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Hispanic Map of the United States 2018

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Topic: Spanish and Hispanics in the United States

Abstract: Analysis of the Spanish language and the Hispanic population in the United States, based on demographic, educational, economic, social, political, and media indicators: October 2018.

Keywords: Hispanics, Latinos, Spanish, education, economics, politics, media, identity

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Introduction

On September 17, 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a law that declared the week of September 15 National Hispanic Heritage Week. Twenty years later, on August 17, 1988, Ronald W. Reagan transformed that week into National Hispanic Heritage Month by signing a bill submitted by Esteban Torres, a Democratic representative from California. Torres stated that the legislation's supporters "want the American people to learn of our heritage. We want the public to know that we share a legacy with the rest of the country, a legacy that includes artists, writers, Olympic champions, and leaders in business, government, cinema, and science."¹

Two years after the first official celebration of Hispanic heritage, the U.S. Census Bureau began including a question about Hispanic background on its survey, which made it possible to begin generating statistics about the country's Latino population.² "Are you Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin?" Although the answer makes it possible to distinguish between Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanic or Latino backgrounds (Argentinian, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spanish, among others), there is no doubt that the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" simplify far more complex historical, cultural, and even linguistic realities.

The terms also gloss over dissimilar characteristics and situations in the U.S. Latinos of Argentinian origin have an average annual household income of \$60,640 and a poverty rate of 11%; 39% have a bachelor's degree or higher, 76% are proficient in English, 58% own their own home, and 13% do not have health insurance. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Latinos of Honduran origin have an average income of \$36,800 and a poverty rate of 27%; only 11% have a

¹ See <https://bit.ly/2PaypKp>

² The 1930 census included the category "Mexican" when asking about race and ethnicity. See: <https://bit.ly/2PbKYoj> and <https://bit.ly/2LcY2YO>

bachelor's degree or higher, and only 28% own their own home; 46% are proficient in English, and 37% do not have health insurance (Flores 2017).

Despite these simplifications, the data generated from the 1970 census makes it possible to trace the evolution of the Hispanic population in the country, its current situation, the ways in which that situation has improved, and the areas in which Latinos still fall short of the U.S. average.

That is the goal of this report, the fourth edition of the “Hispanic Map of the United States,” an annual project that the Observatory of the Cervantes Institute at Harvard University began publishing in 2015. This annual report presents a general overview of the Hispanic and Spanish-speaking population in the U.S. This year, on the 50th anniversary of the declaration of Hispanic Heritage Week, it seeks to compare the Latino reality of five decades ago with that reality today. To achieve this, it examines the chief demographic, linguistic, educational, socioeconomic, and political indicators, organized thematically into six sections.

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The first section considers Hispanic demographics in the U.S., with data on their origins, physical distribution throughout the country, and development, as well as the latest published projections. The second focuses on the Spanish language, regarding both proficiency among Hispanics and the teaching of Spanish at the various educational levels. The third looks at the evolution of Latinos' educational performance and the fourth analyzes their socioeconomic status based on indicators of income, poverty, health coverage, home ownership, and internet access.

The fifth section examines the Hispanic presence in U.S. politics, with data on electoral participation, political demands, and Hispanic representatives, as well as a special focus on the midterm elections that will take place on November 6th of this year. Finally, the sixth section consists of information on use of media and film

1. Demographics

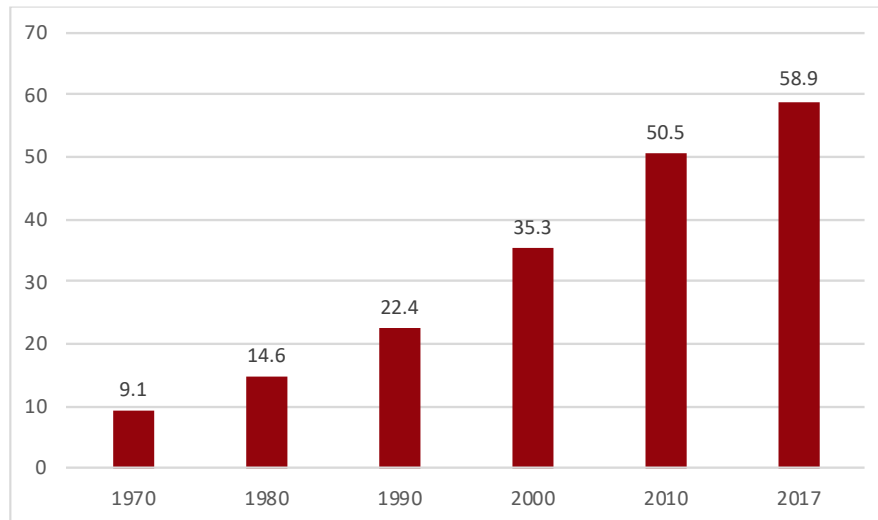
- 18.1% of the current U.S. population is Hispanic (58.9 million people), and projections suggest that this figure will reach 28.6% (111 million) in 2060.
- Of the 111 million Hispanics projected for 2060, 75.67% will be born in the U.S., versus 24.32% born abroad, a distribution that may influence racial and ethnic self-identification and the number of Spanish speakers.

In 1970, 9.1 million Hispanics lived in the U.S., representing 4.5% of the total population. The latest published figures now put that number at 58.9 million, or 18.1% (U.S. Census Bureau 2018a). In 48 years, the Hispanic population has increased by more than a factor of six, and its proportion of the population has quadrupled, making Hispanics the largest ethnic and racial minority in the country, ahead of the black and Asian populations (47.4 million and 22.2 million, respectively). According to the same census data, the non-Hispanic white population is 197.8 million, making it the only group whose percentage of the population has decreased (-0.2%) (ibid.).³

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³ When analyzing this data, we must bear in mind that the undocumented immigrant population is typically underrepresented. Based on migration inflows and outflows, a recent study placed this group at 16.7 million people, based on the most conservative estimates—5.4 million greater than the commonly accepted figure of 11.3 million (Fazel-Zarandi, Feinstein, and Kaplan 2018).

Figure 1. U.S. Hispanic population, in millions. Source: U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.; 2018a); Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, and Albert (2011).

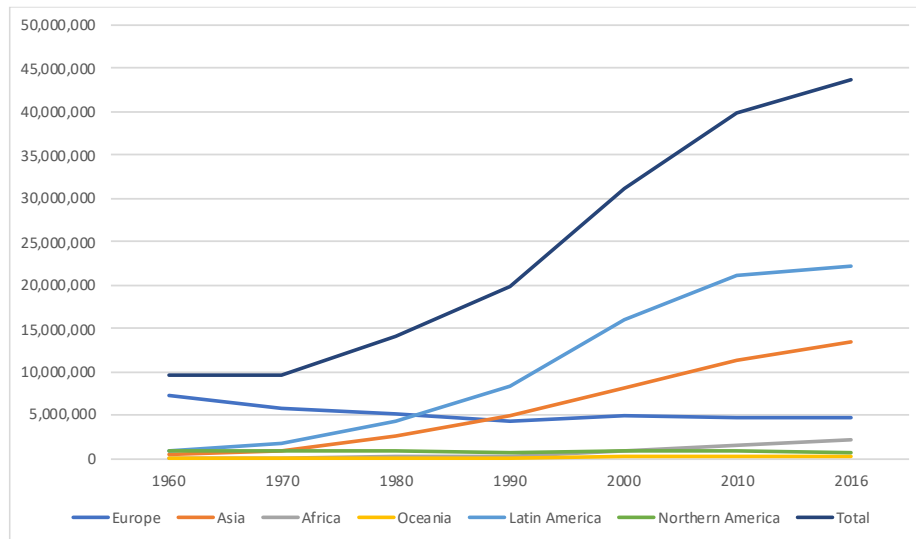


Despite the Hispanic population’s historic presence in what is today U.S. territory, especially in the southwest, this major population growth is driven, at least since the second half of the 20th century, by the increase in immigration from Latin America following the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (the Hart-Celler Act), which eliminated country-based migration quotas that had been imposed by an earlier law (Moreno-Fernández 2016). According to Pew Research estimates, without considering immigration, the number of Hispanics in the U.S. in 2015 would have been around 20 million (Lopez, Passel, and Rohal 2015), when in reality it exceeded 56 million. As shown in figure 2, of the immigrant population in the U.S. in the 1960s, over seven million came from Europe, followed by Canada⁴ with fewer than one million, and Latin America with around 900,000 (Migration Policy Institute n.d.). It was in the 1980s that Latin America beat out the other regions and became the chief source of immigrants to the U.S.

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⁴ Since the 1980s, “Northern America” has included not only Canada, but also Bermuda and other unclassified territories.

