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# The Latino Labor Force at a Glance

Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# The Latino Labor Force at a Glance

## **Abstract**

[Excerpt] At nearly 23 million, people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity represented 15 percent of the U.S. labor force in 2011. By 2018, Hispanics are expected to comprise 18 percent of the labor force.

In 2011, 58.9 percent of Latinos aged 16 and over were employed and just under 1 in 5 of those employed was working part-time. Women comprised 41 percent of all Latinos in the labor force in 2011, compared to 46 percent among the white labor force. Women represent a smaller share of the Latino labor force both because of the high labor force participation of Latino men and the lower labor force participation rate of Latina women when compared to Whites.

Employed Latinos are much less likely to have a college degree than are either Whites or African Americans. Approximately one in six employed Latinos aged 25 and over have completed a bachelor's degree, less than half the proportion among employed Whites. Since 2000, this gap in the share of employed Latinos and Whites who are college graduates has widened. Between 2000 and 2011, the gap between employed Whites with a college education and employed Latinos with a college education grew from 17.6 percentage points to 20.1 percentage points.

Latinos are more likely than either Whites or African Americans to be employed in the private sector, with more than 8 in 10 employed Latinos working in the private sector, not including the unincorporated self-employed. Conversely, Latinos are less likely to work for government than are either Whites or African Americans.

## **Keywords**

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Latinos, labor force, employment, unemployment

## **Comments**

### **Suggested Citation**

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# The Latino Labor Force at a Glance

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April 5, 2012



U.S. Department of Labor

## THE LATINO LABOR FORCE AT A GLANCE

At nearly 23 million, people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity represented 15 percent of the U.S. labor force in 2011.<sup>1</sup> By 2018, Hispanics are expected to comprise 18 percent of the labor force.

In 2011, 58.9 percent of Latinos aged 16 and over were employed and just under 1 in 5 of those employed was working part-time. Women comprised 41 percent of all Latinos in the labor force in 2011, compared to 46 percent among the white labor force.<sup>2</sup> Women represent a smaller share of the Latino labor force both because of the high labor force participation of Latino men and the lower labor force participation rate of Latina women when compared to Whites.<sup>3</sup>

Employed Latinos are much less likely to have a college degree than are either Whites or African Americans.<sup>4</sup> Approximately one in six employed Latinos aged 25 and over have completed a bachelor's degree, less than half the proportion among employed Whites. Since 2000, this gap in the share of employed Latinos and Whites who are college graduates has widened. Between 2000 and 2011, the gap between employed Whites with a college education and employed Latinos with a college education grew from 17.6 percentage points to 20.1 percentage points.

Latinos are more likely than either Whites or African Americans to be employed in the private sector, with more than 8 in 10 employed Latinos working in the private sector, not including the unincorporated self-employed. Conversely, Latinos are less likely to work for government than are either Whites or African Americans.

<b>Table 1. Unemployment, employment, and earnings characteristics by race and Latino ethnicity, 2011 annual averages</b>			
	<b>Latinos</b>	<b>Whites</b>	<b>African Americans</b>
<b>Characteristics of the employed</b>			
% Employed (employment-population ratio among those 16 and older)	58.9	59.4	51.7
% Usually working part-time	18.9	19.9	18.0
% Women (age 16 and over)	40.6	46.0	53.8
% College graduates (age 25 and over)	16.7	36.1	26.0
% Working in the private sector (wage and salary workers)	83.7	78.5	76.9
% Working in the public sector	10.4	14.2	19.3
% Self-employed (unincorporated)	5.8	7.2	3.8
<b>Weekly earnings</b>			
Total	\$549	\$775	\$615
Men	\$571	\$856	\$653
Women	\$518	\$703	\$595
<b>Characteristics of the unemployed</b>			
Unemployment rate	11.5	7.9	15.8
% Women (age 16 and over)	41.9	43.0	46.9
Median duration of unemployment in weeks	18.5	19.7	27.0
% Long-term unemployed (27 weeks or more)	39.9	41.7	49.5
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey Note: Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Those identified as White or Black includes those Latinos who selected White or Black when queried about their race.			

1 The U.S. Office of Management and Budget currently defines "Hispanic or Latino" as "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

2 Latinos who select white when identifying race are included in the White category as well as the Latino category.

3 A possible reason why Latina women may have lower participation rates is that immigrant Latina women come from countries with lower labor force participation and tend to have similarly lower labor force participation. In 2011, nearly half (46.4 percent) of the female Latina labor force was foreign-born while across the entire female labor force, 14 percent were foreign-born. See, F. Blau, L. Kahn and K. Papps. 2011. "Gender, Source Country Characteristics and Labor Market Assimilation Among Immigrants: 1980-2000," Review of Economics and Statistics, 93(1): 43-58.

