

# Welcoming Cities: Framing the Conversation

Written by Welcoming America

Supported by The German Marshall Fund of the United States

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STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

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## Executive Summary

Today, a growing movement of cities and municipalities in the United States and Europe are recognizing the economic and social benefits of becoming welcoming communities and fostering a welcoming culture. Particularly in the U.S., these cities are contributing to an increasing recognition that, across the globe, immigration is a force that can be leveraged for positive change and development, rather than only a problem that must be solved. Increasingly, cities are developing welcoming agendas that look to attract and retain a global workforce and maximize the local economic development and growth opportunities that newcomers bring. In doing so, they seek to position themselves favorably in the new global economy, and see a welcoming climate as a critical asset. However, if cities are to succeed in their welcoming efforts, they must focus on more than just attracting newcomers, but on engaging them and the receiving community together and offering ways to reconcile concerns on both sides. Although precisely defining a welcoming culture and community will be the subject of future work, this paper suggests that a welcoming community, in its broadest sense, is one that is not merely tolerant of newcomers and cultural diverse communities, but actively seeks to engage residents and leverage their contributions and assets for the benefit of all in the community. Welcoming efforts and strategies can be developed on several levels: 1) on the individual level, fostering greater mutual understanding and respect among individual residents by creating opportunities for direct contact between immigrant and long-term residents; 2) on the institutional level, engaging a wide range of organizations and their leaders, from the business community, faith community, community-based organizations, and media outlets; and 3) on the local government level, advancing welcoming policies and practices for the benefit of the whole community. This paper will discuss the imperative for welcoming communities, and outline some of the research and experiences that are leading cities to pursue a more strategic and comprehensive approach. It will also address the next steps that are needed to create a strategic roadmap that will help policymakers to better define and create welcoming communities.

## Introduction

The world is on the move. Immigration and settlement are growing in scale and importance, influencing the public sphere in new ways. Migration is also achieving recognition as a critical component of global development agendas, and, increasingly, as a force that can contribute positively to development.<sup>i</sup> While undoubtedly a macro issue, the impact of immigration, as well as the challenges and opportunities it brings, is experienced most profoundly at the local level. The cities and towns where immigrants settle are the places most deeply affected by changes that are natural to any community in transition – but that are particularly evident in those communities where language, culture, and context may become increasingly unfamiliar for immigrants and natives alike.

Policy makers are seeing immigration as a force that can be leveraged for positive change and development, rather than as a problem that must be solved.

Cities and local communities are also the places best situated to reap the rewards of the multi-faceted contributions made by immigrants. A growing body of research pointing to the economic contributions of immigrants is increasingly making the case that cities that attract immigrants and new, global talent can create positive opportunities for growth and competitiveness. This opportunity is especially compelling for cities with declining or aging populations. And, though during times of economic distress and high unemployment it may be tempting for policy makers to put aside the issue of immigration, it is in fact during these times that the issue takes on even greater importance – both because a more welcoming approach can offer new solutions to revive stagnant economies, and because the flashpoints that are provoked by anti-immigrant sentiment are exacerbated, and arguably best addressed, during times of decline.

Today, a growing movement of cities and municipalities in the United States and Europe are embracing a new vision of immigrants, and turning their focus to fostering welcoming communities. Increasingly, policy makers are seeing immigration as a force that can be leveraged for positive change and development, rather than as a problem that must be solved.<sup>ii</sup> Wanting to capitalize on this potential, they are developing new agendas that seek to attract and retain newcomers. In many cases these efforts offer a counterpoint to the draconian local measures being implemented in places such as Alabama and Arizona. While most current immigration-related measures directly take on the issue of immigrant legal status, the creation of welcoming agendas can offer a broader frame that can empower all cities and communities to recognize that they are strongest when everyone who lives in them feels welcome.

While a promising new paradigm, and one that makes sense in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, this new approach to fostering more welcoming, immigrant-friendly communities should be entered into with intention. This paper will discuss how immigrants contribute to the economic and social vibrancy of cities. In order for cities and communities to fully reap these benefits, however, they

must explore the many dimensions that comprise a truly welcoming community and also address, unfounded or not, the fears and concerns of long-time residents. If cities are to succeed in leveraging their greatest asset – their diverse population – they must focus on more than just attracting newcomers, but on engaging them and the receiving community together.

For this reason, integration, interculturalism, social cohesion, civic participation, and good governance are vital elements of achieving a more welcoming city, while also being important outcomes in their own right. In light of rapid demographic change, we cannot ignore the need to create structures that foster understanding and cooperation between newcomers and long-time residents.

Ultimately, integration and welcoming cannot remain issues that are considered by a few, but that impact us all. As a global issue, there is an opportunity for transatlantic learning. At the local level, there is a need to bring to the table mainstream partners, municipal governments, the business community, faith and education sectors, and community residents, all of whom will play an integral role in defining what welcoming means and how it can be realized in their own communities.