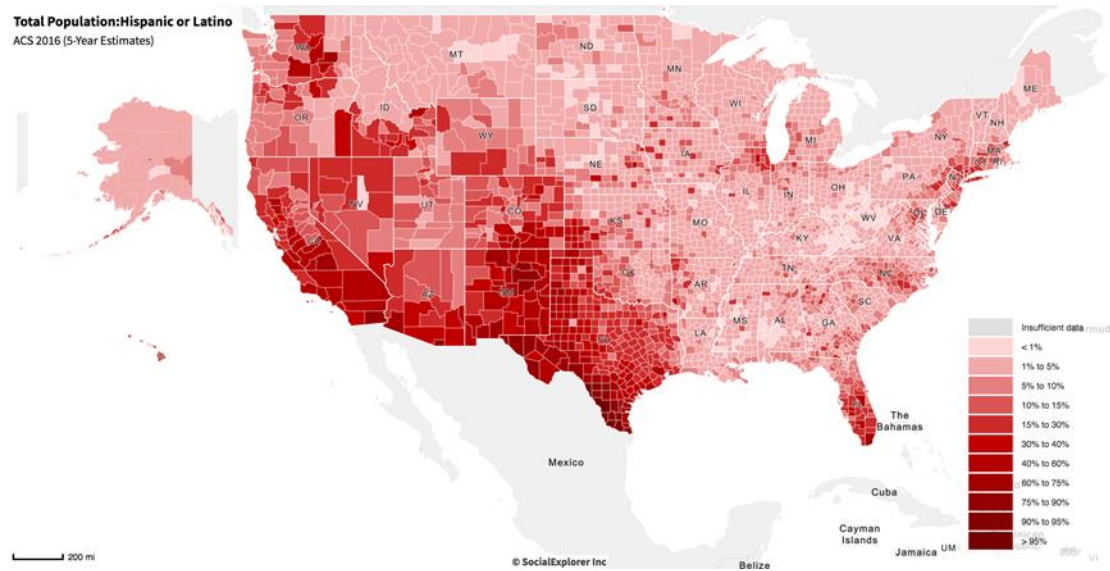
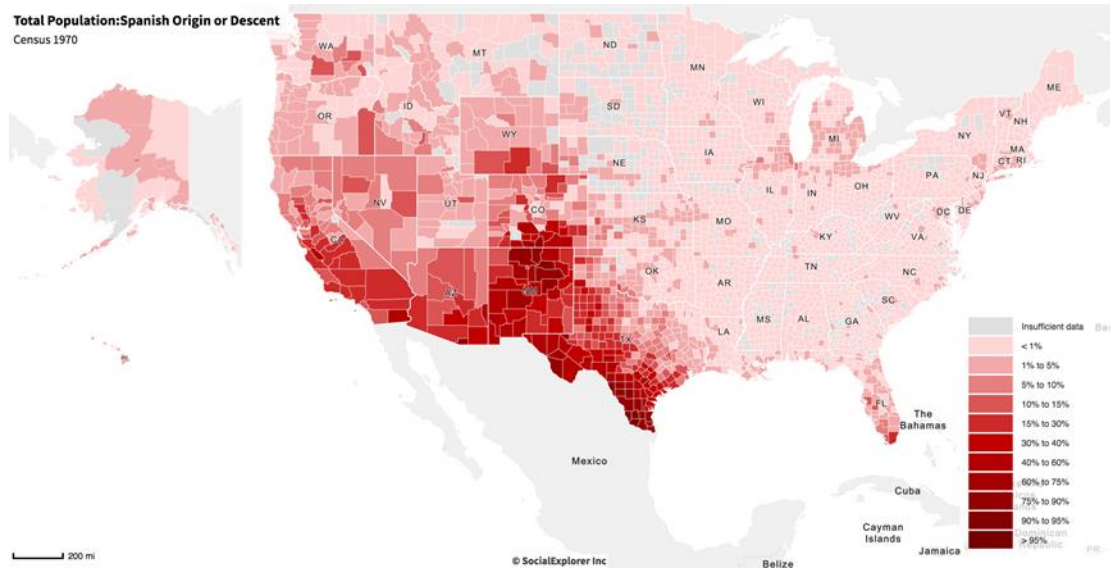
Figure 2. Immigrant population in the U.S. by region of origin, in millions, 1960-2016. Source: Migration Policy Institute (n.d.).



Since then, the Hispanic population has undergone notable changes not only in its size but also in its distribution in the country and composition. In terms of volume, the growth rate following the demographic boom of the 1980s has been gradually slowing: although the current decade is not yet over, it is possible to anticipate that population growth will be far lower than that of the previous decade: between 2010 and 2017, the Hispanic population increased 16.6%, versus 43.1% between 2000 and 2010. In this sense, the Asian population has been growing at a faster rate than the Hispanic population since 2010 (Krogstad 2017), at 3.1% versus 2.1% in 2017 (U.S. Census Bureau 2018a).

The distribution of the Hispanic population in the country has also changed in recent decades; although the greatest concentration remains in the southwest states, it has gradually expanded to the northeast, and to the major urban hubs of the east coast. The following maps compare the Latino presence of 1970 with that of today.

Figure 3. Distribution of U.S. Hispanic population by county, based on the 1970 census and the 2016 ACS.⁵ Source: Social Explorer.



According to the latest figures from the ACS (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: PEPASR6H), the states with the largest total number of Hispanics

⁵ The terms and definitions used by the census and the ACS (“Spanish Origin or Descent” in 1970 and “Hispanic or Latino” in 2016) reveal differences in the questions that make a strict comparison impossible, though we are still able to reflect on the population’s general progression. Alaska and Hawaii are not represented at the same scale as the rest of the territory.

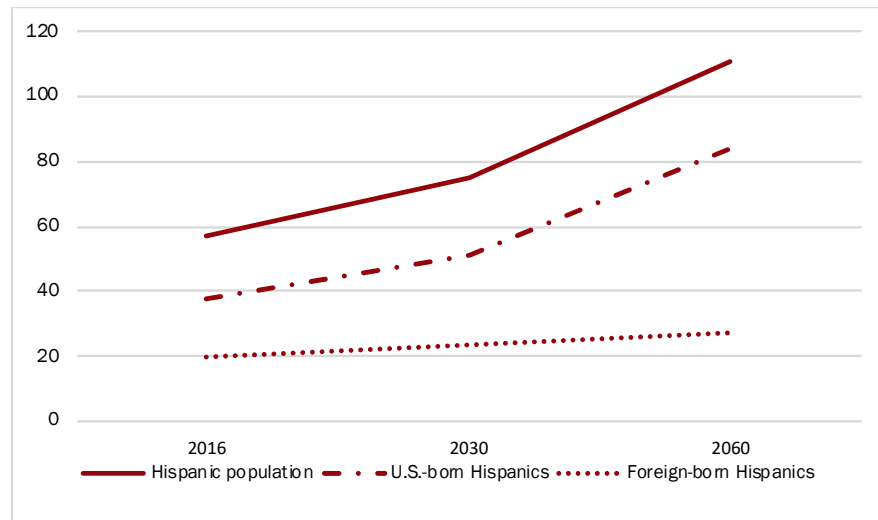
are California (15.48 million), Texas (11.16 million), Florida (5.37 million), New York (3.81 million), and Illinois (2.21 million), while those in which Hispanics make up the largest percentage of the population are New Mexico (48.77%), Texas (39.42%), California (39.15%), Arizona (31.39%), and Nevada (28.84%). Of the ten states with the largest total number of Latinos, those with the greatest increase in that population between 2000 and 2015 were Georgia (a 118.8% increase), Florida (85.6%), Arizona (62.4%), Texas (60.4%), and Colorado (58.4%) (Flores 2017). Of all 50 states, the greatest percentage increases took place in South Dakota (190%), Tennessee (176%), South Carolina (172%), Alabama (164%), and Kentucky (154%) (Stepler and Lopez 2016).

Finally, in the final decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, there have been changes in the Hispanic population's places of origin. Mexico remains the country of origin of most Latinos (62.31% of the total), followed by Puerto Rico (9.5%), Cuba (3.94%), El Salvador (3.93%), and the Dominican Republic (3.54%) (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: B03001). However, from 2007 until at least 2015, the Mexican-born population decreased by 6% while the Central American-born population saw marked growth (a 19% increase from El Salvador, 31% from Guatemala, and 32% from Honduras, for a Central American average of 25%) (Cohn, Passel, and Gonzalez-Barreda 2017).

This decrease in immigration from Latin America and in particular from Mexico, whose behavior largely determines the total figures, is transforming the composition of the Hispanic population in the U.S. The percentage of Latinos born abroad dropped from its peak of 40.1% in 2000 to 34.4% in 2015 (Flores 2017). According to the latest demographic projections from the U.S. Census Bureau, this trend will continue in the coming decades. The Hispanic population will be around 111 million in 2060, 27.5% of the total population of 403.7 million (Vespa, Armstrong, and Medina 2018). Of those 111 million, 84 million (75.67%) will be born in the U.S., versus a little over 27 million (24.32%) who will be born abroad.

This increase in the U.S. Latino population may have major consequences for the presence of the Spanish language in the country, given that, as mentioned in section 2.1, there is a gradual loss of Spanish in the generations following migration.

Figure 4. Projections of the Hispanic population through 2060, in millions. Source: Vespa, Armstrong, and Medina (2018).



These figures are somewhat lower than earlier projections (Colby and Ortman 2015), which placed the Latino population at 119 million (28.6% of the total population) by 2060. These population estimates do not consider two elements that may prove key to the evolution of the Hispanic population in the U.S. First, natural disasters or the political climate, such as changes in immigration policies or political instability, may directly affect population flows (Vespa, Armstrong, and Medina 2018). Second, changes in racial and ethnic self-identification can also change the size of these groups in ways that such figures cannot predict (ibid). Pew Research has demonstrated that self-identification as Hispanic or Latino decreases with the generations: while 97% of those born abroad consider themselves Hispanic, this percentage decreases to 77% by the third generation, and to 50% in the fourth and following generations (Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera, and López 2017). Thus, in addition to affecting the future of the Spanish language, the

growth of the Latino population born in the U.S. may also impact trends in self-identification and, consequently, the official size of the group.

2. Language Proficiency and Use

- With 41 million speakers in 2017, Spanish is the most spoken language in the U.S. after English.
- A total of 7.4 million primary- and secondary school students studied Spanish in the 2014-15 academic year, versus 1.3 million who studied French, 330,898 who studied German, and 227,086 who studied Chinese.
- 712,240 university students studied Spanish in 2016, a decrease of 17.3% since 2009.

Although the U.S. Census first asked about citizens' English proficiency in 1890, the question used today first appeared in 1980 (Leeman 2018). According to Leeman (2018: 7-8), the new version of the question no longer acted as a stand-in for national or ethno-racial origin (the question about Hispanic or Latino origin was added in 1970), but instead aimed to produce statistics about languages to comply with legislation and regulations on bilingual education, English-language education, and the provision of election materials in other languages.

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Figure 5. The question on language used in the U.S. Census. Source: U.S. Census 2000 Form⁶.

11 a. Does this person speak a language other than English at home?

Yes

No → *Skip to 12*

b. What is this language?