4 Latinos who select black when identifying race are included in the Black category as well as the Latino category.

In 2011, 5.8 percent of Latinos were self-employed compared to 7.2 percent among Whites. The lower self-employment among Latinos is partly attributed to lower educational attainment and to less access to financial wealth.<sup>5</sup> However, according to the most recent Census Bureau Survey of Business Owners (2007), Latino-owned businesses were the fastest growing small business sector prior to the recession, expanding at nearly twice the rate of the national average between 2002 and 2007. In fact, the entry rate of Latinos into self-employment compares favorably to that of non-Latino Whites and their entry rate is even higher than that of Whites in low-barrier sectors. The main problem is that Latinos tend to have lower success rates with their new businesses and exit self-employment at a higher rate than Whites.<sup>6</sup>

Half of Latinos working full-time earned at least \$549 per week in 2011. This median weekly wage was only 71 percent of that earned by Whites. This gap in earning has been largely stable over the recession and recovery period. Some of the wage differences between Latinos and non-Latinos can be explained by the usual differences in education and other standard worker characteristics, such as experience and certain demographic characteristics. However, part of the wage gap between Latinos and non-Latinos is due to factors specific to immigrant populations such as language proficiency or time since arrival.<sup>7</sup>

The unemployment rate averaged 11.5 percent among Latinos in 2011. The most recent unemployment report in February 2012 shows improvement for all Americans, including Latinos, who have seen their unemployment rate decline to 10.7 percent in February from a high of 13.1 percent in November 2010. In addition, unemployed Latinos experience a shorter duration of unemployment and are less likely to join the ranks of the long-term unemployed than are either their unemployed white or black counterparts.

## PERIODS OF HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT

The national unemployment rate peaked at 10.0 percent in October 2009 but stood at 7.8 percent in January 2009 after climbing from 5.0 percent in January 2008. Among Latinos, the unemployment rate reached a high of 13.1 percent the following year in November 2010; it peaked for Whites at 9.3 percent in October 2009 and at 16.7 percent among African Americans in March 2010 and again in August 2011 (see Chart 1). These racial differences, with Latinos having higher unemployment rates than Whites but lower than African Americans, are long-standing. For example, at the start of the recession in December 2007, the unemployment rate for Latinos was 6.3 percent, compared to 4.4 percent for Whites and 9.0 percent for African Americans. In addition, the unemployment rate for Latinos is more volatile, which may be partly due to the fact that the unemployment rate of foreign-born Latinos is more cyclical than that of the native born.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the fact that Latinos are over-represented in some of the industries that lost the most jobs, including construction and manufacturing, but underrepresented in the only two industries which continued to create jobs during the recession (government as well as education and health services) contributed to Latinos suffering a harder hit from the recession.

While the unemployment rate peaked for Latinos a year after it peaked among Whites, the unemployment rate remained elevated for all groups from the fall of 2009 through much of 2011. As illustrated in Chart 1, Latinos faced

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5 For information on financial assets by demographic group, See: "Changes in U.S. Family Finances from 2004 to 2007: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances" Brian K. Bucks, Arthur B. Kennickell, Traci L. Mach and Kevin B. Moore Federal Reserve Bulletin, vol. 95 (February 2009), pp. A1-A55 Table 6. [http://www.federalreserve.gov/econresdata/scf/files/2007\\_scf09.pdf](http://www.federalreserve.gov/econresdata/scf/files/2007_scf09.pdf) and US Census Bureau Survey of Income and Program Participation 2004 panel <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/wealth/2004/wlth04-1.html>

6 See M. Lofstrom and C. Wang. 2006. "Hispanic Self-Employment: A Dynamic Analysis of Business Ownership," IZA Working Paper No. 2101. To define a sector as "low-barrier", the authors use measures of human and financial capital requirements to enter the industry.

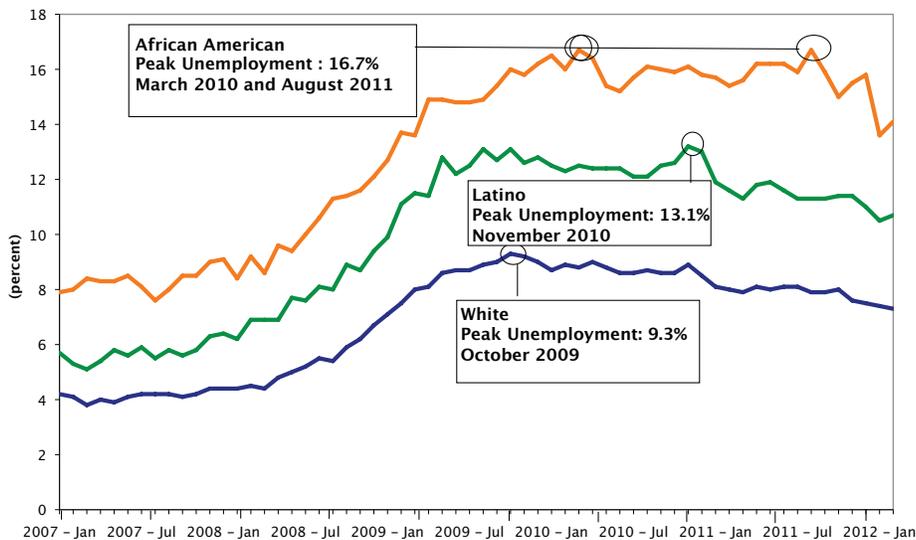
7 Evidence on language proficiency shows that this is an important determinant of wage gaps (see W. McManus, W. Gould and F. Welch. 1983. "Earnings of Hispanic Men: The role of English Language Proficiency," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 1(2): 101-130; G. Grenier. 1984. "The Effects of Language Characteristics on the Wages of Hispanic-American Males. *Journal of Human Resources*, 19(1): 35-5). For evidence on assimilation of immigrant earnings see G. Borjas. 2003. "Assimilation and Changes in the Cohort Quality Revisited: What Happened to Immigrant Earnings in the 1980s" and J. Smith. 2003. "Assimilation Across the Latino Generations, *American Economic Review*, 93(2): 315-319.