This paper will discuss the imperative for welcoming communities and outline some of the research and experiences that are leading cities to embrace the banner of ‘welcoming.’ It will also briefly discuss some promising approaches already being developed and implemented. Finally, it will discuss what next steps are needed to create a strategic roadmap that will help policymakers to better define what it means to be a successful welcoming community. While the imperative may be greater than ever before, this conversation builds on the work of numerous researchers, policymakers, and practitioners who have been pioneers in defining the elements of welcoming, integrated, intercultural, and cohesive communities. We hope to build from their foundational work, and to broaden the circle of discussion and cooperation.

## Communities at the Crossroads

*Communities across America are at a crossroad: to welcome and integrate new residents and help them on a path to citizenship, or to allow old stereotypes, fears and preconceptions to hinder future success.*

*– Welcome Dayton Plan<sup>iii</sup>*

In both the United States and Europe, the last twenty years have witnessed a dramatic rise in the immigrant population. Between 1990 and 2010, the foreign-born population of the United States roughly doubled in number, became more diverse in terms of country of origin, and more dispersed geographically.<sup>iv</sup> In Europe, the majority of population growth has been fueled by immigration, and by 2060 the proportion of the population composed of migrants and their descendants is expected to double.<sup>v</sup>

These dramatic changes have created unprecedented new dynamics and pressures that are affecting municipal governments and local communities being reshaped by immigration. Even where immigrant growth has slowed, communities are contending with integrating newcomers; many of these places have only recently become new immigrant destinations. For a large number of communities, this change has not been easy. One need look no further than Alabama, Arizona, or Prince William County, Virginia to see how tensions sparked by the presence of newcomers can quickly lead to fear and divisiveness. Even in communities with a long tradition of immigration and numerous services aimed at supporting immigrant success, there can be challenges – even conflict – when long-time residents and immigrants see each other as adversaries, rather than as neighbors. In contrast to other policy arenas, the often emotional response stirred by immigration and its polarizing effects in a policy context have made it a complex and sticky area for municipal governments to address. But that, too, is changing.

From Stuttgart, Germany to Dayton, Ohio, an emerging movement of cities is changing course by developing agendas that seek to compete *for* immigrants, rather than compete to drive them away. These cities and their new welcoming agendas articulate that the presence and integration of newcomers is not a threat, but rather a significant opportunity for positive development and growth that can benefit not just immigrants, but the larger community.

In the City of Chicago, Mayor Rahm Emanuel established in 2011 an Office of New Americans, and set a goal for Chicago to become the most “immigrant-friendly city in the world.” “Throughout its history, Chicago has benefited from the immeasurable economic contributions of its immigrant populations, and from the rich fabric of distinct and vibrant neighborhoods they helped to create,” says Adolfo Hernandez, Director of Chicago’s Office of New Americans. “Today, Chicago’s immigrants remain crucial drivers of our economic growth and cultural vitality. As we build a thriving 21st century economy, we must work together to attract and retain immigrants by helping them to succeed and grow in a safe and welcoming city.”

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg has also shared this positive view, proudly declaring New York to be the world’s most immigrant-friendly city. In Detroit, the Global Detroit initiative is also establishing the connection between immigrant success and Detroit’s economic future. And in Boston, the Mayor’s Office of New Bostonians – founded over a decade ago – has worked to support immigrants and highlight their

#### Welcoming Cities in the U.S. News

Media in the U.S. has of late been filled with the stories of “welcoming” cities, particularly because they seem to reflect a turning tide of sentiment.

Among the latest headlines:

[Against the grain, Dayton, Ohio, embraces immigrants - CNN](#)

[Tucson becomes an 'Immigrant Welcoming City'](#)

[Immigrants Welcome: Baltimore, other cities take new approach](#)

[New committee works to make St. Louis attractive for immigrants ...](#)

[Rahm Wants a More Immigrant-Friendly Chicago](#)

It is our view that these cities are simply the early adopters of what will become a much larger movement.

contributions to the city's success.<sup>vi</sup>

While many of these urban centers have long benefited from their multicultural reputations, it is their public declaration of the benefit of attracting immigrants that marks a new path. In addition to these long-standing immigrant gateways, the past few years have also seen a growing chorus among smaller and newer or former gateways, which lends added significance to this movement. In 2011, the city of Dayton, Ohio made national headlines when it published its Welcome Dayton plan. Numerous communities have since approached municipal leaders in Dayton about mirroring their plan. Dayton City Manager Tim Riordan's comments in a local news report reflect why other cities ought to take interest: "Immigrants are more than twice as likely as other citizens to become entrepreneurs and create jobs. We want to make every effort we can to not only attract more of these creative and industrious people, but also to encourage them to stay in our community and plant deep roots for the future."<sup>vii</sup>

Baltimore, Maryland also recently declared itself a welcoming city. On National Public Radio, Mayor Rawlings-Blake discussed the benefits.

*We are open for business, particularly in the area of Latino immigrants. We've actively recruited Latino immigrants to Baltimore, and when they come here, they're thriving. Many have opened businesses, employed individuals. The Latino members of our community that are in our public school system are thriving. I think it's a win-win.....People who understand a growth strategy understand that I'm not choosing immigrants over native-born Americans or that I'm choosing new residents over current residents. It's about all of us growing and getting better and being successful together, it's not an either-or proposition.<sup>viii</sup>*

In addition, Welcoming America has been working with communities across the U.S. – currently in twenty states – to engage local leaders in initiatives that foster mutual understanding and respect between immigrants and non-immigrants. In the past eighteen months, Welcoming America's affiliates in six states and eleven communities have passed Welcoming Resolutions - formal proclamations by elected leaders that articulate openness to immigrants and are an alternative to more divisive policies. The proclamations are also important steps toward creating more actionable and comprehensive welcoming plans.