(For example: Korean, Italian, Spanish, Vietnamese)

c. How well does this person speak English?

Very well

Well

Not well

Not at all

Although the census and the American Community Survey (ACS) offer the most reliable estimates on the number of Spanish speakers in the country, they must be regarded as approximations, as several difficult-to-quantify realities prevent a more precise estimate. These factors include the number of non-Hispanics who are proficient in Spanish but do not speak it at home, and the number of Hispanics born abroad who speak Spanish but who, because they arrived in the U.S. at a young age, are not proficient in it.

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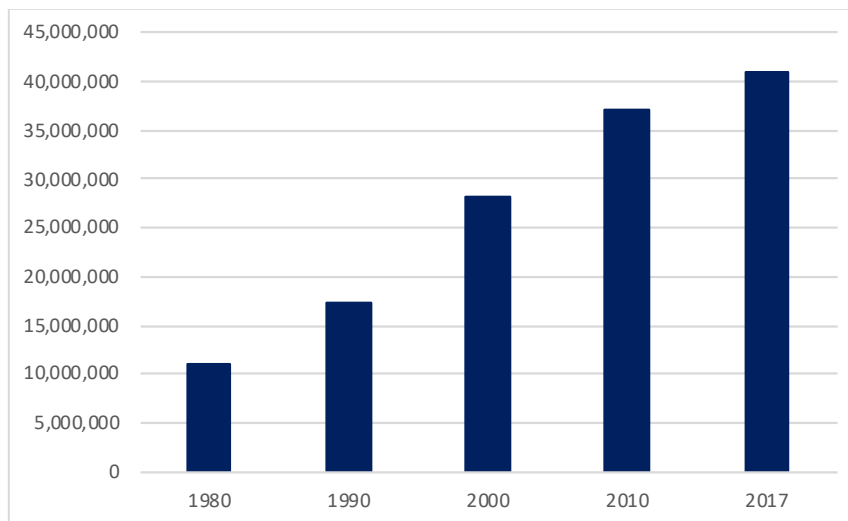
2.1. Spanish Speakers

In 1980, the first year for which data is available, 11.12 million people spoke Spanish at home in the U.S. (Ortman and Shin 2011). At that time, it was the country's most spoken language after English, the sole language of 187.19 million U.S. Americans. In third place was Italian (1.62 million speakers), followed by German (1.59 million), and French (1.55 million). Thirty-six years later, the number

⁶ Available at: <https://bit.ly/201wsDc>

of Spanish speakers has nearly quadrupled to 41 million, according to the latest available data (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: C16006; C16005): Spanish remains in second place after English, which is now the sole language of 237.81 million people. However, the following three languages by number of speakers are not European, but Asian: Chinese (3.46 million), Tagalog (1.75 million), and Vietnamese (1.45 million), respectively (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: B16001).

Figure 6. Spanish speakers older than five in the U.S., in millions (Ortman and Shin 2011 and U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2017: C16006, C16005).



Of those 41 million Spanish speakers, 38.4 million are Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau/American Fact Finder 2017: C16006), and 2.6 million are individuals who do not identify as Hispanic but who also speak Spanish at home (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: C16005).

The only projections currently available anticipate between 39.39 and 43.13 million Spanish speakers by 2020, depending on immigration patterns (Ortman and Shin 2011). High net migration would result in 43.1 million Spanish speakers (41.11 Hispanics and 2.01 non-Hispanics), and low net migration would result in 39.49 million Spanish speakers (38.18 Hispanics and 1.97 non-Hispanics).

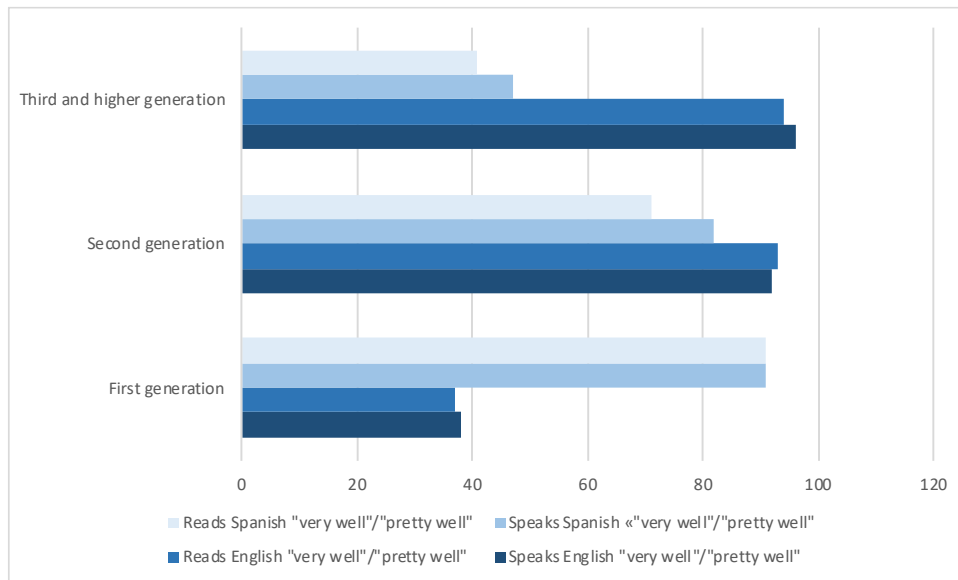
Therefore, the behavior of migration from Latin America will influence the future of Spanish in the U.S., as we know that linguistic proficiency among Hispanics varies by place of birth and, for U.S. American Hispanics, by generation. This is not a defining characteristic of the Spanish language: to the contrary, notwithstanding a few isolated groups, “all other ethnolinguistic minorities in the United States lose their ethnic mother tongue fairly completely by their second or third generation of encounter with American urban life” (Fishman, in Crawford 1992: 168). Fishman writes that the only difference is that there is a “slightly longer retention of Spanish, due to the continued influx of monolingual Spanish speakers into their urban barrios” (ibid).

According to an analysis by Pew Research, the use of Spanish decreased by 5% in the country’s 25 largest metropolitan areas between 2006 and 2015 (Krogstad and Lopez 2017). Unfortunately, there is no data that would facilitate a comparison between the evolution of Spanish and that of other languages, such as Chinese, making it impossible to determine if this is a generalized trend among all non-English languages or if the behavior of Spanish is governed by its inherent dynamics.

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Figure 7 represents active and passive linguistic proficiency in English and Spanish among first, second, third, and subsequent Hispanic generations. Clearly, the origin of U.S. American Latinos is a relevant factor in the determination of the Spanish language’s future in the U.S.

Figure 7. Linguistic proficiency of Hispanics in the U.S. by generation. Source: Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, and Velasco 2012.



Thus, 61% of Hispanics born abroad speak Spanish as their primary language, versus 8% of second-generation Hispanics, and 1% of third- and subsequent-generation Hispanics (Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, and Velasco 2012). English proficiency follows just the opposite trajectory: 6% of the first generation speaks English as their primary language, a figure that increases to 40% in the second generation and 69% in the third and subsequent generations. Bilingualism among Hispanics peaks at 53% in the second generation, compared to 33% in the first generation and 29% in the third and subsequent generations.

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Of the total number of people with limited English proficiency (LEP), 16.4 million speak Spanish as their primary language (Batalova and Zong 2016). Persons are considered to have LEP when they report on the census that they speak English less than “very well.” Spanish speakers make up 77% of the U.S.-born LEP population (3.6 million) and 61% of the immigrant LEP population (12.8 million).

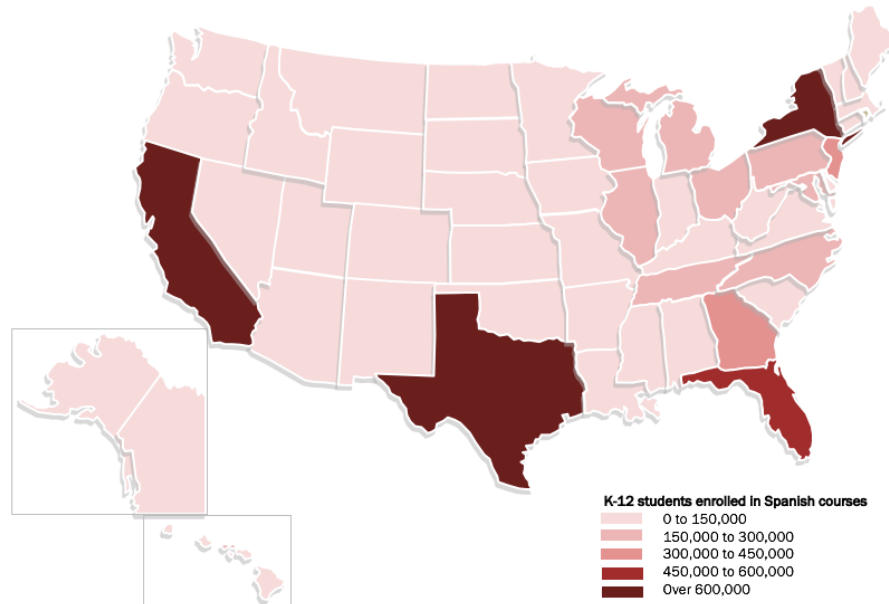
2.2. Spanish Education in the U.S.

Spanish is the most studied language in the U.S. at all levels of education. A total of 7.4 million primary and secondary school students were enrolled in Spanish classes in the 2014-15 academic year, far more than studied French (1.3 million), German (330,898), and Chinese (227,086) (American Councils for International Education 2017). There are 8,177 Spanish programs at public and private high schools, 46% of the country's total language programs, followed by French (21.03%), German (8.71%), Latin (8.51%), and Chinese (6.43%). In terms of primary education, there are 112 Spanish programs (38.5% of the total), according to the report cited above, once again followed by French (19.9%), and then by Chinese (11.7%), Latin (11%), and German (5.2%).