8 For evidence on the greater cyclical activity of labor market activity of immigrants see B. Chiswick, Y. Cohen and T. Zach. 1997. "The Labor Market status of Immigrants: Effects of the Unemployment Rate at Arrival and Duration of Residence," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 50(2): 289-303.

an unemployment rate of 13.0 percent in October 2009 when the rate peaked among Whites. The gap in the unemployment rates of Latinos and Whites was largely steady between October 2009 and November 2010 at approximately 3.7 percentage points.

Since reaching its high point in November 2010, the overall Latino unemployment rate has fallen by 2.4 percentage points as of February 2012. As illustrated in Table 2, the reduction in Latino unemployment rates has been broad-based with Latinos of all age groups seeing their unemployment rates decline from 2010 to 2011.

**Chart 1: Unemployment Rate for African Americans, Latinos and Whites (seasonally adjusted monthly, January 2007 - February 2012)**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

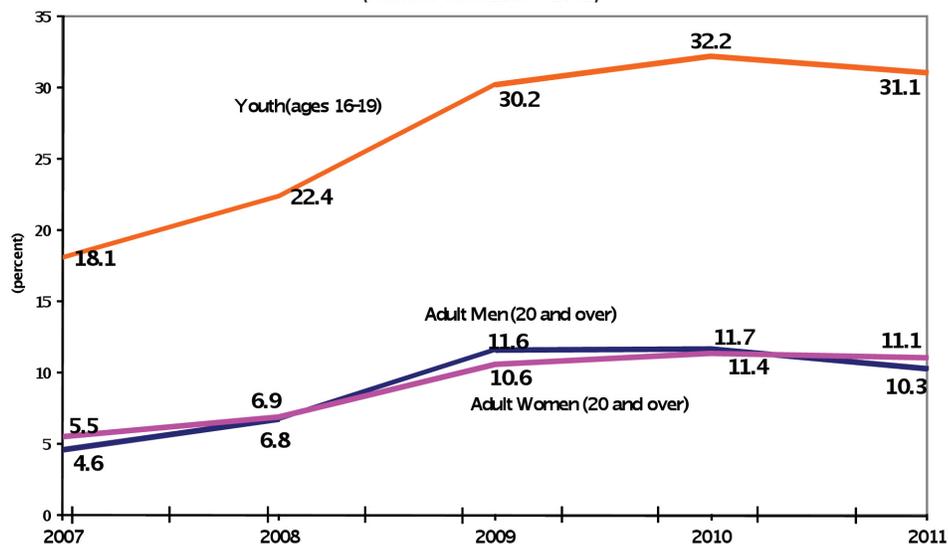
**Table 2: Latino Unemployment Rates by Age Group**

Year	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54
2007	18.1	7.8	4.9	4.3	4.3
2008	22.4	11.5	6.7	5.8	6.3
2009	30.2	16.2	11.4	10.2	10.1
2010	32.2	17.4	11.3	10.3	10.8
2011	31.1	15.7	10.4	9.2	9.9
Change from 2010 to 2011	-1.1	-1.7	-0.9	-1.1	-0.9

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Chart 2 shows annual unemployment averages for Latino men, women, and youth (ages 16-19).<sup>9</sup> Reversing the pattern of the prior two years, the unemployment rate in 2011 among Latino men was lower than that among Latina women. This narrowing occurred as unemployment among adult Latino men declined 1.4 percentage points, while it was little changed among adult Latina women. There are several factors that could have contributed to the smaller decline in unemployment among Latina women. One potential factor is their

**Chart 2: Unemployment Rate among Latinos Adult Men, Adult Women, and Youth (Annual data 2007 - 2012)**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

<sup>9</sup> Monthly seasonally adjusted data are not available for Latino men, women, and youth. As such, annual averages provide a more accurate picture of changes in unemployment for these groups over time.

disproportionate participation in industries that have continued to experience job losses, such as state and local government. For example, 55 percent of Latino government workers were women in 2011.

As Chart 2 also illustrates, Latino youth (ages 16-19) have much higher unemployment rates than do Latino adults. The unemployment rate for Latino youth declined to 31.1 percent from its high of 32.2 percent in 2010. The signs of improvement have continued into 2012; as of February, the unemployment rate had fallen to 27.5 percent from 30.6 percent a year earlier.<sup>10</sup> Although the unemployment rate has fallen, a large number of Latino teens are no longer in the labor force—either working or looking for work. In 2007, Latino teens participated in the labor force at a rate of 37.1 percent. By 2011, that rate had declined substantially to 28.3 percent. Some of this decline in labor force participation among teens reflects an increase in the percent of teens in school. Among 16-19 year old Latinos, 80.4 percent were students in October 2011 compared to 74.9 percent in 2007, the year the recession started.<sup>11</sup>

Falling labor force participation is occurring among all Latinos; however the declines are greatest for those who are young. Among those ages 20 to 24, labor force participation ticked up to 72.0 percent in 2011 from 71.1 percent in 2010; however, the rate remains below its 2007 average of 74.8 percent. While this decline is smaller than that experienced by teenagers, there was an even larger increase in the proportion of 20 to 24 year-olds remaining in school - 31.9 percent of 20 to 24 year old