While this growing movement may have particular resonance in the U.S. because of its sharp contrast to more negative municipal responses to immigration, it is in fact part of a more global welcoming trend. In Canada, for example, the Welcoming Communities Initiative brings together academic, government and community-based organizations to promote the integration of immigrants and minorities across Ontario. Cities of Migration, an international project that shares excellence and innovation in immigrant integration, has compiled over 150 profiles of municipal leadership and good practice from cities that are working to build a welcoming culture in 20 countries across North America, Europe, and Australasia. <sup>ix</sup>

Further details on examples of targeted community efforts in various cities in the U.S. and abroad are provided in Attachment 1.

## The Rewards of Welcoming

*Nations that are more accepting of and better at integrating new immigrants have a higher level of economic growth and development.*

– Richard Florida<sup>x</sup>

The comments from city leaders shared in the previous section are focused squarely on how welcoming agendas lead to economic benefits, and rightly so; a growing body of research has identified the positive economic impact of immigrants on local communities and is more firmly establishing the connections between immigrant growth and economic growth. While it is true that immigrants are often attracted to those places experiencing economic growth, it is also clear that they are not only drawn to booming places, but play a significant role in contributing to the boom.

Consider the research on immigrant entrepreneurship and job creation, and the role of immigrants as consumers in the U.S. economy. Immigrants are 30 percent more likely to start a business in the United States than non-immigrants, and a disproportionately high number of immigrants are small business owners. While some may argue that this can be the result of exclusion from other labor markets, what matters is that small businesses can ultimately generate wealth. They employ about half of all private sector employees and create more than half of the nonfarm private GDP in the U.S. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, small businesses owned by immigrants employed an estimated 4.7 million people in 2007, and generated more than \$776 billion annually.<sup>xi</sup>

Immigrants from across the skills spectrum contribute economically and may be highly sought after because they fill critical gaps in the labor market. In a knowledge-based economy, high-skilled immigrants have received particular attention because of their contributions to economic competitiveness. According to the Census Bureau, immigrants represent a disproportionately high percentage of engineers, mathematicians and scientists. The Partnership for a New American Economy has documented that in 2011, foreign-born inventors were credited with contributing to more than 75 percent of patents issued to the top ten patent-producing universities. At the same time, middle and low-skilled immigrants are also critical to economic growth, and maximizing their potential and inviting their contributions should be a key component of any development strategy.<sup>xii</sup>

In 2007, the U.S. Congressional Budget Office calculated that the fiscal impact of immigrants as a whole is positive, as the tax revenues generated by immigrants exceed the cost of the government services they use. Similar studies have also shown a positive net benefit made by immigrants at the state and local level as well. For example, the Global Detroit study found that immigrants in southeast Michigan “provide enormous contributions to the region’s economic growth and will play a key role in our economic future.”<sup>xiii</sup>

Using data from the Census and U.S. Department of Commerce, one can also see how immigrants, by increasing the ratio of workers to retirees, give cities (particularly those with aging populations), as well as countries, a structural advantage over trading partners.

Studies have also correlated increased immigration with increased earnings of American workers,<sup>xiv</sup> and documented the significant local purchasing power of immigrants, which translates into a growing demand for local consumer goods, and diversification of those goods within a local economy.<sup>xv</sup> Research has also identified that immigrants in the U.S. have helped boost housing prices.<sup>xvi</sup>

Researcher Dowell Myers has discussed how immigrants “balance the senior ratio,” by playing an important role in offsetting the challenges posed by an aging population, including demands made on health and retirement systems. And when immigrants succeed economically and socially, they make significant contributions to the tax base – and contribute even further as homeowners, buying the houses of retired baby boomers.<sup>xvii</sup>

Combining these factors, cities have begun to see immigrants as offering them a competitive edge – not only nationally, but also globally. In their *Focus on Atlanta* report, the Partnership for a New American Economy describes how the city of Atlanta benefits from immigrants, and from efforts to position itself as a global hub. “[Atlanta] isn’t competing with Birmingham and Chattanooga, it is competing with New York, Chicago, Shanghai, and Mumbai.” The report further describes Atlanta’s unparalleled economic and population boom, attributed “both to entrepreneurial immigrants determined to succeed in America and to Atlanta’s own determination to capture the world’s imagination, capital and talent.”<sup>xviii</sup> Among the many reasons compelling cities to attract immigrants is the idea that they may be an important key to attracting businesses and investment, by ensuring the availability of talent and human capital resources. Cities across the U.S. are clearly picking up the signal that businesses want to operate and hire in communities that attract global talent, and create environments that welcome international employees and customers. As one example, economic development and business leaders in the Research Triangle region of North Carolina recently launched a campaign to attract business by showcasing the region’s talent. According to the campaign, “as the global competition for the world’s best and brightest heats up, the Triangle’s business leaders have recognized that we must be proactive in retaining, cultivating and replenishing our most important asset – people – in order for our region to flourish in the decades to come.”<sup>xix</sup>

