Safe Families

Community Survey

EL PUEBLO

Understanding the needs and concerns of North Carolina's Latino immigrant community in the face of anti-immigrant policies.

December 2025

Context and Background

In early 2025, El Pueblo launched "**Familias Seguras**" (Safe Families), a guide for immigration emergencies created specifically for the Latino community in North Carolina in response to the mass deportation campaign announced by the new federal administration and the growing collaboration between state law enforcement agencies and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The guide, published in Spanish, with plain language and an attractive design and format, compiles relevant information to family preparedness, from how to exercise your rights and find help, to the steps to protect children, property, and family finances in the event of detention or deportation.

El Pueblo distributed nearly **10,000 printed copies** of the Familias Seguras guide throughout the state through community events and organizations, grassroots groups, and other allies, while also organizing workshops and community meetings to disseminate the information.

Our direct participation in events, workshops, and meetings with community leaders revealed deeper concerns among many Latino residents about anti-immigrant policies at the local and federal levels. It wasn't just about knowing what to do and being prepared.

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Many shared that they were facing problems with mental health, isolation, job insecurity, difficulties accessing reliable information and requesting resources, in other words, broader gaps that prevented them from living and participating civically in their communities.

In response to these early signs, in August, El Pueblo decided to launch a community survey to better understand the needs, priorities, and daily challenges faced by Latino immigrants in Wake County and neighboring counties in the context of an aggressive federal mass deportation campaign and the enactment of new anti-immigrant policies at the state level, such as HB10 and HB318, which require sheriffs across the state to collaborate with ICE.

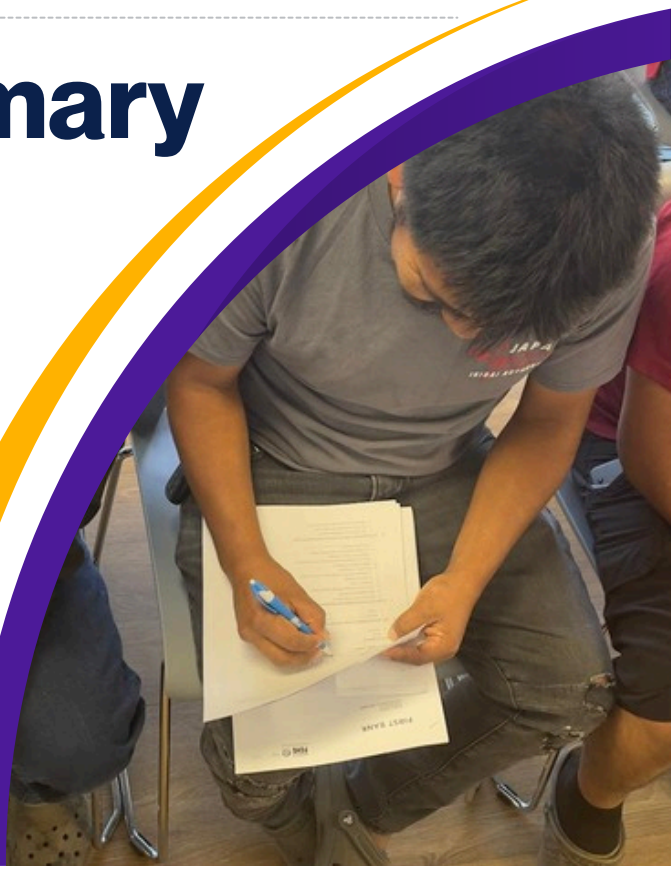
Objectives

The survey was designed to listen carefully to the voices of the community and collect concrete data that can inform El Pueblo's programs, partnerships, and strategies to address the issues and conversations that affect our community on a daily basis. Our goal is to ensure that the voices and experiences of those most affected are reflected in our work and decision-making process.