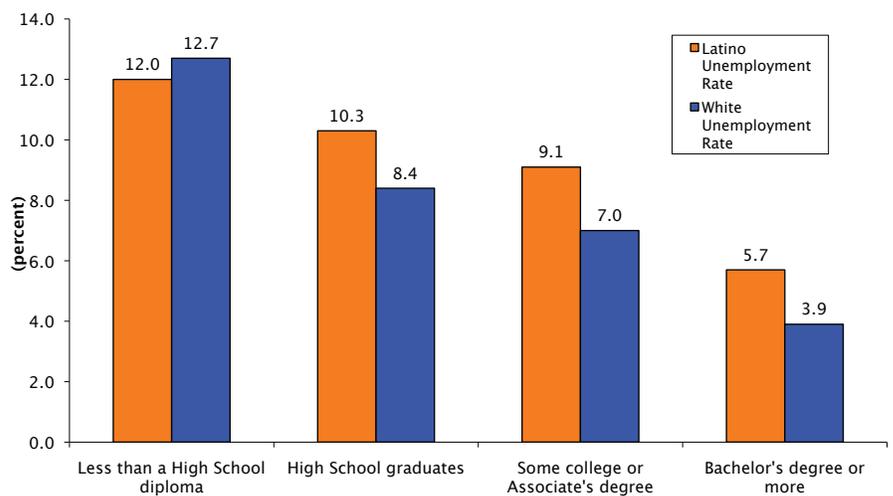
Latinos were students in October 2011 compared to 24.2 percent in October 2007. After rising in 2010, the labor force participation declined from 80.4 percent to 79.5 percent for those ages 25 to 54 in 2011, and the rate actually rose for those over age 55. Among all Latinos, 66.5 percent were in the labor force in 2011, compared to 68.8 percent in 2007.

One factor that may explain why Latino labor force outcomes lag behind those of their white counterparts is educational attainment. As is true for all racial and ethnic groups, the link between greater educational attainment and improved employment outcomes remains strong.

Unemployment rates are lowest among those with a bachelor’s degree or higher. For instance, the 2011 unemployment rate among Latinos with at least a bachelor’s degree was 5.7 percent, (compared to 3.9 percent for Whites). Unemployment rates are higher for those with fewer years of schooling. In 2011, the unemployment rate of Latinos with only a high school degree was 10.3 percent (compared to 8.4 percent of Whites with only a high school degree) and 12.0 percent for Latinos with less than a high school degree (compared to 12.7 percent for Whites with less than a high school degree).

While those with more education are less likely to experience unemployment, Latinos of all education levels were hit hard by the recession. From 2007 to 2011, the unemployment rate at least doubled for Latinos at every educational attainment level. As Table 3 shows, this pattern began to turn around in the past year. The decline in the Latino

**Chart 3: Unemployment Rate for Latinos and Whites by Educational Attainment, 2011 Annual Average**  
(Persons 25 years and older)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

<sup>10</sup> These are not seasonally adjusted rates as seasonally adjusted unemployment rates by age are not available for Latinos. However comparing February 2012 to February 2011 also indicates an improvement in the unemployment rate among Latino youth.

<sup>11</sup> October data are used as the reference month for school enrollment rather than an annual average since most schools are in session during October. School enrollment is very seasonal. Annual averages are skewed by low school attendance rates during the summer months.

unemployment rate has occurred at every educational level, with both highly educated and less educated Latinos seeing their unemployment rates decline in 2011.

**Table 3: Latino Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment, Annual Averages Not Seasonally Adjusted**

Year	Less than HS	High School	Some college	College
2007	6.0	4.4	4.1	2.3
2008	8.2	6.2	5	3.4
2009	13.7	10.4	9.2	5.7
2010	13.2	11.5	9.7	6
2011	12.0	10.3	9.1	5.7
Change from 2010 to 2011	-1.2	-1.2	-0.6	-0.3

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

The Latino labor force is significantly more likely to be foreign born than the general population. In 2011, 52.2 percent of the Latino labor force was foreign born compared to only 15.9 percent of the overall labor force. Foreign-born Latinos have traditionally had lower unemployment rates than have native-born Latinos. The unemployment rates more than doubled among both groups between 2006 and 2010. In 2011, unemployment rates declined for both groups.

**Table 4: Latino Unemployment Rates by Native Status, Not Seasonally Adjusted, Annual Averages, Age 16 and over**

Year	All Latinos	Native-born Latinos	Foreign-born Latinos
2005	6.0	7.2	5.0
2006	5.2	6.2	4.5
2007	5.6	6.6	4.9
2008	7.6	8.4	6.9
2009	12.1	12.9	11.4
2010	12.5	13.8	11.3
2011	11.5	13.0	10.1
Change from 2010 to 2011	-1.0	-0.8	-1.2

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Within the Latino labor force, unemployment rates vary by ethnic subpopulation. Puerto Ricans have historically had the highest unemployment rates, while Cuban-Americans traditionally have had the lowest. Among the three major Latino subgroups (Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and Cuban-American), unemployment rates rose sharply from 2006 to 2010. All three groups saw improvements in 2011; however, the Puerto Rican unemployment rate was 2.6 percentage points above the overall Latino unemployment rate of 11.5 percent in 2011.