The Open Cities Project of the British Council offers additional thought leadership in this arena, including the finding that the “ability of a city to attract international populations over time is a key indicator of long-term city success.”<sup>xx</sup> The Project presents the idea that knowledge is the most decisive factor for a city’s economic output in coming years, and that cities can most differentiate themselves by their openness and accessibility to people and business.<sup>xxi</sup> In a report by the initiative, the concept of openness is defined as “the capacity of a city to attract international populations and to enable them to contribute to the future success of the city.”<sup>xxii</sup>

While more difficult to quantify, immigrants – and more specifically, the welcoming environments that embrace and engage them and their talents – can generate other benefits. Although less economically driven, these tangible benefits come in the form of what some researchers have dubbed the “diversity advantage” – the potential for greater innovation, creativity, and even cultural renaissance that is the product of communities that manage their diversity well.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Researcher Richard Florida adds a further dimension to realizing the competitive edge in his research on the connections between immigration and economic competitiveness: “Nations that are more accepting of and better at integrating new immigrants have a higher level of economic growth and development.”<sup>xxiv</sup> Florida has also described how the benefit of immigration is based on something more than just the presence of newcomers. While economic success is tied to diversity in sheer numbers, it is also a factor of integration or “bridging” between groups. As Florida states in his book *The Flight of the Creative Class*, “Openness to people, tolerance, and diversity are critical components of the full equation of economic growth.” Florida also discusses the work of Gary Gates, whose research in more than 300 metropolitan regions in the U.S. examined several dimensions of diversity, including both immigrant concentration and the strength of relationships and social capital across diverse groups. In all measures, Gates found that diversity is significantly related to economic growth. Gates also found that communities with higher levels of diversity, including immigrants; higher levels of integration; and – most notably - higher levels of bridging social capital, tended to have better growth rates.<sup>xxv</sup>

In other words, the economic benefits to cities as a result of being welcoming is about something more than just the presence of newcomers – it can only be the result of a more proactive approach that looks at the extent to which they are engaged and connected with the larger community. As the scholar Robert Putnam has discussed, “The challenge for a successful immigrant society is to... make people become more comfortable with diversity by creating a new sense of identity that cuts across these lines, a sense of shared identity...If we pay attention to how to create this more encompassing sense of ‘we,’ we can get through this process and we can reap the benefits of immigration much more quickly.”<sup>xxvi</sup>

## Realizing the Benefits – the Role of Receiving Community Engagement and Cohesive Communities

*While the advantages of immigration are huge for a receiving community, the reality is that the integration of and public receptivity to newcomers is far from perfect in our communities. When people do not feel valued, they are likely to leave, taking their talent, experience and expertise with them. In a highly and increasingly competitive labour market, communities and businesses need to find ways to ensure that they are seen as attractive places to live and work.*

- Report on Attraction and Retention of Immigrants: Policy Implications for the City of Calgary<sup>xxvii</sup>

While much attention has been given to the economic integration of migration,<sup>xxviii</sup> the quote above

from researchers in Calgary underscores the need to look beyond purely economic integration and to instead examine how the creation of more broadly receptive and engaging environments enables communities to not only more successfully attract and retain newcomers, but to fully reap the rewards of their presence and contributions.

The Open Cities Project articulates this view, arguing that “attractiveness is not enough...cities also need to be open, creating the conditions for these international populations to be able to participate in the social and economic development of the city and providing easy access to services and systems.”<sup>xxxix</sup>

As the movement to welcome and compete for immigrants grows, it will be important for policymakers to consider the importance of receptivity.

G. Pascal Zachary further discusses this dynamic in his research examining U.S. cities that sought to attract immigrants as part of a larger economic development agenda. He asks the question, “once an American city decides to become an immigrant-magnet, what can city officials and civic leaders actually do to realize this ambition?” His findings suggest that it is not enough to simply offer jobs and economic opportunity. Cities must also concentrate on other elements of fostering a more welcoming climate, not only by ensuring that newcomers are attracted and retained, but also by ensuring that they are engaged both economically and civically: “in Oakland, immigrants are not only tolerated and celebrated, they are actively engaged by the native population.” Elsewhere, Zachary suggests, “natives are tolerant but have gotten no further than considering the value of celebrating immigrant cultures.”<sup>xxx</sup>

The impact of this distinction in receptivity is felt directly by immigrants themselves, and directly factors into their decisions about where to put down roots.<sup>xxxi</sup> As an increasing number of policymakers look to create immigrant-friendly cities, it is important to recognize that not all the factors leading to economic integration are purely economic in nature. In Germany, for instance, current efforts to recruit Spanish workers to fill labor shortages can fall flat when those workers are met with a chilly cultural reception.<sup>xxxii</sup> Cities like Stuttgart have confronted this dynamic directly and have recognized that creating a warm welcome for immigrants is vital, as are other strategies that stress the importance of outreach to the host society as a key element of integration policy.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

As the movement to welcome and compete for immigrants grows, it will be important for policymakers to consider the importance of receptivity. First, because receptive host communities are essential for immigrants to integrate effectively.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Just as fertile soil is needed for a seed to grow, receptive communities are critical if immigrants are to thrive.