However, to properly assess this data, a few points must be clarified. First, study of foreign languages is not common: only 19.66% of primary and secondary students are enrolled in foreign language classes. In 16 states, study of a foreign language is not a requirement for graduation. Furthermore, the available figures suggest a decline in the study of non-English languages: in 2008, 4.2 million primary students and 10.5 million secondary school students were enrolled in foreign language classes (Rhodes and Pufahl 2014); seven years later, a study by the American Councils for International Education reported that 10.6 million K-12 students were enrolled in such classes in the 2014-15 academic year. In 1997, those figures were 2.2 million primary students and 12 million secondary students (Rhodes and Pufahl 2014).

Second, there are major differences between the states: in D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, Vermont, and West Virginia, over 30% of students study a non-English language, whereas, in Arizona, Arkansas, and New Mexico, less than 10% do. These disparities hold true in the case of Spanish: fewer than 20,000 students are enrolled in Spanish classes in North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and West Virginia, compared to more than 600,000 in California, Texas, and New York.

Figure 8. Number of primary and secondary school students (K-12) enrolled in Spanish classes by state, 2014-15. Data from the American Councils for International Education 2017.



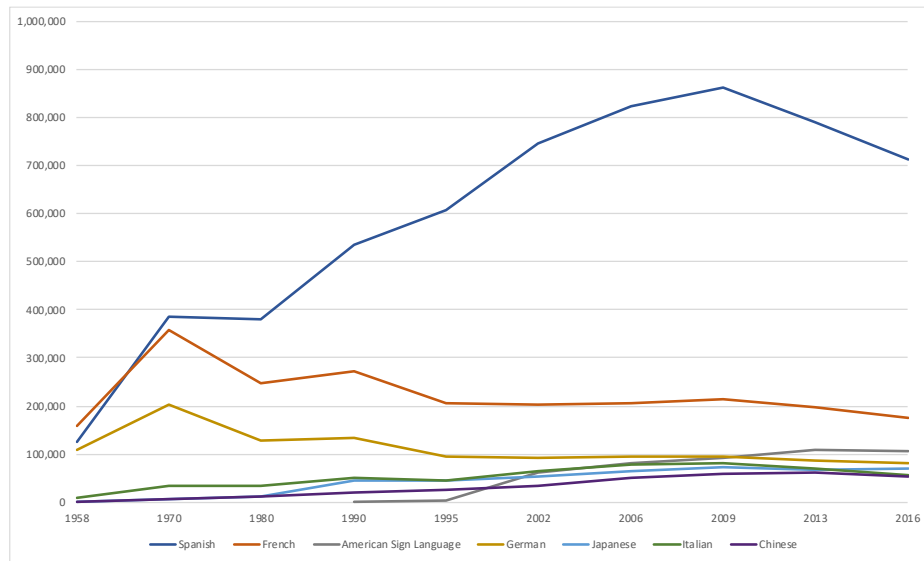
Despite the major decline in students in foreign language programs, some legislative changes are being implemented to encourage the study of non-English languages: in November 2016, California repealed a law requiring all classes be taught in English (Hopkinson 2017), and Massachusetts did the same in November 2017 (Vaznis 2017); in the coming years, it will be possible to assess whether these legal measures translate into an increase in the number of programs for foreign language study and the number of students enrolled in such programs. Furthermore, 32 states and D.C. have approved the “Seal of Biliteracy,” a distinction that appears on the high school diploma of students who have achieved proficiency in two or more languages.⁷

Spanish is also the most studied language at the university level, with 712,240 students, 50.2% of the total number of students studying foreign languages

⁷ More information available at sealofbiliteracy.org.

(Looney and Lusin 2018). This has been the case since Spanish overtook French in 1970. The following chart shows the evolution of the seven languages most studied at U.S. universities.

Figure 9. Students of the seven languages most studied at U.S. universities. Source: Looney and Lusin 2018.

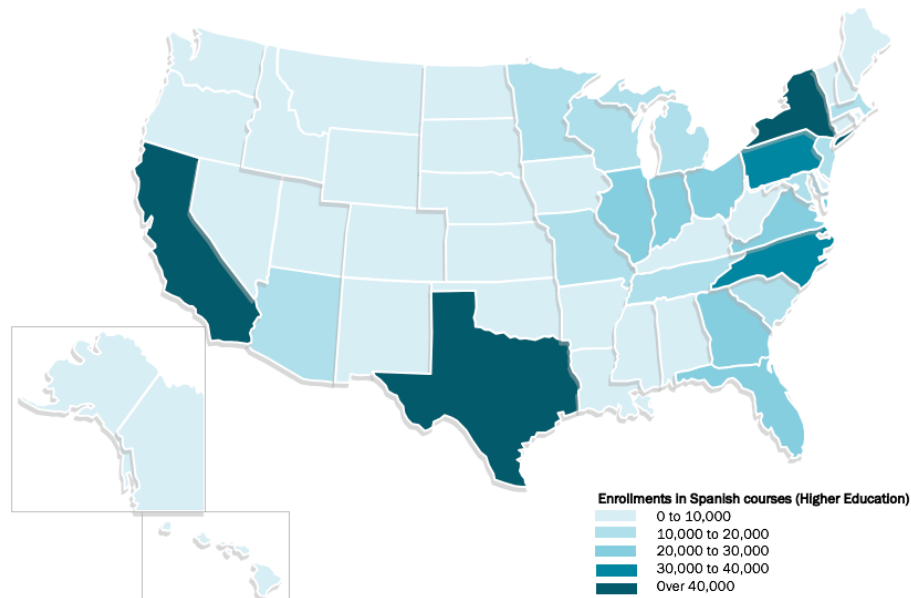


As the chart indicates, in 1958, French was the most studied language in the U.S., with a total of 157,900 students. Spanish became the most popular language among U.S. university students in the 1970s, and it remains the most popular today. The number of students in Spanish classes increased every year until 2009, when this number began to drop for Spanish and all other foreign languages, except for Japanese (3%) and Korean (12.1%). Between 2009 and 2016, enrollment in non-English language programs decreased by 15.3% at the national level. The numbers had not fallen since 1970 (except for an isolated decrease in 1995). Then, in 1980, after a decade of decline, 7.3 of every 100 university students were enrolled in language classes; by 2016, it was 7.5 in 100.

As for Spanish, the number of students enrolled has decreased by 17.3% at the national level since 2009 and reached 712,240 students in the fall of 2016. This

was the first decrease since the Modern Language Association began keeping records: enrollment in Spanish courses had even increased in 1995 when the total number of enrollments in foreign language courses dropped. The drop affected every state except Missouri and New Mexico, which, during those six years, saw 6% and 3.4% growth, respectively. At the opposite extreme, enrollment in Spanish language courses decreased by over 30% in Alaska (-54.2%), D.C. (-33.9%), Illinois (-36.24%), North Dakota (-40.30%), and West Virginia (-30.93%). As can be seen in the map below, the concentration of students by state, in which California, New York, and Texas make up 26.1% of the total, is nearly the same as at the primary and secondary level.

Figure 10. University students in Spanish classes by state, Fall 2016. Source: Modern Language Association. Language Enrollment Database, 1958-2016⁸.



⁸ Available at: https://apps.mla.org/flsurvey_search

3. Educational Landscape

- The percentage of Hispanics that have completed secondary education has increased from 59% in 1990 to 88% in 2015.
- The high school dropout rate has decreased by 20 percentage points since 1992, reaching 8.6% in 2016.
- Of Hispanic students in four-year college programs, 55.7% finish their studies within six years, as compared with 71.7% of white students and 75.8% of Asian students.

In 2017, 73% of Latinos believed that improving the education system should be the top priority of the president of the U.S. and Congress (Pew Research 2017b). In 2016, when asked about the most important issues in the presidential election, education was one of Latinos' biggest concerns, at the same level as healthcare and terrorism, and second only to the economy (Krogstad 2016). Education's presence among Hispanics' political concerns reveals the importance they place on it: 64% of Hispanics say a university education is a key part of the American Dream (compared to 50% among whites and 48% among African Americans). Similarly, 41% believe that education is the most important element in the path to economic success, versus 27% of whites and 34% of African Americans (*The Washington Post* 2014). The value that the Latino population places on education may be partially responsible for the improvement in the levels of enrollment and completion at the various levels of education, though major disparities with the country's other racial and ethnic groups remain.

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3.1. Primary and Secondary Education

In 2013, Hispanic children represented 25% of all children enrolled in Pre-K through 12th grade, a 6% increase since 2003; the Hispanic student population is expected to make up 29% of the total by 2025 (National Center for Education Statistics 2017). Furthermore, the number of Hispanics on the teaching force is

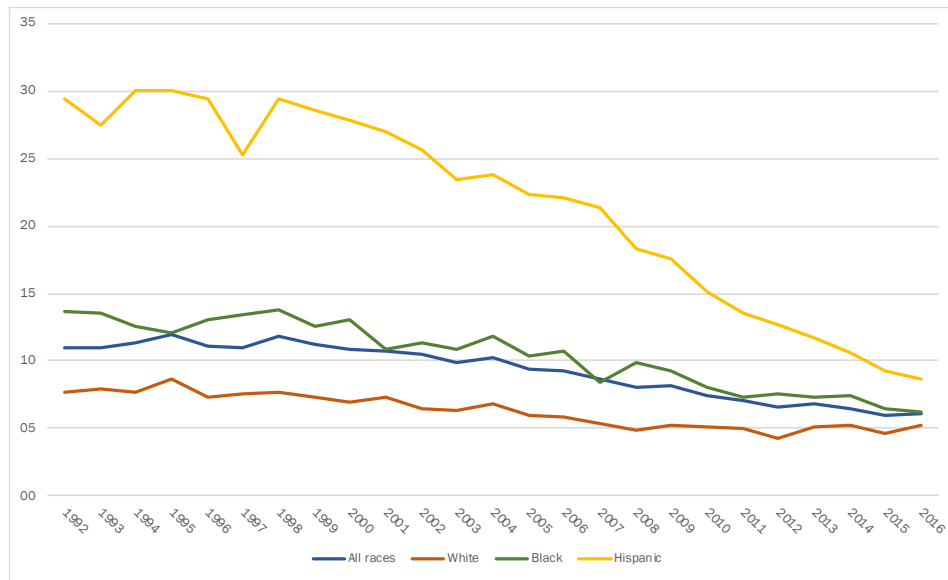
gradually increasing. In 1987-88, Hispanics accounted for 3% of public-school teachers, but by 2015-16 they accounted for 8.8%; in private schools, they accounted for 5.2% in 2011-12, the last year for which data is available (NCES 2017. 209.10).

But, apart from the growing Hispanic presence in classrooms, all indications suggest constant improvement in Latinos' academic performance. In 2015, 88% of Hispanics aged 18 to 24 had completed secondary school, an increase of 29% since 1990 (59%), although the rate remains below other groups and the national average (95% for whites, 92% for African Americans, 97% for Asians, 94% for Pacific Islanders, 82% for American Natives and Native Alaskans, for a national average of 93%) (National Center for Education Statistics 2017). Birthplace influences the rate at which students complete their studies, especially among Hispanics: 79% of Latinos born abroad between ages 18 and 24 completed their secondary school studies in 2015, compared to 92% of first-generation Hispanics and 90% of second- and subsequent-generation Hispanics. Among non-Hispanics, 95% of those born abroad complete their secondary schooling, followed by 98% of the first generation and 94% of subsequent generations. Given that Hispanics born in the U.S. represent a growing percentage of the Latino population, one can expect this and other indicators to improve over time.

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The continual decrease in the secondary school dropout rate among Hispanics aged 16 to 24 confirms that advances are being made in education. In 2016, that rate was 8.6%, a 20.8% decrease since 1992, when it was 29.4% (NCES 2017. 219.70). Although Latinos do have a greater dropout rate, the difference with respect to other groups has dropped dramatically: in 1992, the Hispanic rate was 18.4 points higher than the national average (11% versus 29.4%); by 2016 that difference had shrunk to 2.5 points (6.1% versus 8.6%).

Figure 11. Secondary school dropout rate over time, by race and ethnicity, 1992-2016. Source: NCES 2017. 219.70.



Once again, birthplace has a major impact: in 2014, the dropout rate was 8% among Hispanics born in the U.S. and 21% among Hispanics born abroad. Place of origin also plays a determining role among Pacific Islanders (7% for those born in the U.S. and 23% for those born abroad) and American Natives and Native Alaskans (11% and 22%); this is not true among African Americans (7% and 6%), Asians (2% and 3%), or whites (4% in both categories) (NCES 2017). The main reason given for young Latinos leaving school is the need to support their families financially (74%), along with poor English proficiency (around 50%), and dislike for school and the feeling that they do not need more education for their desired careers (around 40%) (Lopez 2009).

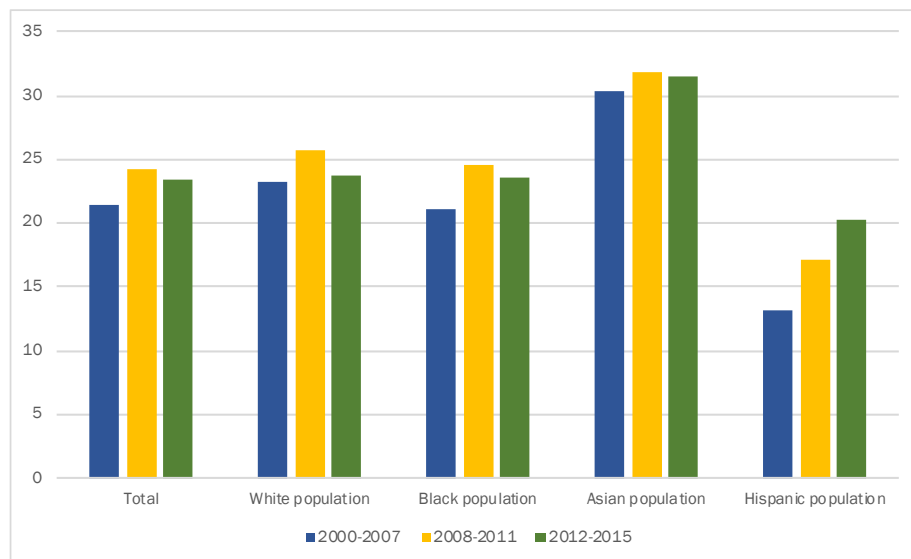
3.2. University Education

The Hispanic population’s evolution in university-level education is similar to its experience at the primary and secondary levels: benchmarks are gradually improving, and disparities with other groups are shrinking, though they still exist. In 2016, 39.2% of Hispanics aged 18 to 24 were enrolled in an institution of higher

learning, in two- or four-year programs (NCES 2017. 302.60). Since 2003, the first year in which NCES used the same ethnic and racial breakdown it uses today, that figure has increased by 15.7%. Furthermore, the disparity with the national average has decreased from 14.3 points in 2003 (37.8% among the general population aged 18 to 24 versus 23.5% of the Hispanic population) to 2% in 2016 (41.2% versus 39.2%).

Hispanic enrollment increased both during the Great Recession and in the period thereafter, in marked contrast to other groups and the national average (Schmidt 2018a). During the recession (2008-2011) total Hispanic enrollment grew by 0.8 million over the previous period (2000-2007) and it grew by 0.7 million in the following years (2012-2015). While the enrollment percentage for the white and Asian populations aged 15 to 34 returned to pre-crisis levels, the levels for Hispanic and black populations remained higher.

Figure 12. Percentage of population aged 15 to 34 pursuing a post-secondary degree. Source: Schmidt 2018a.



The increase in enrollment among Hispanics was similar for two-year institutions (4.8% in the period before the recession versus 8% in the following years, a 3.2%

increase) and four-year institutions (7.1% versus 10.5%, a 3.4% increase). Enrollments tend to increase during economic contractions, both as a means of improving job readiness and because the shortage of employment opportunities decreases the opportunity cost of devoting time to study (ibid.). Therefore, in the coming years, it will be essential to observe if these trends continue or if they are influenced by the impact of the Great Recession of 2008.

Despite Hispanics' undoubted improvement in university education, some nuances should be mentioned. First, according to an analysis published by *The New York Times*, the mechanism of affirmative action has not been sufficient to reduce the disparities between the general university-age population and that group's percentage of students. Among Hispanics, this difference was 3% in 1980, while in 2015 it was 9% (22% of the university-age population versus 13% of first-year students) (Ashkenas, Park, and Pearce 2017).

Furthermore, race and ethnicity are associated with differences in how long it takes a student to complete a degree. According to the annual report of the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, which analyzes data from students who began their studies six years earlier, 55.7% of Hispanics at four-year public institutions finished within six years, ten points higher than black students (45.9%), and far behind white and Asian students (71.7% and 75.8%, respectively) (Shapiro, Dundar, Huie, Wakhungy, Yuan, Nathan, and Bhimdiwali 2017). Furthermore, Hispanics are more likely to attend two-year institutions than students of other ethnic and racial groups: 46% of the total number of post-secondary degree students, compared to a national average of 36.6% (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 2018).

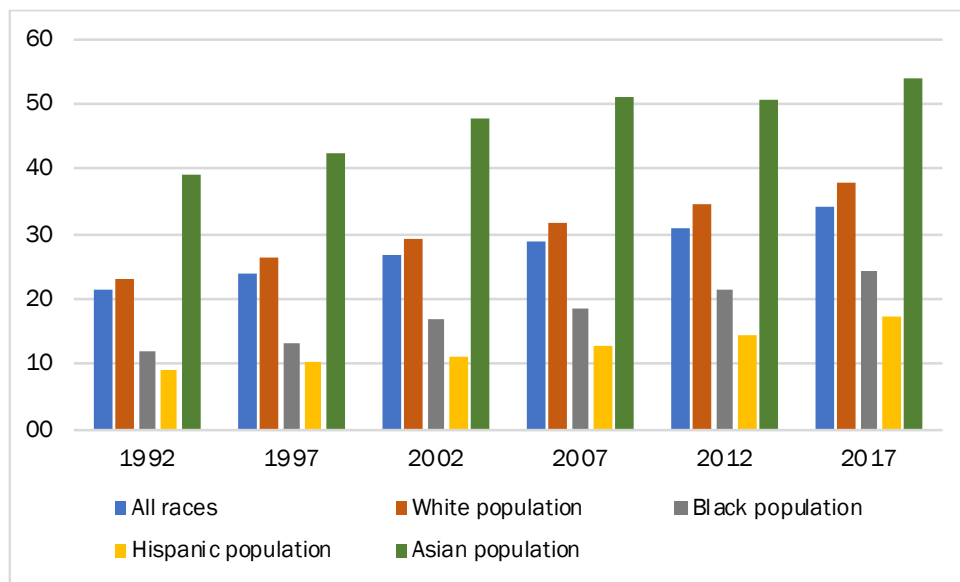
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3.3. Average Education Level

As a consequence of the above trends, the last few decades have seen an improvement in the average education level of the Hispanic population. Whereas

in 1997 only 55% of Hispanics aged 25 and older had completed secondary school, in 2017 that percentage reached 71%, though, again, that figure remains behind the graduation rate for whites (94%), Asians (87%), and African Americans (87%) (Schmidt 2018b). Here, too, place of birth affects the odds of completing secondary school: 15% of U.S.-born Hispanics did not complete secondary school, as opposed to 76% of those born abroad (ibid.).

Figure 13. Percentage of the population with a university degree or higher. Source: NCES 2017. 104.10.