Unemployment varies across the United States and the unemployment rate of Latinos, like that of other Americans, differs depending on the state in which they live. Latinos facing the highest unemployment rates in 2011 reside in Rhode Island (21.6 percent), Connecticut (17.8 percent), Washington (14.8 percent), Nevada (14.5 percent), and Pennsylvania (14.5 percent), while those facing the lowest rates live in Alaska (4.3 percent), West Virginia (5.6 percent), Virginia (5.8 percent), Maryland (7.0 percent), Arkansas (7.3 percent), and the District of Columbia (7.3 percent).

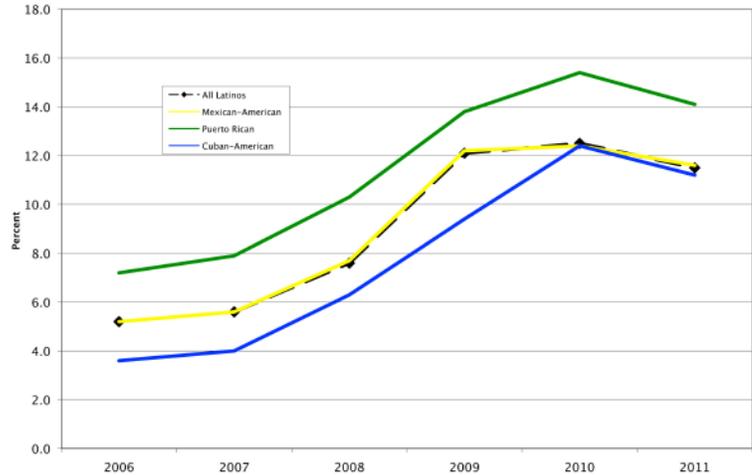
The supplemental map at the end of this report highlights the states where the largest numbers of unemployed Latino workers reside. As one would expect, states with the largest Latino populations had very large numbers of unemployed Latino workers. Overall in 2011, California (901,000), Texas (396,000), Florida (223,000), New York

(153,000), Arizona (113,000), and Illinois (106,000) had the most unemployed Latinos. The unemployment rates in these states were as follows: 13.8 percent in California, 8.9 percent in Texas, 11.6 percent in Florida, 10.6 percent in New York, 12.7 percent in Arizona, and 12.1 percent in Illinois.

Within states, Latinos are more likely to move within a county than the general employed population, indicating that they may be more likely to move for employment opportunities (See Table 5). In fact, a number of studies have found that Latino employment is particularly sensitive to the density of jobs held by other

Latinos. This suggests that networks may play a key role for Latinos and may help to alleviate geographical mismatch which hypothesizes that lower employment rates for a particular group is in part attributable to fewer jobs per person in the areas where that particular group tends to reside.<sup>12</sup>

**Chart 4: Latino Employment Rates by Detailed Ethnicity, 16 and older (Annual data 2006-2011)**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

**Table 5. General Mobility of Employed Civilians 16 Years and Over, by Sex, Age, Race and Latino Origin, Region, and Major Occupation Group: 2010 to 2011**

	Total	Didn't move	Moved within same county	Moved to a different county	Moved to a different state
<b>TOTAL 16+ years</b>					
Employed civilians	138,410	88.5%	7.7%	3.8%	1.8%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>					
Employed civilians	19,701	86.1%	10.9%	3.0%	1.6%

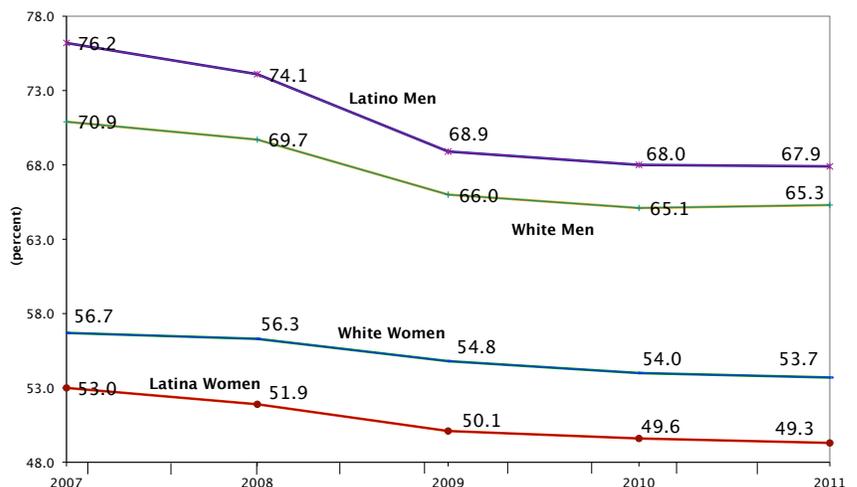
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## EMPLOYMENT DATA

As Chart 5 illustrates, 2011 employment rates for white and Latino men and women were below pre-recession levels. Overall, white and Latino men are employed at higher rates than are white and Latina women; however employment rates fell much more sharply among men than among women during the 2007 to 2009 recession.

Latino employment declined most significantly in construction, manufacturing, financial activities, and profes-

**Chart 5: Employment to Population Ratio by sex for Whites and Latinos, 16 and older (Annual data 2007-2011)**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

<sup>12</sup> See J. Hellerstein, M. McInerney and D. Neumark. 2009. "Spatial Mismatch, Immigrant Networks, and Hispanic Employment in the U.S.," NBER Working Paper No. 15398.

sional and business services during the recession of 2007-2009. Together, these industries accounted for nearly 1.1 million jobs lost among Latino workers. The job losses subsided in 2010, Latino employment rose modestly during the year. In 2011, Latino employment continued to increase. Latinos benefited from employment growth in retail trade and professional business services, both of which are large employers of Latinos. Latinos continued to lose jobs in other industries. The rebound in employment has continued in 2012, as the share of Latinos with a job has continued to trend up from its post-recession lows. In February 2012, 59.4 percent of Latinos were employed, up from 58.3 percent a year prior.