And, secondly, because the process of achieving a more receptive climate is all about bringing native communities into the mix – helping them to understand how a welcoming community can and must be about their well-being, too. This process cannot happen simply through fact-sharing about immigrants. Effective receptivity strategies are based on the need to foster greater interaction between immigrants and non-immigrants, in order to build the kind

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of trust and mutual understanding that is fundamental to a truly welcoming environment, as well as an essential building block for a strong civic culture.

The Intercultural Cities model, originating in Europe, offers a glimpse into the importance and payoffs of this focus on engagement and interaction: “In partnership with business, civil society and public service professionals, the intercultural city develops a range of policies and actions to encourage greater mixing and interaction between diverse groups. The high level of trust and social cohesion help to prevent conflicts and violence, increase policy effectiveness and make the city attractive for people and investors alike.”<sup>xxxv</sup>

Researchers have long understood the importance of this more encompassing view of welcoming as key to creating a more successful policy approach. The importance of fostering a receptive environment for immigrants and their families, as well as addressing the challenges they face in successfully integrating, is of value not just to the immigrants that cities seek to attract, but is important to the larger societal fabric.<sup>xxxvi</sup> A community that is truly welcoming not only helps immigrants to be more successful, but helps the rest of the community to participate in the welcoming process, to understand its value, and to benefit from its success.

The payoff is that leaders who want to create policies that help cities realize the promise of becoming global hubs that attract new talent and investment will, by engaging the full community, have the support and resources to ensure that the process is successful and sustainable.

## What Next? Toward the Welcoming Roadmap

*Everywhere in the world, it is a choice between building a community's future or setting the stage for its demise. Without an investment now, before the next wave arrives, that choice will be made by circumstances.*  
- Doug Saunders, *Arrival City: How the Largest Migration in History is Reshaping Our World.* <sup>xxxvii</sup>

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In his work documenting the new urban centers reshaped by migration, author Doug Saunders discusses how large-scale migration is shaping new urban centers, which hold great economic and cultural potential – or the potential for conflict. The difference, says Saunders, depends on our ability to notice and our willingness to engage.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

As city leaders increasingly focus on these new models of engagement and see the need to foster a welcoming environment as a vital policy concern, a number of key questions have been and will continue to be raised:

- What does it mean to be a welcoming place?
- How can communities identify when they have become welcoming, and define the steps needed to get there?
- How do policy makers and city/community leaders ensure that the public and other sectors understand and accept the value of being welcoming and contribute to achieving it?

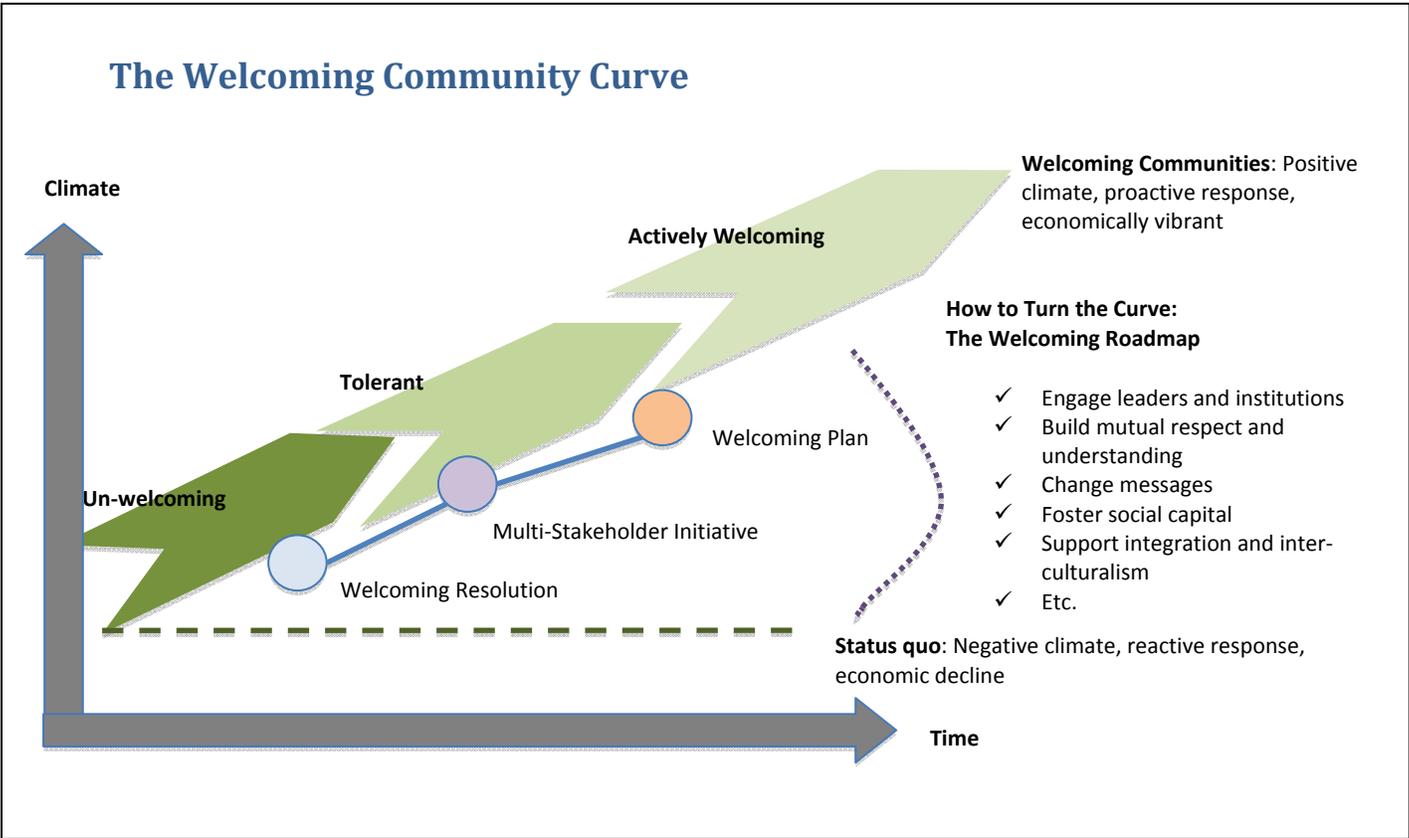
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- How can communities implement and sustain what works?

