that *having a lot of stress, anxiety and depression that interferes with daily activities* is a major or moderate household problem, and 30% state that *not having enough money to pay for housing* is a major or moderate household problem.
- In the phone survey, a question was added in 2001 asking if the respondent had experienced racial or ethnic discrimination. The percentage who rated this as a major or moderate problem fluctuated from 4% in 2001, to almost 7% in 2003, back to

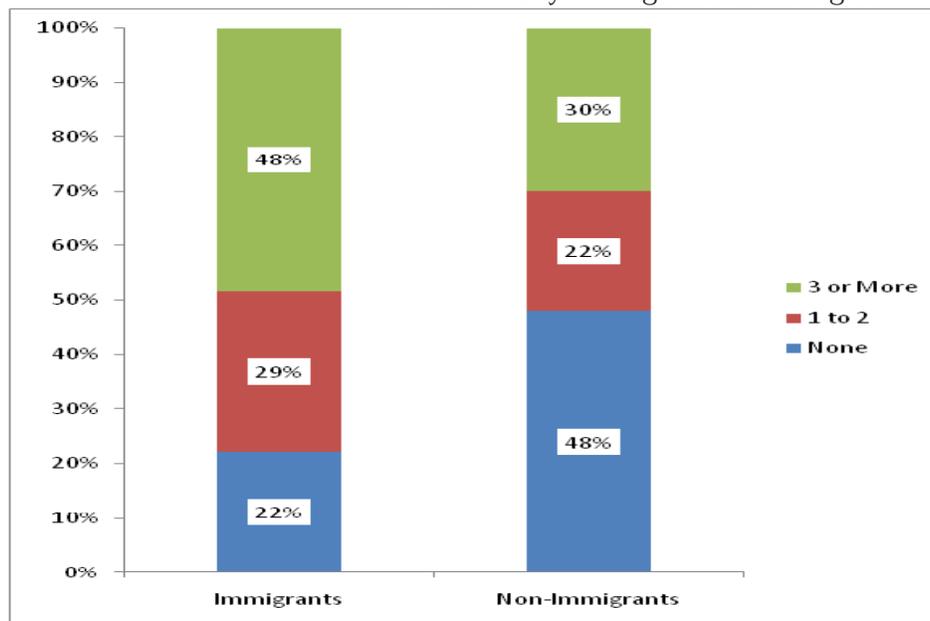
almost 5% in 2005 and 2007 then 6.58% in 2009. In the 2011 phone/online survey, 5% rated it as such.

- Among respondents to the 2011 Consumer Survey, 39% cited *not being able to speak, read or write in the English language* as a major or moderate problem compared to 2009 when over half rated it as such. Almost 70% of the respondents to this survey responded that they spoke a language other than English at home. Another high need, lack of money to pay for dental care, was expressed as a major or moderate problem by almost 60% of consumer respondents.
- Community Conversations with various multi-cultural community groups in 2011 revealed that there is a continued, high need for human service organizations, schools, and municipalities to provide interpretation for those who do not speak English. Another common theme was unemployment. There continues to be intense competition for many of the low-wage jobs that immigrants once were able to get easily; now, non-immigrants with higher education and training are getting these jobs.
- In Key Informant Interviews with members of the East Indian, Latino, and Iranian communities, the theme of the gap in information about community resources and community events in languages other than English was expressed.
- Another need expressed frequently in discussions with key informants and providers within the immigrant and refugee was services for survivors of domestic violence. Gaps included multilingual advocates, legal services and shelters that are culturally sensitive.
- Some immigrants and refugees report in Community Conversations that they believe they have experienced housing or job discrimination, such as receiving notice to leave without cause, or not getting wage increases. Due to fear of deportation, some immigrants will not report these incidents.

Implications for Action

- The need for more culturally and linguistically competent human services staff grows each year. Throughout the community, there is a need for information to be available in languages other than English, such as that provided through the Cultural Navigator program. Due to the economic downturn, increased needs for employment, health insurance, basic needs and legal assistance are emerging among immigrants and refugees who have not previously needed to ask for help before. Efforts by groups such as the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition to increase the cultural competency of staff working with these communities are critical in addressing this need.
- Requests for English-as-a-Second-Language classes at all levels for adults are increasing significantly, a result of larger numbers of refugees and immigrants living in Bellevue as well as a greater demand for better language skills to secure jobs in this era of high unemployment. More opportunities for people to learn English, especially those that offer childcare, are needed.
- Non-English speaking parents need assistance helping their children in school. This can include having more bilingual staff, materials for parents translated in their native languages, and events to educate parents about the school system and culture in the U.S.
- Increased opportunities are needed for people to have cultural events and activities to increase awareness in the community about the richness of these cultures

and engage new Americans in meaningful dialogue. There are more ways yet untapped to utilize the strengths and assets that the many immigrant and refugee



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groups have brought here with them, to enrich and strengthen the whole community.

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