Latinos account for almost one in every four workers in the construction industry. As Table 6 shows, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects that employment in the construction industry will grow 2.9 percent annually by 2020. However, much of this growth is replacing jobs lost during the recession. Jobs in the health and social assistance industry are expected to grow the fastest with 5.6 million additional jobs projected for 2020 compared to 2010. In 2011, only 10.9 percent of jobs in this industry went to Latino workers, making them underrepresented in this high-growth industry. Latinos are underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) occupations—accounting for less than seven percent of the jobs—in math and science related occupations, such as computer and mathematical occupations (5.7 percent), architecture and engineering occupations (6.4 percent), and life, physical, and social science occupations (5.9 percent).

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Annual average rate of change 2010-2020<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Latinos as a percent of total employed by industry in 2011<sup>2</sup></b>
Health and social assistance	3.0%	10.9%
Construction	2.9%	24.4%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	2.6%	7.1%
Education services	2.3%	9.5%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.  
<sup>1</sup>Employment projections presented here are based on Current Employment Statistics data. The projections are found at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecopro.pdf>.  
<sup>2</sup>These data are from the Current Population Survey.

## **OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

Overall work-related fatalities declined in 2010, the most recent year for which data are available. According to preliminary estimates from the BLS, in 2010 Latino workers experienced a high rate of work-related fatal injuries at 3.7 incidents per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers, compared to 3.6 for Whites and 2.8 for African Americans. Latino workers experienced 4.3 percent fewer work-related fatal injuries in 2010 compared to 2009. Certain industries, including construction, which has traditionally employed a high percentage of Latino workers, have historically accounted for a significant portion of fatal work injuries, though reported fatalities in this industry have also significantly declined. The number of fatal injuries in the private construction industry fell by 10.0 percent in 2010, following a similar decline of 14.5 percent in 2009. This fall is attributable to the combined effect of a drop in the aggregate number of hours worked in the construction industry as well as a decline in the work-related fatal injury rate from 9.9 incidents per 100,000 full time equivalent workers in 2009 to 9.5 in 2010.

The decline in fatal-work injuries among Latino workers in 2010 was largest for native-born Latino workers, whose fatal-work injury counts decreased by 10.2 percent. In comparison, the decline among foreign-born Latinos was less than one percent. Fatal-work injuries incurred by workers who were born outside of the United States accounted for 17 percent of the U.S. total in 2010. Of the foreign-born workers who were fatally injured in the United States in 2010, the largest share (38 percent) was Mexican-born.

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## **AGENCY ACTIONS AND A LOOK AHEAD**

The economic recovery to date has improved employment prospects for all Americans, and indeed Latino unemployment rates are lower today than in February 2009 when President Obama launched work on the American Recovery Act. However, the unemployment rate for Latinos remains higher than pre-recessionary levels and more needs to be done to get this group back to work. The Department of Labor is working alongside other federal agencies in the Obama Administration to address the particular challenges facing Latino workers. Our efforts include:

### **► Getting America Back to Work:**

- Of the nearly 3 million Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants who received staff-assisted services from October 2010 through September 2011, more than 11 percent were Latino. Of those Latinos who exited the WIA Adult program in calendar year 2010 and were unemployed when they entered the program, nearly 60 percent or 77,000 began employment within the quarter after their exit. Of those Latinos who exited the WIA Dislocated Worker program in calendar year 2010 and were unemployed when they entered the program, about 57 percent or 51,000 began employment within the quarter after their exiting the program.
- The Department also works to transition more Latino youth to employment through programs targeting individuals affected by high poverty and high unemployment, as well as through programs directed toward youth. Programs such as DOL's Job Corps and YouthBuild programs provide job training and educational opportunities for low-income or at-risk youth ages 16 to 24. There have been over 4,000 Latinos enrolled in YouthBuild, representing nearly 19 percent of participants, since the Department began administering the program in 2007. Roughly 17,000 Latinos enrolled in Job Corps from October 2010 to September 2011, representing more than 17 percent of participants in Job Corps. More than 64 percent of Latino youth separating from Job Corps in program year 2010 were graduates who received their GED – more than two percent higher than the national high school graduation rate.
- The Department offers other training and employment programs that provide opportunities for Latinos. The Wagner-Peyser program, for example, provides a full range of employment services to jobseekers including career guidance, testing, job development, and job referral. DOL regulations require states to ensure that Wagner-Peyser services are offered to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) on a basis that is equivalent and proportional to the services offered to non-MSFWs. Roughly 3.3 million participants (16.7 percent) of individuals served by Wagner-Peyser in program year 2010 were Latino. The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), a job training and employment assistance program for MSFWs, provides

job training services to eligible farmworkers to help them prepare for jobs that provide stable, year-round employment and better wages. About 75 percent of participants in the NFJP are Latino.