A roadmap to answer the questions posed above is needed. For this reason, the German Marshall Fund, Welcoming America and its municipal partners are convening U.S. cities to support locally-driven efforts to create more welcoming, immigrant-friendly environments that maximize opportunities for economic growth and cultural vitality and position communities as globally competitive, 21st century leaders. Participating city governments will connect with their peers through a community of practice that will share good ideas, develop new tools, and receive recognition for their efforts to create more welcoming communities that improve the quality of life and economic potential for immigrants and non-immigrants alike.

For more information on the Welcoming Cities Project, visit [www.welcomingcities.org](http://www.welcomingcities.org).

The *Welcoming Community Curve*, the graph featured below, has been used by Welcoming America to show that communities may have vastly different starting points along the continuum toward welcoming-ness, requiring different interventions - but that all communities can make incremental progress. The difference between success and maintaining the status quo is a community's efforts to undertake a number of strategies to "turn the curve" from a negative to a more positive climate. These strategies will be more clearly defined as part of this Project. Ultimately, though, the interventions that will lead to a more welcoming community must be based on locally-driven decisions. The curve concept featured in the graph is borrowed from the results-based accountability model developed by Mark Friedman and used by governments and communities across the globe to improve the well-being of whole populations.<sup>xxxix</sup>



This initiative is highly relevant for communities on both sides of the Atlantic, as they face common challenges in seeking to incorporate and welcome newcomers. The possibilities for transatlantic exchange and learning on this topic promise significant benefits for those concerned with fostering socially and economically vital communities.

This opportunity holds great promise to help those cities and communities who have already recognized the value of becoming welcoming places, and seek a clear path forward toward success. Equally important, however, is the opportunity to transform the current dynamic towards immigrants in the United States. Currently, many communities are “racing to the bottom,” investing effort and resources in creating unwelcoming climates and policies that minimize contributions, diversity, and creativity – the key elements of a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. This effort seeks to change this by instead promoting a “race to the top” – encouraging, supporting, and promoting cities and communities that move along a clear spectrum toward becoming more welcoming places. Says Welcoming America Executive Director David Lubell,

*We want to recognize communities that welcome newcomers because we know that those places will be better positioned to attract global workforces and global investment. They'll be better positioned to succeed in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century economy. They'll be better able to help the public understand that our communities are strongest when everyone who lives in them feels welcomed. And that's something that we can all benefit from.<sup>x1</sup>*

## About the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF)

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) is a non-partisan American public policy and grantmaking institution dedicated to promoting better understanding and cooperation between North America and Europe on transatlantic and global issues. GMF does this by supporting individuals and institutions working in the transatlantic sphere, by convening leaders and members of the policy and business communities, by contributing research and analysis on transatlantic topics, and by providing exchange opportunities to foster renewed commitment to the transatlantic relationship. In addition, GMF supports a number of initiatives to strengthen democracies. Founded in 1972 through a gift from Germany as a permanent memorial to Marshall Plan assistance, GMF maintains a strong presence on both sides of the Atlantic. GMF has a solid reputation as a professionally managed, non-partisan, non-profit organization with headquarters located in Washington, DC and a total of seven offices throughout Europe: Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Belgrade, Bucharest, Ankara, and Warsaw. GMF also has smaller representations in Bratislava, Turin, and Stockholm.

GMF is well placed to advance the discussion about welcoming communities in the U.S. and Europe among stakeholders from national, regional and local governments, academia, media, the private sector and civil society operating through its Immigration and Integration as well as Urban Policy Programs.

## About Welcoming America

Welcoming America, founded in 2009, is a national, grassroots-driven collaborative that promotes mutual respect and cooperation between foreign-born and U.S.-born Americans. Through a countrywide network of member organizations and partners, Welcoming America works to promote a welcoming atmosphere – community by community – in which immigrants and native born residents can find common ground and shared prosperity. Welcoming America's work has its history in the award-winning Welcoming Tennessee Initiative, an effort that successfully transformed a hostile anti-immigrant climate in Tennessee, and was the subject of the 2011 PBS documentary, *Welcome to Shelbyville*.

Welcoming America is the first national organization in the U.S. that focuses its efforts exclusively on addressing the fears and concerns that native-born Americans often have in the face of rapid local immigrant growth. Welcoming America supports a national network of affiliates, currently in 20 states. With the help of Welcoming America's tools and resources, these organizations work to transform their towns and cities into Welcoming communities. Welcoming America also directs the Receiving Communities Initiative (RCI), an effort to build and support a movement of individuals and organizations focused on involving mainstream Americans in immigrant integration.

## Attachment 1: Examples from the Field

Although the momentum around welcoming cities has reached new levels, efforts to create comprehensive strategies that foster a climate of welcoming have already taken shape in a number of cities. The following section outlines some examples of how this movement is taking shape on both sides of the Atlantic. These examples are intended to be illustrative, rather than exhaustive:

### United States

#### *Chicago, Illinois*

In Chicago, an Office of New Americans was recently established by the Mayor, and tasked with the goal of making the city the most immigrant-friendly in the world. The office is working with a multi-stakeholder group, including the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, to develop a plan to support immigrant integration and foster economic growth. A localized scorecard is being developed for the city in order to ensure accountability and to communicate impact and benefit to immigrants and all residents.

#### *Dayton, Ohio*

In 2011, the City of Dayton announced a communitywide initiative – guided by the Welcome Dayton plan - designed to attract and retain immigrants in the city. The plan itself includes a range of strategies aimed at improving access and services to immigrants. Equally important to the work in Dayton is the process that led to the plan, and which continues to bring together numerous community partners through a series of task forces to ensure that its goals are carried out. A website, <http://www.welcomedayton.org/>, amplifies the work by educating the public about its purpose and about immigrants and their contributions to the city.

#### *New York, New York*

In New York, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs promotes and supports policies and programs that advance immigrant integration. The Office also promotes the importance of immigrant success as being vital to the safety and economic development of the city as a whole.<sup>xli</sup> Even in diverse cities like New York, current programming recognizes that it remains important to nurture relationships between newcomers and long-time residents, such as around tangible neighborhood-based projects that are meaningful to the entire community.

#### *Redwood City and Oakley, California*

In 2010, the Institute for Local Government partnered with Welcoming America to help launch Welcoming initiatives in the Northern California cities of Oakley and Redwood City. Both efforts are led by multi-stakeholder collaboratives with a strong leadership role played by local municipal government.

The *You, Me, We Oakley!* Program brings different institutions and organizations together to make Oakley a welcoming community. The partnership includes the City of Oakley and local school districts, the city police department, and local faith and community-based organizations. In Redwood City, the Welcoming Initiative is led by Redwood City 2020, a long-standing partnership consisting of nine organizations that have joined together to address complex issues facing children and families and to engage and strengthen the community. RWC2020 recognized that immigrant engagement was an important priority for the community, and through its initiative works to create a community in which all members, regardless of their length of time in the community, are valued as assets and seen as contributors. As part of this vision, longer-term members actively reach out and invite newcomers to be a part of the community, and newcomers are invited and encouraged to participate in civic and community events and opportunities. Both cities utilize Welcoming America's model – including leadership engagement, building contact and interaction between immigrants and non-immigrants to foster understanding and mutual respect, and strategic communications.

### *Montgomery County, Maryland*

While not a city, Montgomery County, once a sleepy suburb of Washington, DC, exemplifies the suburban gateways and “arrival cities” that have made a conscious effort to welcome immigrants. While not without its challenges, the county is today a thriving place that boasts a 42% foreign-born population. As Doug Saunders discusses in the book *Arrival Cities*, the county is a place where “Something different happened. Citizens and officials, realizing that the immigrants were their main source of wealth creating, banded together to find ways for them to stay.”<sup>xlii</sup> A supportive municipal government with vocal leadership in support of immigrants, as well as a strong non-profit sector, has proven critical and are now exploring new ways to ensure immigrants are further civically engaged.

### *Detroit, Michigan*

Global Detroit is among several efforts in the Great Lakes region that seeks to revitalize the region's economy through a series of strategies that seek to make the region more attractive and welcoming to immigrants, international residents and foreign trade and investment. The initiative includes a comprehensive set of programs that include international student retention, microenterprise training and lending, the Global Detroit Welcome Mat network of immigration and social services, attracting foreign investment to support local job growth, and the Welcoming Michigan campaign. The goals include telling the story of how immigrants, foreign investment, and global connections can be a positive development for the region's economic success, as well as the economic success of all local residents.<sup>xliii</sup> Says Director Steve Tobocman, “If Michigan is to compete, we have to welcome the investment, the jobs, the workers, and the ingenuity of immigrants and refugees. Welcoming Michigan is the foundation of a global economic growth strategy to return prosperity to our state.”<sup>xliv</sup>

### *Boise, Idaho*

Under the leadership of the Idaho Office for Refugees, Boise has emerged in recent years as a model for successful community engagement and resettlement planning through the development of the

Refugee Resource Strategic Community Plan, a process that continues to successfully engage the broad receiving community and immigrants across the state. Focused largely around Boise's growing refugee population, more than one hundred community leaders, policy makers, service agency representatives, resettled refugees, volunteers, advocates, educators and community members-at-large were engaged in a process of developing an action plan that has helped the community to expand its capacity and support for refugees, while also ensuring a more receptive climate for newcomers, and improved public services for the entire community.

