

# New Report Details Major Employment Hurdles for Young Immigrants

*Report released by Upwardly Global says 60% of young immigrant adults find their skills overlooked by U.S. employers*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Upwardly Global](#)

— the premier workforce development organization for immigrant and refugee professionals — has released a groundbreaking new report, “Roadblocks to Workforce Inclusion for Immigrant Young Adults,” which includes fresh, and at times, alarming, insights from over 200 immigrants under 30 on the unique employment barriers they face in the U.S. The report coincides with an interactive landing page that allows viewers to filter key data based on demographics.



Young immigrants in the U.S. face major hurdles when finding employment.

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“This data should ring alarm bells,” says Jina Krause-Vilmar, President & CEO of Upwardly Global. “It shows us, quite clearly, that young immigrants have a major hill to climb to find jobs, stifling opportunities for thousands of immigrants to contribute to the U.S. economy.”

The report finds that 60% of young immigrants believe their professional skills are not fully valued at work, with that number climbing to over 70% for immigrants of color. These data-driven findings are colored by personal testimonials from young immigrants — healthcare workers, legal professionals, project managers, journalists, software engineers, and others — on navigating the U.S. job market as an outsider.

Their main roadblocks to skill-aligned employment include:

Difficulty identifying their place in the U.S. market. 71% percent had difficulty evaluating which career paths, professional courses, or credential evaluations were worth pursuing.

Accessing and valuing professional networks. 85% of all jobs are filled through networking, but only 50% of study respondents used networking as a job search method.

Communicating about their job skills and history in professional-level English. While only 22% mention English proficiency as a barrier, 43% asked for targeted support on industry lingo and professional communication.

Possessing little U.S. work experience. Only 17% of participants had any U.S. work experience in their field of specialization, facing many U.S. employers that don't recognize overseas education and experience.

Luana Lima, a study participant and 29-year-old legal professional from Brazil, spent four years searching for a skill-aligned role in the U.S. while making ends meet as a preschool teacher and babysitter. For nearly half a decade, Lima sent off hundreds of applications with no luck.

"It makes you feel unsafe; it makes you feel like you're never going to get out of this game and make good money. Looking back, I was dying every day," says Lima. "But something inside of me said, 'Keep going. I know it's hard, but keep going.'"

After finding Upwardly Global's free career coaching program, Lima finally landed her current role as a Legal Processing Clerk at the San Francisco Public Defender's office, where she supports other immigrants through the U.S. legal system.

"Deepening our knowledge of the unique job search barriers young immigrants face is critical to our mission of advancing workforce equity for years to come," says Krause-Vilmar. "I'm thrilled to share these findings publicly and call on organizations, policymakers, and others with a vested interest in inclusion to join us in advancing key solutions."

Based on these findings and over 20 years of innovations in workforce inclusion programs, Upwardly Global outlines recommendations in the latter portion of the report, including industry-specific career mapping and coaching, employer investment in alternative hiring models, and networking connections between jobseekers and professionals in their fields.

"The findings and testimonies in Upwardly Global's new report not only shed an important light on the struggles young adult immigrants face in today's labor market, but offer solutions for policymakers, employers and workforce development professionals to bridge the gap to employment opportunities that are aligned with skills and career interests," says Ranita Jain, a senior associate with the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Employment, Education and Training portfolio.

Remedying workforce inequity requires building better supports to help immigrants restart their lives and gain self-sufficiency in the U.S., but it is also in the best interest of the U.S. economy

and businesses as a whole.

"Many young people with immigrant backgrounds face barriers to employment and are too often overlooked in today's labor market," says Ron Smith, Vice President of Philanthropy at Salesforce. "Breaking down these barriers is critical to building a more diverse, equitable and thriving workforce. Salesforce is proud to partner with Upwardly Global to help immigrant, refugee and asylee professionals get the connections and skills they need to restart their careers in the United States."

Find the interactive landing page here. For all media inquiries, contact [media@upwardlyglobal.org](mailto:media@upwardlyglobal.org).

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Upwardly Global is a U.S.-based nonprofit focused on eliminating employment barriers for immigrant and refugee professionals and advancing the inclusion of their skills into the economy.

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