- **Enforcing Labor Standards and Protecting Workers' Welfare:** The Department's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) is concentrating its enforcement resources on securing sustained employer compliance in high-risk industries that employ vulnerable workers – many of whom are of Latino descent – and where labor violations are most prevalent.
  - Since the beginning of 2009, WHD has collected more than \$594 million in back wages for approximately 720,000 workers in 85,900 cases nationwide. In Fiscal Year 2011, the WHD collected \$224,844,870 in back wages and helped over 275,000 workers; this is the largest amount of back wages collected in a single fiscal year in the Division's history. Since 2009, WHD has hired more than 300 new investigators, bringing the Division's total to more than 1,000 investigators, nearly half of whom speak Spanish.
  - To further strengthen channels of communication between the Department and the public, WHD, in 2010, has an interpreter service line with a capacity of 176 languages. Now, when a person with limited English proficiency contacts WHD staff, personnel can quickly obtain interpretation services.
  - In 2012 WHD released a series of educational "Know Your Rights" videos to serve as employee resource tools and inform workers of their rights. The videos provide valuable information regarding wage and hour laws, address common workplace concerns, and provide information on how to file a complaint with WHD. The videos are available in English and Spanish on WHD's website.
  - DOL and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in March 2011 to ensure that their respective civil enforcement activities do not conflict and advance the mission of each Department. The MOU recognizes the importance of enforcing labor laws to ensure proper wages and working conditions for all workers, regardless of their immigration status, and to reduce the incentive for illegal migration to the nation. The MOU also outlines each Department's commitment to protecting workers from employers or other parties who use threats of immigration enforcement as a means to retaliate against employees for exercising labor rights, or otherwise frustrate the enforcement of labor laws.
  - In 2011, WHD announced new protocols and has since begun certifying nonimmigrant visa applications for those immigrants who are victims of crimes and are willing to cooperate with law enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of those crimes.
  - WHD has refocused its enforcement priorities and resources on achieving sustainable and enterprise-wide compliance in industries that employ low-wage and vulnerable workers who face the greatest risk of exploitation, such as low-wage workers, minors, migrant or seasonal laborers, workers with limited English language skills, and workers who are unaware of their rights or are reluctant to file a complaint when subject to labor violations. In FY 2011, the Division conducted 12,225 investigations in low-wage industries, recovering approximately \$60 million in back wages for more 108,000 workers nationwide.
  - In April 2010, the Department's WHD launched the "We Can Help" nationwide campaign that seeks to connect America's most vulnerable and low-wage workers with the broad array of services offered by the Department. The WHD has conducted nearly 3,300 outreach and education events since the start of the campaign. Through the use of Spanish/English bilingual publications and public service announcements on local television and radio stations, the campaign is reaching and assisting workers who often find themselves denied the pay legally guaranteed to them by law.
  - WHD also conducts community-based outreach initiatives tailored to meet the needs of local worker populations and industries. These programs draw support from a wide range of local partners and stakeholders such as worker centers who advocate on behalf of workers and help convey to these workers

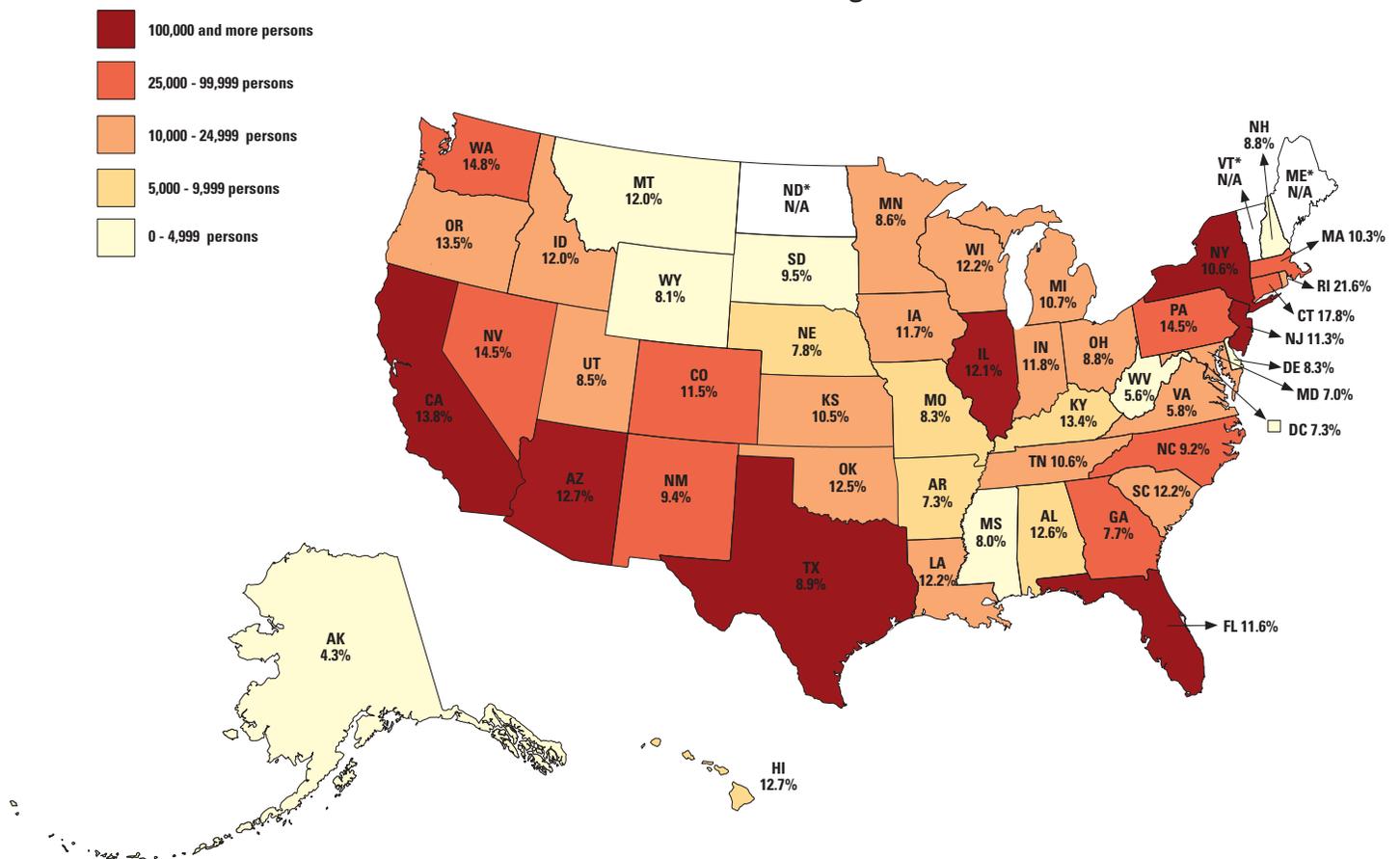
the messages and services of WHD's campaign through disseminating translated materials and conducting outreach activities.