### *Boston, Massachusetts*

The Mayor's Office of New Bostonians (MONB), founded by Mayor Menino in 1998, is a city office that works with numerous local partners to support the growing immigrant population, expand access to services, address emerging issues, act as a catalyst for change, and promote the contributions of immigrants to the city. Mayor Menino's intentions for the office are captured by a quote shared on MONB's website; "it is not enough to just welcome immigrants to the City of Boston. We must make a collective effort to ensure that immigrants feel welcomed, and include their voices in the city government."<sup>xlv</sup>

### *Houston, Texas*

In Houston, the Office of International Communities, situated in the Department of Neighborhoods, promotes the integration, well-being and connectedness of Houston's international community. A coordinating board of various community partners informs strategy and supports implementation under several pillars, including one that will focus specifically on fostering a welcoming environment.<sup>xlvi</sup> Says Terence O'Neill, who runs the Office, "our success will come from partnering with other organizations and stakeholders to achieve a truly community-driven process."

### *Raleigh, Durham and Beyond, North Carolina*

Uniting North Carolina is a nonprofit and Welcoming America affiliate that, since its founding in 2008, has focused exclusively on a mission of working to make North Carolina a place that respects and values immigrants.<sup>xlvii</sup> A successful statewide billboard campaign by Uniting NC recently attracted national media attention for its positive portrayal of immigrants. A new project, the Welcoming Durham Initiative is a unique partnership between Uniting NC, Welcoming America, and the Institute for the Study of the Americas at the University of North Carolina at Chapel. Using the Institute's Building Integrated Communities Model that has already seen success elsewhere in the state, the partnership will lead a comprehensive community change strategy to develop a comprehensive Welcoming vision and plan for the city.

### *Various*

#### *Stuttgart, Germany*

Adopted in 2001, the Stuttgart Pact for Integration was and continues to be a groundbreaking example of a municipal government welcoming newcomers through a strategic and collaborative approach. Endorsed by the city's mayor<sup>xlviii</sup> and strongly supported by the business community, the

Pact is a living plan that outlines a comprehensive set of policy areas for ongoing investment. These include both services to immigrants as well as strategies for increasing and improving interactions between Germans and newcomers. Writing about the work in Stuttgart and other municipal efforts, Ayşe Özbabacan, who coordinates implementation of the plan for the City, writes, “If we want to provide a high quality of life in our cities and attract immigrants (and highly skilled labor in particular) in the future, we have to get away from a problem-oriented sight of immigration and capitalize on cultural diversity as a resource and added value in all spheres of daily life.”<sup>xlix</sup>

### Canada

Numerous cities in Canada – from Toronto to Calgary to Ottawa – have developed comprehensive approaches to lifting up welcoming communities, as well as unique programs that foster understanding between host and immigrant communities. *Cities of Migration* has documented numerous examples, ranging from a volunteer mentoring program in Toronto’s City Hall<sup>i</sup> to Citizens For Citizenship<sup>ii</sup>, which brings communities together in celebration of citizenship.

In addition, with federal support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, regional and municipal governments – and even neighborhood coalitions – are supported to develop local councils that develop plans and execute strategies with the explicit goal of fostering more welcoming communities. The Welcoming Communities Initiative – a consortium of academic and community-based organizations – provides support and greater coordination to these efforts through research, strategy, and evaluation.<sup>lii</sup>

The motivation for this work in larger and small cities alike throughout Canada is underscored by the following statement from a presentation on attraction strategies in Calgary:

*Immigration will continue to be an important economic and population driver in Canada. Small to medium sized urban centres wishing to remain competitive in attracting and retaining immigrants to their communities, will require a number of tools, policies and practices to ensure that they are attractive to newcomers. Calgary has already begun implementing some of these best practices to live up to our civic slogan ‘the best place to live’.<sup>liii</sup>*

### Copenhagen

The City of Copenhagen, Denmark developed a comprehensive immigrant integration plan as early as 2006, focusing on a full range of government services from education to housing. However, in 2010, the City recognized that the plan was not fully engaging other community stakeholders who had a key role to play in successful integration, and developed a new action plan to incorporate business and other sectors outside of government as part of a broader Integration Policy agenda. Unique elements of the plan include a leadership structure and a Diversity Charter, which actively incorporates the business community and other institutions who commit to principles of diversity and inclusion, and help the city toward their goal of being the “warmest and most welcoming major city in the world.”<sup>liv</sup>

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