The main objectives of the survey were:

- To identify and understand the current needs and concerns of Latino immigrants in Wake County and surrounding areas.
- To measure the impact of current state and federal immigration policies on the daily lives of Latino immigrant families.
- To collect data to inform the creation of strategies, programs, services, and resources for the Latino immigrant community.
- Share the results with organizations, grassroots groups, elected officials, state government agencies, and others to promote better policies, practices, and services for the Latino community.
- Spread the results to the community and the media using various platforms to raise awareness about the impact of immigration policies on the Latino immigrant community

Executive Summary



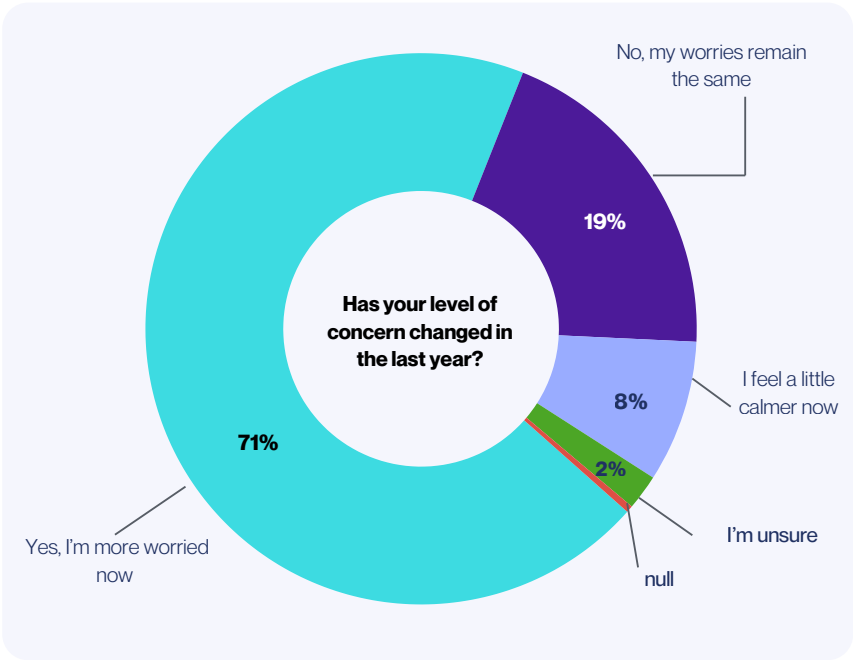
The data from this survey reveal the tangible impact of the large-scale deportation operations carried out by the federal government and anti-immigrant policies at the local level on the Latino immigrant community in North Carolina, particularly in Wake County and its surrounding areas.

The anonymous responses of 1,091 Latino individuals surveyed from August 9th to October 2025 show a widespread climate of fear with serious consequences, such as the dangerous isolation of a highly vulnerable community that urgently needs help and access to basic services like healthcare, food, and safety.

This reality was already tangible even before the arrival of Customs and Border Patrol agents in North Carolina on November 15, 2025 for two weeks of large- scale immigration operations in the state (*).

** Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has given contradictory figures on the number of arrests carried out by CBP in North Carolina since 11/15/2025.*

Key Findings



1 Fear of ICE and family separation

The majority of Latino immigrants surveyed said they are now more worried than before for themselves and their families.

More than 71% of respondents stated that their level of concern has increased over the past year.

Key Findings

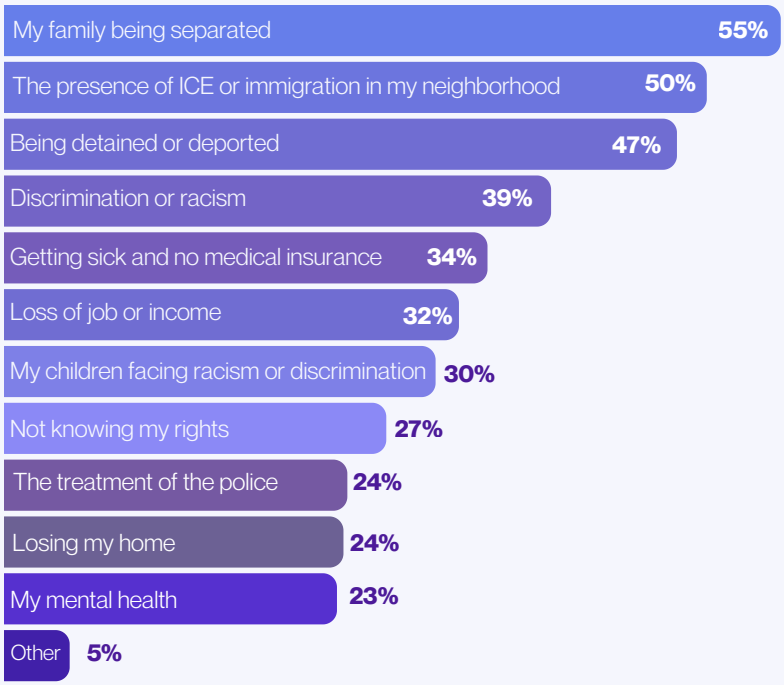
Three of the four main concerns expressed by respondents relate to the mass deportation campaign and anti-immigrant policies.

55% responded that their main concern is being separated from their family, 50% pointed to the presence of ICE in their neighborhood, and 47% responded that they are concerned about being detained or deported.

It is important to note that these responses were given well before the CBP/ICE operations in North Carolina in November 2025.

In addition, 39% responded that they are concerned about suffering discrimination or racism.

What are your main concerns right now?



- **Multiple- choice question. Respondents were allowed to select more than one option.**

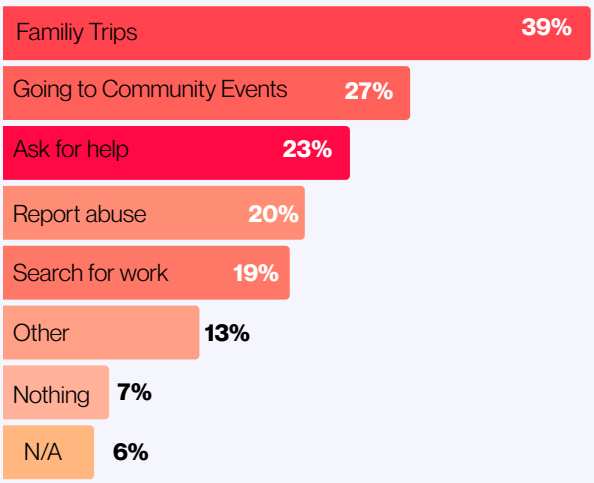
2 Greater isolation and vulnerability

Most respondents said that fear of being detained and/or deported has caused them to isolate themselves and avoid seeking help.

Nearly 40% said they have stopped going on family outings, while 27% said they have stopped attending community events, such as gatherings or festivals.

While these were the most common responses to the question about whether they had stopped doing certain activities out of fear of being identified as immigrants, the most concerning finding is that more than 40% also responded that fear prevents them from seeking help (23%) and reporting abuse (20%).

Is there anything you've stopped doing for fear of being identified as an immigrant?



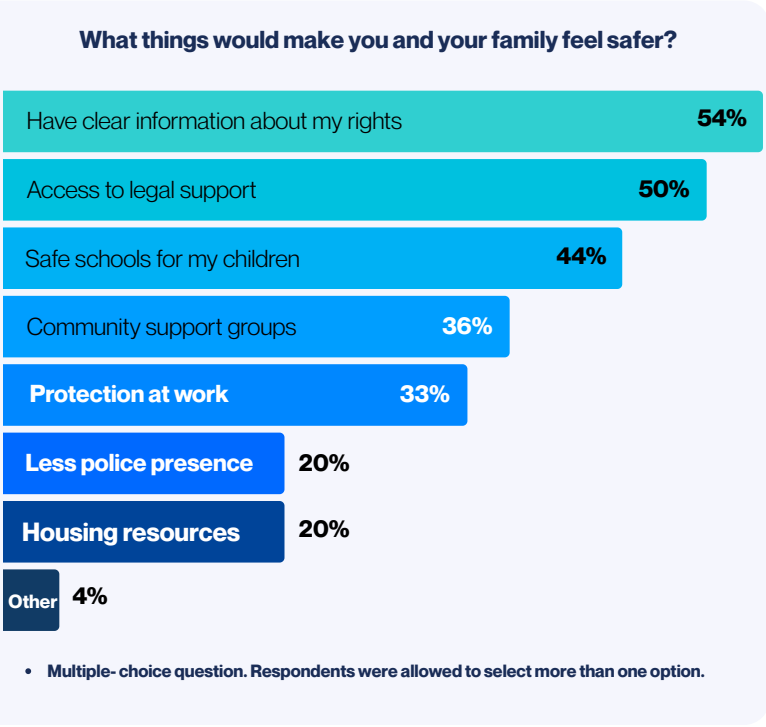
- **Multiple- choice question. Respondents were allowed to select more than one option.**

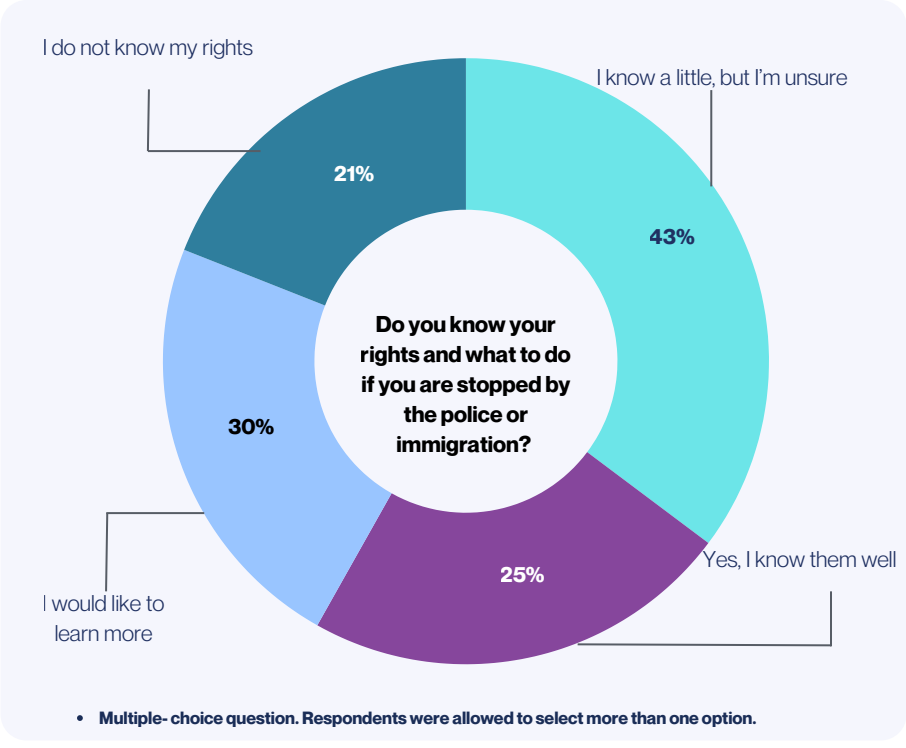
Key Findings

3 Growing need for information and resources

The survey also reveals a latent need for information and access to resources in the Latino immigrant community.

When asked what would make them feel safer, the most common responses among respondents were “having clear information about my rights” (54%) and “access to legal support” (50%).





The vast majority of respondents also said they know little or nothing about their rights and what to do if they are detained by police or immigration agents.

43% said they knew very little or were unsure, 21% said they knew nothing about their rights, and only 25% said they were well aware of their rights.

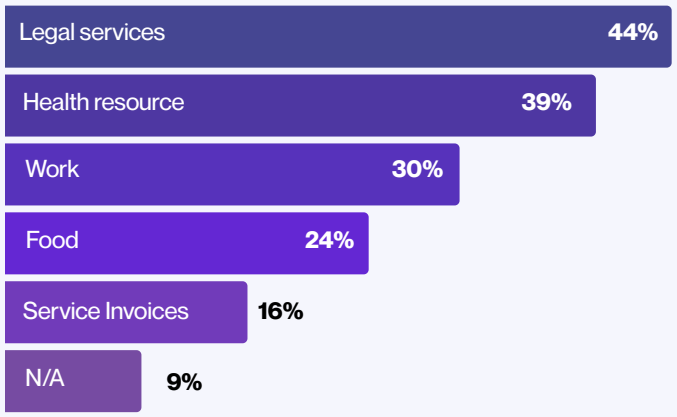
Key Findings

3 Growing need for information and resources

The need for access to legal services was also the most common response to the question about what type of help or resources they need right now, with 44% of responses, followed by health services 39%.

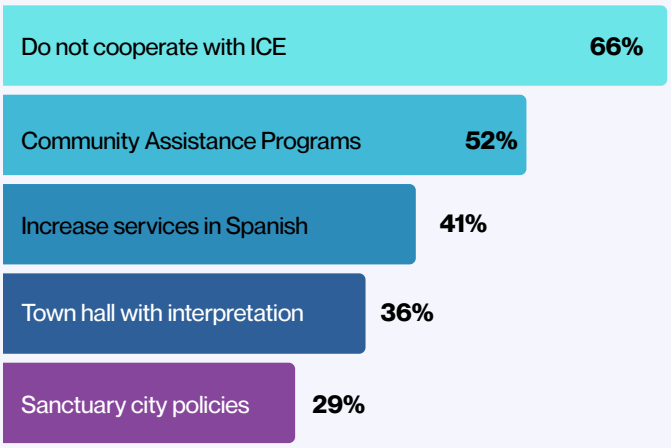
30% also responded that they needed help finding work, and 24% indicated a need for food, indicating that many members of the Latino immigrant community face economic challenges and lack access to benefits as a result of fear and isolation.

What kind of help or resources do you or your family need right now?



Multiple- choice question. Respondents were allowed to select more than one option.

What do you think a local elected official should do to support the immigrant community?



- **Multiple- choice question. Respondents were allowed to select more than one option.**

4 Rejection of collaboration with ICE

Rejection of local agencies collaborating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) appears to be a clear demand from the Latino immigrant community, according to the survey.

66% of respondents said that not collaborating with ICE would be their main request to local elected officials to support the immigrant community.

52% also said programs to assist immigrants should be created, and 41% requested more services in Spanish, reinforcing the need for access to resources and support identified in the third section of this report.

Conclusions

The survey reveals a troubling state of constant fear of deportation and family separation among the Latino immigrant community in North Carolina, even before the arrival of Custom and Border Patrol troops in the state, who carried out more than 370 arrests over two weeks beginning on November 15, 2025.

The fear of being detained and of family separation due to immigration status leads to dangerous self-isolation among families, who avoid not only recreational and leisure activities, but also asking for help and reporting abuse.

The widespread fear and tendency toward self-isolation revealed by this survey appear to be only the tip of the iceberg of the situation faced by Latino immigrants in North Carolina, which may further exacerbate issues related to mental and physical health, marginalization, insecurity, and vulnerability.

Although El Pueblo and other allied organizations have made efforts to inform the Latino immigrant community about their rights and how to respond in the presence of immigration agents, the survey shows that there is still an enormous challenge in this area.

It also reveals a persistent need for access to legal and health resources for a community that is already vulnerable and marginalized.

Finally, it shows strong rejection of collaboration policies between local and state agencies and federal immigration enforcement, and demonstrates how such policies break trust in local authorities and discourage people from reporting abuse and seeking help.

Recommendations

1 Eliminate or Limit Cooperation with ICE

Survey responses show near-unanimous rejection of state agencies collaborating with ICE, and a request from the immigrant community to elected officials to eliminate or limit these agreements.
Local governments should adopt and clearly communicate practical measures that reduce unnecessary engagement with federal immigration agencies. This includes establishing internal protocols that restrict voluntary cooperation, limiting information sharing that is not legally required, and ensuring that local agencies do not participate in arrests, ICE detainer requests, or operations conducted by federal agencies such as CBP/ICE. These protections are essential to rebuild trust and reduce the climate of fear.

2 Expand Support and Assistance Programs

The second highest priority identified by survey respondents is the need for strong community assistance programs. Counties and city governments should invest in mental health resources, as well as financial and social-service supports that help stabilize the most vulnerable immigrant families. Allied organizations can strengthen this support by expanding legal clinics, rapid-response efforts, and resource distribution. Together, these programs provide immediate relief and reinforce the community's safety and stability.

3 Increase Access to Spanish and Multilingual Services

Survey respondents consistently emphasized the importance of language access within services for immigrant communities.
Public agencies should expand the availability of Spanish-language services in all offices that serve the public. In addition, community spaces, local meetings, and public forums should include interpretation to ensure that Latino immigrants are fully included in conversations.
Strengthening language access removes barriers, increases trust, and ensures civic participation by everyone.

4 Deepen Research on the Impact of Anti-Immigrant Policies

There is a critical gap in understanding the personal experiences of immigrants, particularly the impact of local and federal immigration policies.
This survey shows widespread fear and isolation within the Latino immigrant community, but more research is needed to determine the magnitude and scope of the harm these policies cause, from mental and physical health, safety, and economic stability to immigrant families' access to basic services.
Further research is needed to comprehensively explore the generational and long-term consequences of these policies in order to inform community support programs and public policy interventions.

Appendix

Methodology

This survey was designed to gather the concerns and needs of Latino immigrants in Wake County and surrounding areas in North Carolina.

About the questionnaire:
It included 14 closed and multiple-choice questions covering topics such as demographics, main concerns, changes in habits, access to resources, knowledge of rights, and support needs.

The questions were designed to be culturally sensitive, accessible, and confidential. No personal information, such as names, contact details, or immigration status was collected.

Survey Type:
In-person with a physical paper questionnaire and online via Google Forms.

Location and audience:
The survey was distributed in Spanish to Latino individuals at El Pueblo events, other community events, roundtables, and workshops in Wake County and surrounding areas.

Data collection was conducted by El Pueblo staff members and members of its Community Leadership and Action Committee (CLAC), which is the organization's adult program.

Survey Period:
From August 9 to October 12, 2025.

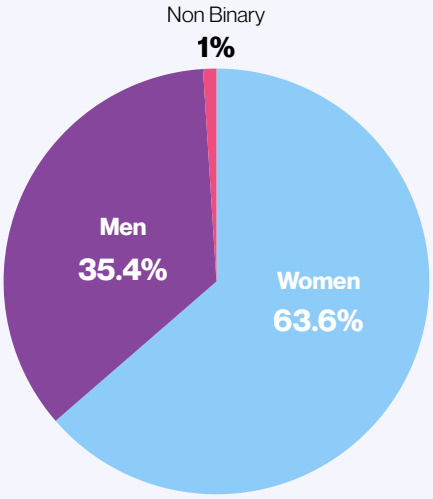
Participation and Process:
A total of 1,200 surveys were completed, but after removing incomplete responses, the final sample consisted of 1,091 valid surveys. After data collection and cleaning, the responses were digitized and tabulated for analysis.

14 Questions	**1200** Surveys Conducted
1091 Valid Responses	**65** Days

Demographic

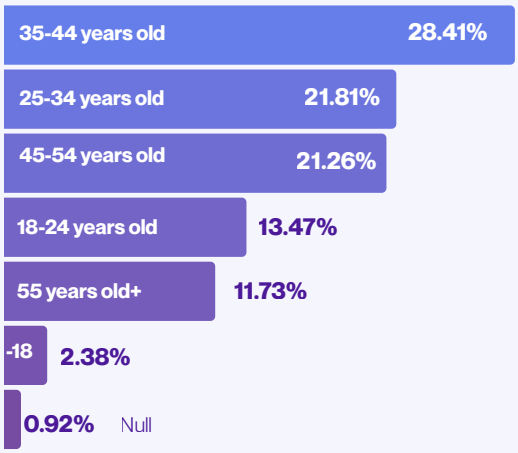
Gender

- The majority of the 1,091 respondents are women with a total of 698 (63.98%) compared to 283 men (35.11%).



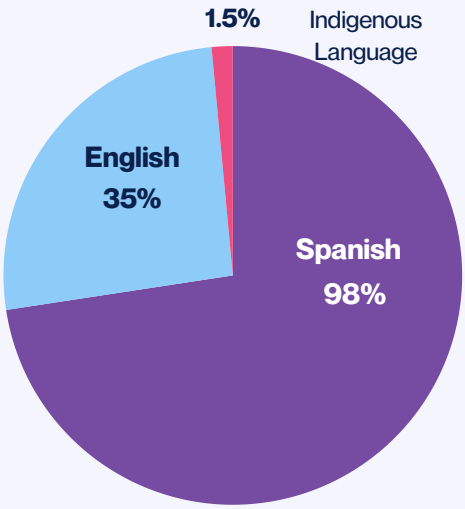
Age

- In terms of age range, most respondents are adults between 35 and 44 years old (28.51%) and between 25 and 34 years old (21.81%).



Language

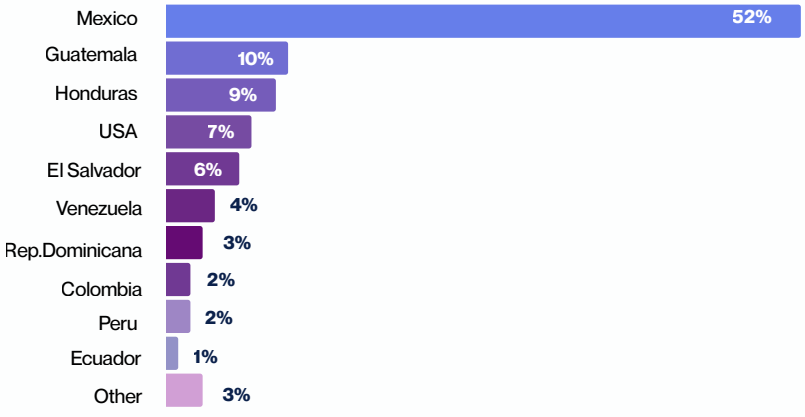
- The majority of respondents speak only Spanish (63.70%), and 31.99% are bilingual (English and Spanish).



Demographic

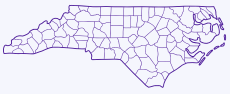
Country of Origin

- More than half of the respondents are from Mexico (51.97%). 25.3% are from Central America, mostly Guatemala (10.08%), Honduras (9.07%), and El Salvador (6.42%).



Other Countries: Puerto Rico, Chile, Cuba, Nicaragua, Argentina, Spain, Belize, Canada, Costa Rica y Panama.

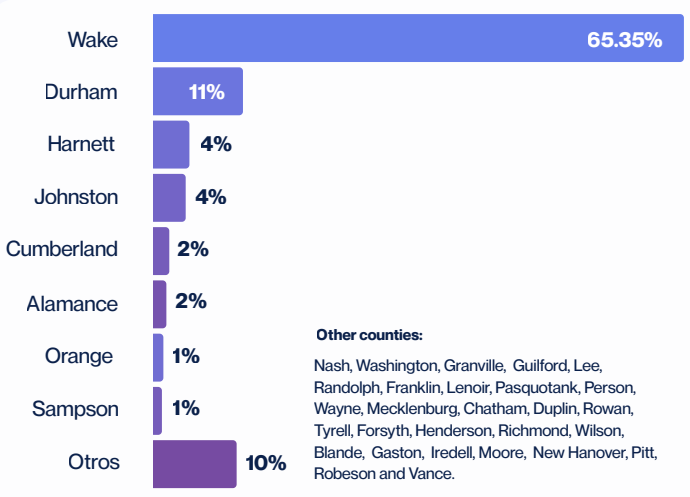
Counties



- The vast majority of respondents said they live in Wake County (65.35%), and almost half of them in the city of Raleigh (42.25%), where El Pueblo is based.

- Due to limited funding and El Pueblo's reduced capacity, the survey could not reach more Latinos outside the Triangle area

- However, the sample includes individuals from up to 30 other counties who were interviewed while visiting Wake County for community events or consular services.



Other counties:

Nash, Washington, Granville, Guilford, Lee, Randolph, Franklin, Lenoir, Pasquotank, Person, Wayne, Mecklenburg, Chatham, Duplin, Rowan, Tyrell, Forsyth, Henderson, Richmond, Wilson, Blande, Gaston, Iredell, Moore, New Hanover, Pitt, Robeson and Vance.

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Community Survey

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