- **Enforcing Non-Discrimination Requirements:** The Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is responsible for enforcing affirmative action and non-discrimination obligations of federal contractors and subcontractors. Nearly one-in-four American workers are employed by a company that does business with the federal government, giving OFCCP a broad purview to enforce equal employment opportunity laws across the American labor force.
  - In Fiscal Year 2011, OFCCP successfully resolved 134 cases of employment discrimination affecting women, minorities, people with disabilities and protected veterans. In total, OFCCP negotiated over \$12 million in financial remedies for victims of discrimination and recovered more than 1,400 potential job offers for affected workers. During this period, OFCCP recovered over \$800,000 in back pay for over 500 Latino workers who were victims of employment discrimination. This accounts for about 20 percent of the over \$4 million in back pay that went to minority workers as a whole in FY 2011 and represents a 67 percent increase from the amount of back pay to Latino workers recovered in FY 2010.
  - OFCCP is working to develop partnerships with community-based organizations that serve minorities, including the Latino community. OFCCP shows workers how to identify discriminatory practices and creates avenues for communication with the Latino community. Some examples include events with national organizations such as League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), La Raza, and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF).
  - In addition, OFCCP has developed four new Fact Sheets that inform workers of their rights in federal contracting workplaces. All Fact Sheets will be translated into 14 languages, including Spanish.
  - OFCCP has translated into Spanish its outreach materials describing the laws OFCCP enforces as well as the complaint form workers may use if they suspect they have been subject to discrimination. In addition, OFCCP has recruited Spanish speaking compliance officers and will be securing language translation services to ensure that workers calling the agency's toll-free numbers have access to someone who speaks their language, including Spanish.
- **Ensuring Workplace Safety:** Among the most vulnerable workers in America are those who work in high-risk industries, particularly construction. Because of language barriers, literacy and other limitations, these workers, many of whom are of Latino origin, are often hard to reach through traditional communications methods. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and WHD are working to address this problem and reduce incidences of workplace injuries and fatalities and violations of wage and hour laws. DOL Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership has been working with OSHA to reach out to worker centers who serve Latino workers. OSHA has reminded employers that, to comply with OSHA requirements that they must present information about workers' rights, safety and health training materials, with information and instructions in a language that their workers can understand.
  - The Secretary has reiterated DOL's long-standing partnership with the Mexican Consulates by signing a joint declaration and a letter of arrangement with the Mexican Embassy. The Department has also signed joint-declarations and letters of arrangements with the embassies of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic to assist the Department in the protection of migrant workers employed in the U.S. and to help communicate with workers whom the Department may not have otherwise been able to reach. The Department is exploring additional joint declarations and letters of arrangements between the Secretary, the heads of WHD and OSHA, and the ambassadors of other countries.
  - In Fiscal Year 2011, OSHA awarded nearly \$11 million in Susan Harwood Targeted Topic and Capacity Building Grants, which will assist organizations in providing safety and health training and educational programs for workers and employers. In order to continue to reach vulnerable workers in high risk

industries with critical information, OSHA launched their Campaign to Prevent Heat Illness in Outdoor Workers in April 2011.

- **Protecting Retirement and Health Benefits Security:** The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) protects the retirement and health benefits security of our nation's workers and retirees. An important component of its responsibilities is to provide education and assistance to workers and employers.
  - In 2011, EBSA, working with the National Council of La Raza and the Certified Financial Planning Board, conducted its first webcast that was entirely in Spanish. The webcast focused on retirement savings issues for workers. This year, EBSA followed up by conducting a second webcast in Spanish, co-sponsored by Families USA that focused on health issues for workers. Both webcasts are archived and available on the EBSA website, and future webcasts are currently being planned.
  - EBSA has a number of publications and videos available in Spanish aimed at both workers and employers. Through its staff of Benefits Advisors, EBSA also conducts outreach to local communities and responds to queries from the Spanish-speaking public.

## Latino Unemployment Rates by State 2011 Annual Averages



\* Due to small sample sizes, Latino unemployment rates are not available for Maine, North Dakota, and Vermont.

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey