The State of Foreign-Born Workers
New York State · Western New York
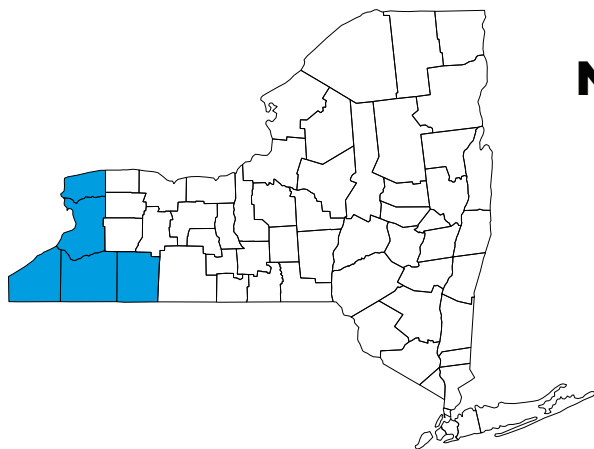
54,802	7,693	50.79% Women	49.10% Men
Foreign-Born Population	Limited English Proficient	Foreign-Born by Gender	

Place of Birth	Africa	Asia	Europe	Latin America	North America
	7.59%	56.63%	14.69%	15.49%	5.60%

Highlights

- The Western New York region ranked in 10th place in 2012 and in 9th place in 2021 against indicators of economic integration.
- A comparison between poverty rates in 2012 and 2021 shows a widening gap between foreign and native-born populations. For foreign-born residents of this region, poverty rates rose by almost 2 percentage points from their 2012 rates and the gap between foreign-born poverty rates and those of their native-born counterparts widened to almost 14 percentage points.

- Poverty rates increased for populations on the lower end of the educational attainment spectrum as well as those on the higher end in 2021 when compared to 2012 rates.
- Limited English proficiency exacerbates poverty rates and for college-educated foreign-born residents of Western New York, poverty rates in 2021 skyrocketed to 60.21%, an increase of 31 percentage points from their recorded 2012 rates.
- Although poverty rates increased for both segments of this population, unemployment rates fell in 2021, signaling underemployment for this population and the need for workforce development, career readiness, and English language learning programs.

Ranking

	2012		2021	
Regional Score Card[1]	-0.46		-0.78	
Regional Rank[2]	10th Place		9th Place	
	Foreign-Born	Native Born	Foreign-Born	Native-Born
Poverty Rate	29.34%	18.28%	31.23%	17.26%
Unemployment Rate	6.35%	6.03%	5.72%	5.40%

Institute on Immigrant Integration Research and Policy

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Effects of Low Educational Attainment & English Proficiency: Outcomes of Foreign-Born New Yorkers Who Are Holders of High School Diploma or Less

Total Population	English Proficient	Non-English Proficient
20,899	15,169	5,735

	2012	2021
Poverty Rates for All	39.51%	54.02%
Poverty Rates for English Proficient	31.25%	52.94%
Poverty Rates for Non-English Proficient	52.07%	55.59%
Unemployment Rates for All	7.18%	3.51%
Unemployment Rates for English Proficient	6.30%	1.85%
Unemployment Rates for Non-English Proficient	8.51%	5.94%

Effects of High Educational Attainment & English Proficiency: Outcomes of Foreign-Born New Yorkers Who Are Holders of College Degrees

Total Population	English Proficient	Non-English Proficient
22,544	22,037	507

	2012	2021
Poverty Rates for All	14.15%	19.53%
Poverty Rates for English Proficient	13.08%	18.26%
Poverty Rates for Non-English Proficient	29.10%	60.21%
Unemployment Rates for All	5.07%	1.85%
Unemployment Rates for English Proficient	4.01%	1.91%
Unemployment Rates for Non-English Proficient	19.84%	Not available

Western New York includes the counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara.

The source of data is the American Community Survey, 2021, one-year data. The data includes all foreign-born individuals who are 16-64 years of age.

[1] Scorecard is calculated based on the performance of the region against seven economic indicators; income, poverty, unemployment, working poor, full-time work, homeownership, and rent burden. The region's performance is calculated based on the differences in the seven economic outcomes between foreign-born and native-born New Yorkers. We calculate a standardized score for seven outcomes using the mean and standard deviation of each outcome across the state. Then, we average these scores for seven scores to compose one general index score indicating the overall disparity between foreign-born and native-born New Yorkers in each region. Higher index scores can be interpreted as positive and lower scores can be interpreted as negative.

[2] Rank represents the performance of the region when compared to the other nine regions of New York State. 1 = best performer; 10 = worst performer.