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The university graduation rate has also increased, although, as is clear from the above chart, growth of that rate among Hispanics between 1992 and 2017 was the slightest of all groups and, consequently, lower than the average (7.9% versus an average of 12.8%, 14.9% among whites, 12.5% among African Americans, and 14.5% among Asians). Not to mention, the percentage of Latinos with post-secondary degrees of any level remains 17% below the national average. Therefore, these benchmarks reveal the same situation as the earlier indicators: there have been significant improvements among the Hispanic population in the past few decades, but the results remain far behind the average for the overall U.S. population. The differences between foreign-born and U.S.-born Hispanics are also

repeated in this category: according to data from 2015, of the foreign-born Latino population aged 25 to 34, only 11% have a bachelor's degree or some post-secondary degree, compared to 20% of U.S.-born Hispanics (NCES 2017. 104.60). Among Asians in the U.S., the difference is less drastic and reversed: 61.7% of those born in the U.S. have completed post-secondary degrees, versus 66% of those born in other countries.

4. Economic and Socioeconomic Trends

- The annual per-capita income among the non-Hispanic white population (\$38,487) is nearly double that of the Hispanic population (\$19,537).
- The proportion of Hispanics living below the poverty level reached the historic low of 18.3% in 2017.
- In 2017, 16.1% of the Latino population lacked health insurance, versus 11.6% of the black population, 7.3% of the Asian population, and 6.3% of the white population.
- Only 67.5% of Hispanic households have a computer, and 81.8% have a smartphone.

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Today, Hispanics have a buying power of 1.5 trillion dollars, a 203% increase since 2000, giving Hispanics 10.3% of the country's total buying power. This figure is expected to increase to 11.2% by 2022, though this growth is slower than that of Asian Americans (Weeks 2018). The number of Latino-owned businesses and the value of those businesses are also growing. According to data from Geoscape (2017), the number of Latino businesses in the U.S. increased by 31.6% between 2012 and 2017, compared to a growth rate of only 13.8% among other racial and ethnic groups. A total of 4.37 million such businesses generate \$700 billion in the U.S. economy.

However, as with educational indicators, Hispanics' economic situation remains behind that of other racial and ethnic groups and behind the national average, despite gradual improvement. Furthermore, the Great Recession of 2008 impeded economic performance among the entire population, such that the past several years have been spent trying to return to pre-crisis income, poverty, and employment levels.

4.1. Income and Poverty

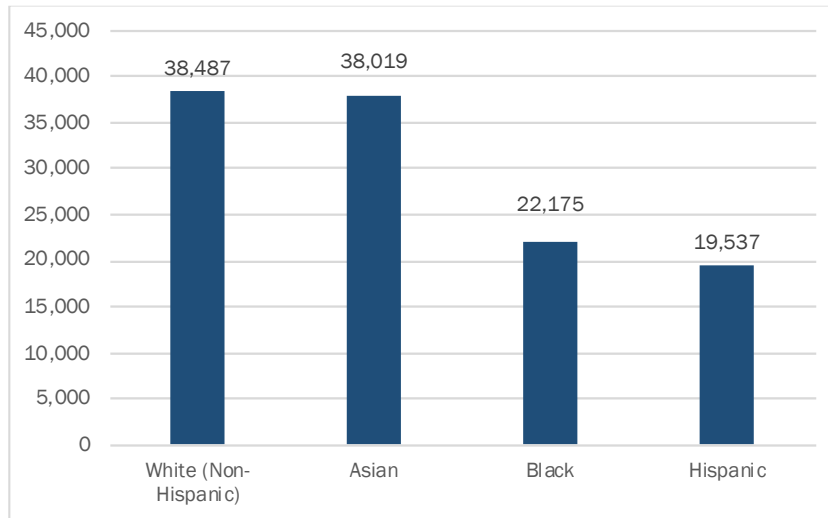
The average per-capita annual income among Hispanics in 2017 was \$19,537 (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: S1902), compared to \$38,487 among the non-Hispanic white population, \$38,019 among the Asian population, and \$22,175 among the black population. At the low point of the Great Recession, in 2010, per-capita income among Hispanics reached \$14,801, compared to \$26,059 for the U.S. population as a whole. In terms of household income, those headed by Hispanics have an average annual income of \$47,675, below that of those headed by whites (\$65,041) and Asians (\$81,431), and ahead only of those headed by African Americans (\$39,490) (Semega, Fontenot, and Kollar 2017).

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Since 1973, average per-capita income has increased by 72.5% for Latinos, from \$12,136 to \$20,937 in 2017⁹ (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.-b). The Hispanic and African American populations have seen the greatest rate growth, with growth around 95%, versus 69.3% growth among the white population and 55.1% growth among the Asian population (data on the Asian population goes back only to 1993). As with many other indicators, improvements have not been large enough to bridge initial disparities.

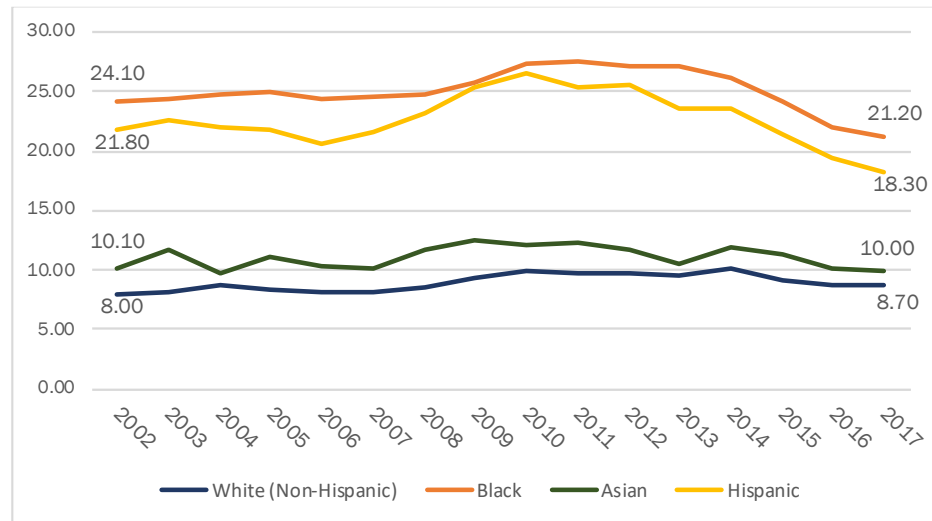
⁹ In 2017 dollars. The amounts reported by the census in these charts differs from those reported by American FactFinder for the same year; in any case, it is still possible to observe general trends since 1973.

Figure 14. Per-capita income by race and ethnicity, 2016 Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: S1902.



As for poverty, improvements have been moderate and slow. From 1972 to the present day, the proportion of the Hispanic population living below the poverty level has decreased by 4.5 percentage points (from 22.8% to 18.3% in 2017), and the national average has increased from 11.9% in 1972 to 12.3% today (U.S. Census Bureau 2018b). The poverty rate among the Latino population hit a high in 1994, with 30.7% living below the poverty level. That number slowly decreased until the Great Recession, when it again began to increase, reaching 26.5% in 2010. Today it is 18.3% (ibid.). As is clear from figure 15, the Hispanic population behaves similarly to other racial and ethnic groups, among which inequality has decreased slightly, or even increased over the past 15 years; consequently, disparities between the groups persist.

Figure 15. Percent of the population living below the poverty line by race and ethnicity (2002-2017). Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2018b.

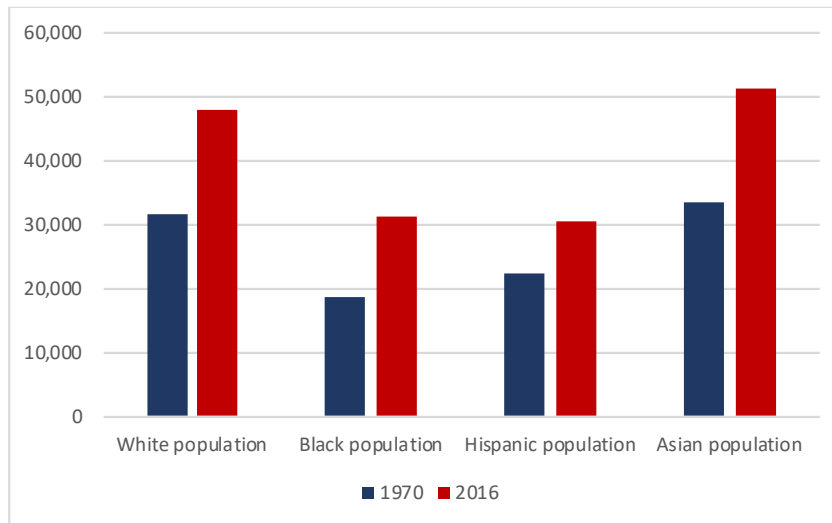


These disparities hold across age groups. The black population has the highest child poverty rate, with 30.8% of those under 18 living below the poverty level; that same figure is 26.6% for the Hispanic population, 11.1% for the Asian population, and 9.5% for the white population; among those ages 18 to 64, those percentages reduce to 18.9% among blacks, 15.8% among Hispanics, 9.5% among Asians, and 9.2% among whites. Finally, 18.7% of the black population older than 65 lives below the poverty level, followed by 17.4% of senior Hispanics, 11.8% of senior Asians, and 8.1% of senior whites (Semega, Fontenot, and Kollar 2017).

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Furthermore, a recent Pew Research study on intragroup inequality highlighted that the median Hispanic household income is below that of other ethnic and racial groups and that it is has grown less than that of all other groups since 1970 (Kochhar and Cilluffo 2018). The Hispanic and white populations have the least internal inequality: the top-earning 10% of Hispanics earn 7.8 times the lowest-earning 10%, whereas, among the Asian population, the income at the 90th percentile represents 10.7% of the 10th percentile (ibid.).

Figure 16. Median household income by racial and ethnic group (1970-2016). Source: Kochhar and Cilluffo 2018.



The unemployment rate among Hispanics was 4.7% last August, two tenths of a point higher than in July, and the lowest it has been since 2008. After the increase in unemployment in the final months of 2008, all groups began returning to pre-Great Recession levels of unemployment. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), in August 2018, unemployment was at 4.7% among Hispanics, 3.4% among whites, 6.3% among blacks, and 3% among Asians.

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4.2. Homeownership and Health Insurance

In 2017, the homeownership rate among Latinos was 46.2%, lower than in 2006 and 2007, when nearly half of Hispanic families lived in homes they owned. The current rate is nearly 18% lower than the U.S. average of 63.9% (Hispanic Wealth Project 2018). According to the census, the Hispanic homeownership rate has increased by 4.8% since 1994, from 41.2% to 46% in 2016; homeownership has increased among the white population 1.9% (from 70% to 71.9%), decreased among the black population by 0.7% (from 42.3% to 41.6%), and increased among the Asian population by 4.1% (from 51.3% to 55.3%) (U.S. Census Bureau 2018c).

In terms of medical coverage, 16.1% of Hispanics did not have health insurance in 2017, versus 11.6% of blacks, 7.3% of Asians, and 6.3% of whites (Berchick, Hood, and Barnett 2018). The percentage of Hispanics with private health insurance is once again the lowest of all groups (53.5%), and it is the demographic group with the second highest rate of insurance through government plans (39.5%), behind only the black population (44.1%) (ibid.).

As with many of the other benchmarks discussed in this report, place of birth is associated with key differences. In this case, 49% of Hispanics born abroad lacked health insurance, versus 18% of those born in the U.S. (Krogstad and Lopez 2014). Furthermore, although the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) represented a major improvement for the Hispanic population, many states with large Latino populations—including Texas and Florida, with a combined Hispanic population of 16.5 million—have not expanded their Medicaid programs within the framework of that law, which has limited the scope of the reform. Thus, before July 2014, 24% of adult Hispanics between 19 and 24 living in states that expanded Medicaid did not have health insurance, versus 46% of those in states that did not expand it (Doty, Beutel, Rasmussen, and Collins 2015).

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A second report by the Commonwealth Fund shows that differences in access to healthcare between the black and Hispanic populations and all others decreased between 2013 and 2015, largely in states that expanded Medicaid (Hayes, Riley, Radley, and McCarthy 2017). In the face of political movements to reform the ACA, UnidosUS has asserted that a repeal would result in a loss of coverage for six million Hispanics (National Hispanic Leadership Agenda 2017).

4.3. Cell Phones and Internet Access

The gap in internet use by racial and ethnic groups has practically disappeared: according to data from the Pew Research Center (2018a), the internet is used by

89% of the white population, 87% of the black population, and 88% of the Hispanic population; only eight years ago, those figures were 78%, 68%, and 71%, respectively. These differences are due mainly to device type and internet subscription services. Ryan (2018) notes that low-income households are less likely to have high connectivity—that is, to have a computer, a smartphone, a tablet, and a broadband internet connection—while, to the contrary, most such households have only smartphones. The same situation can be observed in Hispanic or Black households: they have lower rates of high connectivity and a higher number of only smartphones.

Only 67.5% of Hispanic households have a desktop or laptop computer, a rate that is higher only than that of black households (63.9%) and far below the rates for white and Asian households (80.9% and 89%, respectively) (Ryan 2018). The situation is very different in terms of smartphones, which can be found in 81.8% of Hispanic households, 87.6% of Asian households, 74.9% of white households, and 74.8% of black households (ibid.).

In terms of internet connectivity, there is a clear gap between the Hispanic and black populations at one end and the white and Asian populations at the other, in terms of subscriptions to any internet service and subscriptions to broadband service, as is clear from table 1.

Table 1: Homes with an internet connection by connection type and ethnic and racial group, 2016 Source: Ryan 2018.

	Any internet subscription	Broadband connection
Non-Hispanic white	83.9	83.4
Black	72.6	72.3
Asian	90.3	90.1
Hispanic	77.3	77.1

5. Politics

- Hispanic electoral participation is typically 13 to 18 points below the average in presidential elections and 20 to 25 points lower in midterm elections.
- In 2017, 4% of senators and 7.8% of representatives were Hispanic, while the Latino population makes up 18.1% of the general population.
- State congresses have a total of 322 Hispanic members: 243 in state houses of representatives and 79 in state senates, with more Democrats (263) than Republicans (59).

On November 6, 2018, the U.S. will hold midterm elections to choose 435 members of the House of Representatives¹⁰ and 35 senators, one third of the 100 in the national Senate. Thirty-six states will also select their governors. These elections are also often interpreted as an informal referendum on the performance of the president and his party, in this case, Donald Trump and the Republican Party.

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The following overview examines the role of Hispanics in U.S. politics, including their participation in elections and presence in national and state legislatures.

5.1. Voter Registration and Turnout

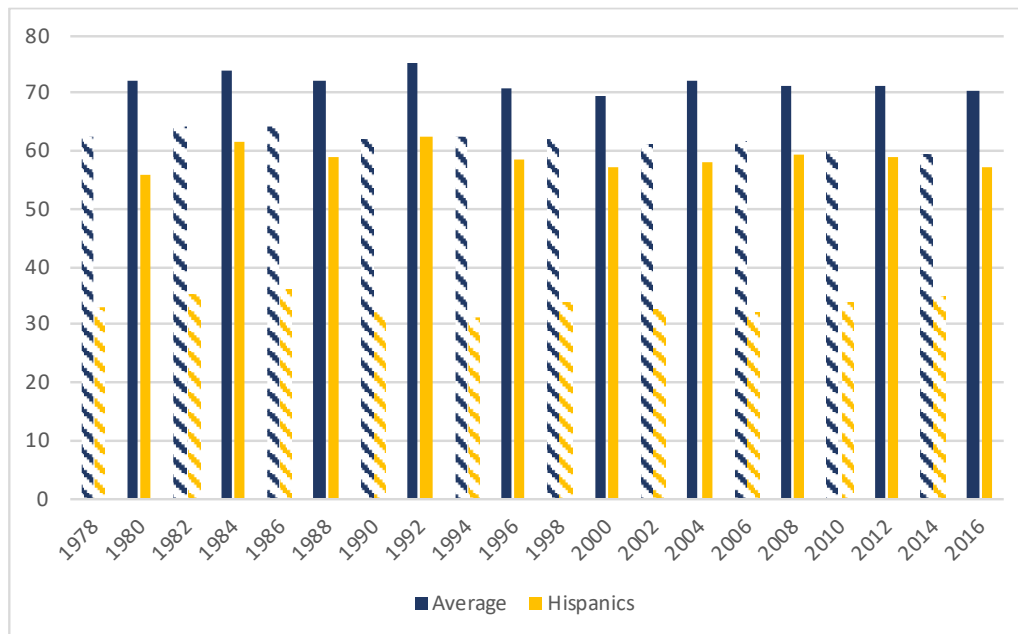
With every election, there is no shortage of reports on a dormant Latino voting bloc with the power to swing the balance to one party or another. However, these expectations have never materialized. This was the case in the 2016 presidential election: predictions of increased turnout (Gross 2016) did not come true. First, Hispanic voter registration (57.3%) decreased slightly with respect to the 2012 elections, below the average (61.4%), white registration (73.9%), and black

¹⁰ In addition to these 435 state representatives, there will also be one representative for Washington, D.C., and five delegates (Guam, Islas Marianas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Samoa).

registration (69.4%); only the Asian population had a lower voter registration rate (56.3%) (U.S. Census Bureau 2017, Table 11). Second, Hispanic voter turnout was also slightly lower than in 2012, at 47.6% (48% in 2012), compared with a national average of 61.4% (61.8% in 2012).

An analysis of voter registration and turnout makes it possible to identify the evolution of electoral behavior among the U.S. population in general and the U.S. Hispanic population in particular. Voter registration is typically around 70% for presidential elections and 60% for midterm elections. These rates are always lower among the Hispanic population, with differences of between 12 and 15% in presidential elections and 25 to 30% in midterm elections: thus, in 2014, 59.3% of the U.S. population was registered to vote, as versus 34.9% of the Latino subgroup.

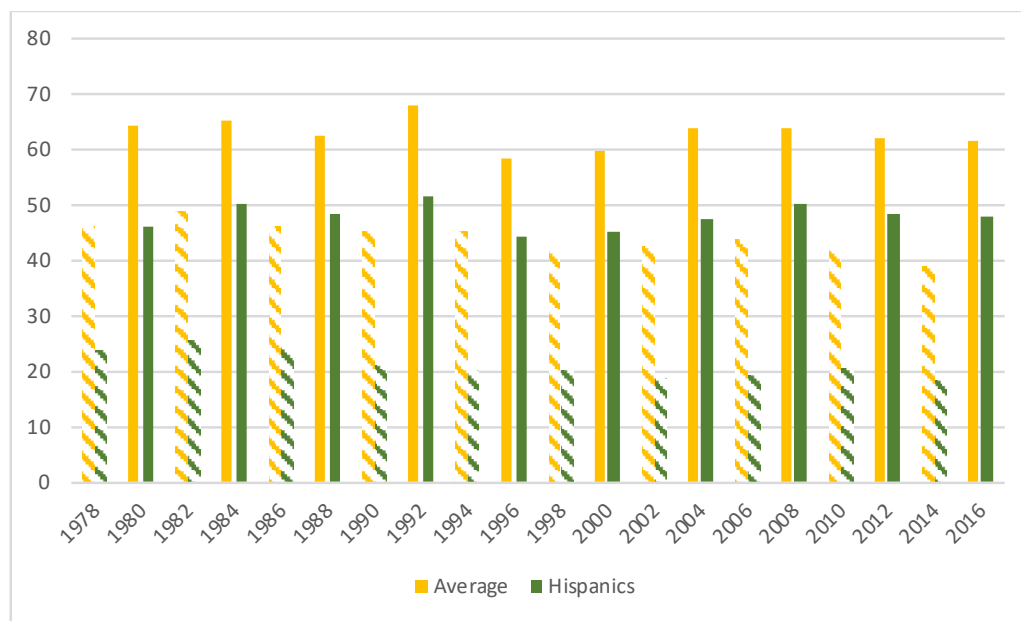
Figure 17. Voter registration rates in presidential and midterm elections (striped bars), 1978-2016. Source: U.S. Census Bureau n.d.-c: Tables A-6 and A-8.



UnidosUS, the largest Hispanic organization in the U.S., aware of the major gap between Hispanics and other groups, has demanded effective steps to increase voter registration and an increase in investment to encourage registered voters to participate (UnidosUS and California Civic Engagement Project 2018).

Turnout disparities affect both presidential and midterm elections, though the effect is less drastic in the former. In presidential elections, Hispanic turnout is typically between 13 and 18 points below the national average; the smallest gap was in 2018 when Hispanic turnout was 13.7 points lower than the average. In midterm elections, discrepancies in turnout are between 20 and 25 points lower than the national average. Furthermore, as is clear from figure 18, turnout for midterm elections among both the general population and the Hispanic population is typically 20 to 30 points lower than for presidential elections. For example, in the 2012 presidential election, 61.8% of the national population and 48% of the Hispanic population voted, while in the 2014 midterms, those percentages decreased to 38.5% and 18.4%, respectively.

Figure 18. Voter turnout in presidential and midterm elections (striped bars), 1978-2016. Source: U.S. Census Bureau n.d.-c: Tables A-6 and A-7.



According to DeSipio and De la Garza (2002), the demographic characteristics of the Hispanic population help explain the turnout gap between Latinos, the U.S. average, and other groups: in any sort of population, young people, people with less education, as well as people with lower incomes, are less probable to vote; these groups are all overrepresented in the Hispanic population.

If the trends reflected in these figures continue, Hispanic voter registration and turnout can be expected to be notably lower than the national average on November 6th of this year; furthermore, in if the usual patterns apply, turnout will be at least 25% lower than the recorded turnout for 2016.

To take control of the Senate, the Democratic Party must win 28 of the 33 seats being selected in November; that is, the 26 Democratic senators currently running for reelection must win, and Democrats must win two additional seats currently held by Republicans. The Republican Party will hold control of the Senate if it wins nine elections (Lee and Parlapiano 2018). As for the House of Representatives, in which every member must run for reelection every two years, Democrats must add 24 seats to their current 194. According to *The New York Times*, based on estimates by three organizations,¹¹ seats for 48 of the 435 districts are competitive: of those, 41 are currently held by Democrats and seven are held by Republicans (Lee 2018).

Could Latino voters play a decisive role in the House elections? UnidosUS has identified a total of 25 competitive congressional districts in the 2018 elections in which Latinos represent at least 6% of the voting-age population. In 24 of those districts, the voting Latino population was greater than the margin of victory between the two candidates in the 2016 presidential election (UnidosUS and California Civic Engagement Project 2018): they are Arizona's 1st and 2nd districts;

¹¹ Cook Political Report, Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales and the University of Virginia's Center for Politics.

California's 10th, 25th, 39th, 45th, 48th, and 49th; Colorado's 6th; Florida's 18th, 26th, and 27th; Illinois' 6th and 14th; New Jersey's 7th and 11th; New Mexico's 2nd; Nevada's 3rd; New York's 11th; Texas's 7th, 23rd, and 32nd; Utah's 4th; and Washington's 8th. That said, as indicated above, the tendency towards low midterm voter registration and turnout among Hispanics may diminish this potential influence.

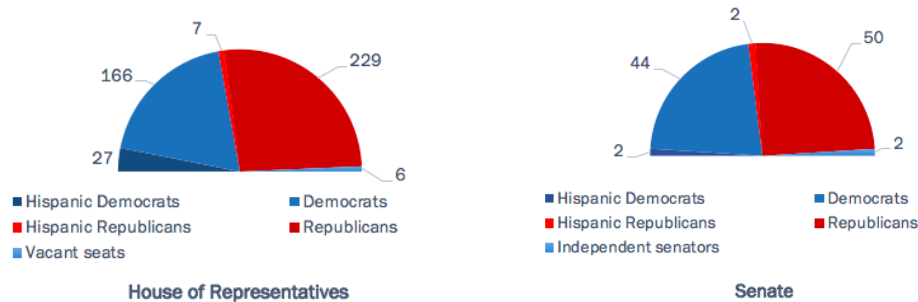
5.2. Latino Representatives

Latinos remain far from having their demographic presence proportionally reflected in the national legislative bodies. Although Hispanics make up 18.1% of the national population, there are only four Hispanic senators (4% of the total). Marco Rubio (Rep. FL); Catherine Cortez Masto (Dem. NV); Robert Menendez (Dem. NJ), and Ted Cruz (Rep. TX). The seats currently held by Menendez and Cruz are among those up for grabs on November 6th, and both senators are running for reelection. Although there is a greater Hispanic presence in the House of Representatives, it is still far from reflecting the demographics of the country. The 34 Hispanic members of the House (7.8%) are distributed as follows, by state:¹² Arizona (2), California (12), Florida (4); Idaho (1); Illinois (1); New Jersey (1); New Mexico (2); Nevada (1); New York (3); Texas (5); Washington (1); and West Virginia (1) (NALEO Educational Fund 2017a).

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¹²The number of representatives in the House for each state is determined by the population of the same. Every state is represented by two senators, regardless of that state's population.

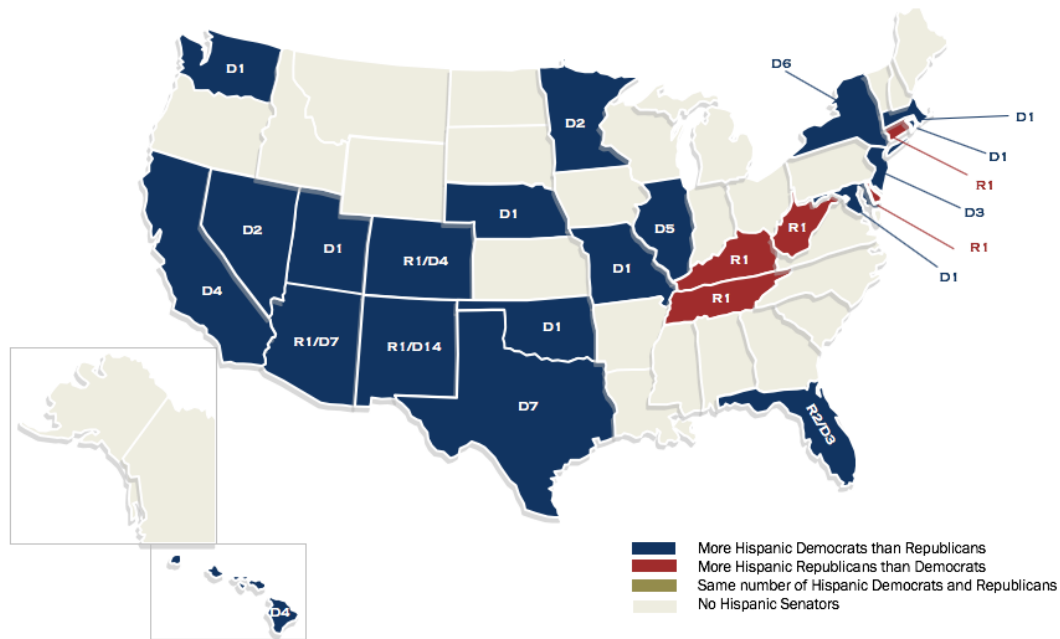
Figure 19. Representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate. Source: NALEO Educational Fund 2017a.



The situation is different in state legislative bodies. Only in three cases the percentage of Hispanic representatives is the same or higher than the percentage of the Latino population, but the differences, at least in states with a greater Hispanic presence, are far less drastic. In 2017, there were 243 Hispanics in the lower state houses (194 Democrats and 49 Republicans) and 79 state senators (69 Democrats and ten Republicans) (NALEO Educational Fund 2017b). The three states where the Hispanic representation in the legislature is greater than the Hispanic presence in the population¹³ are Hawaii (16% of the State Senate, 10.4% of the population); Michigan (5.45% of the State House of Representatives, 5% of the population); and West Virginia (2% of the State House of Representatives and 2.94% of the State Senate, 1.5% of the population). In general, lesser differences can be found in states where Hispanics make up a smaller percentage of the total population: the five states with the least divergence between percentage of Hispanic residents and percentage of representatives in the lower house are Vermont (1.2% difference), Maine (no Hispanic representatives), and Ohio (1.7%). Conversely, the greatest disparities appear in the states with the largest Hispanic presence: Texas (14.4% lower), California (12.7% lower), and Idaho (no representatives despite a population that is 12.3% Hispanic). This trend is also

¹³ These population percentages are drawn from 2016 data by the American Community Survey (ACS), table PEPASR6H.

Figure 21. Hispanic members of state senates. Source: NALEO Educational Fund 2017b.



The oldest available data is from 1984, when the NALEO Directory of Latino Elected Officials accounted for 119 Hispanics in lower state legislative houses and state senates.¹⁵ In 2017, that figure was 322, reflecting a 170.1% increase; from 1980 to 2017, the Hispanic population in the U.S. increased by 303.4%.

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5.3. Spanish in U.S. Politics

The use of Spanish in election campaigns seems to have a clear impact on Hispanic voter turnout. According to a study by Latino Decisions, exposure to Spanish-language ads increases turnout among Latinos and increases the odds that the voter will vote for the party that produces the ad (Barreto and Wilcox-Archuleta 2018). It is understandable, then, that some political candidates choose to use Spanish in their campaigns, such as Tim Kaine, the Democratic candidate for vice president in 2016, who gave an entire speech in Spanish in Miami (Florida), or the

¹⁵ No data exists that differentiates between representatives and senators, nor by state.

Republican senator from Texas, Ted Cruz, who used Spanish in a televised debate during the Republican primaries that same year.

Outside of election campaigns, according to an analysis by Univision¹⁶ (Peinado and Melgar 2017), 15 of the 34 congress people in Hispanic-majority districts did not provide any information in Spanish on their webpages, and 16 did not use Spanish on their Twitter or Facebook profiles. In the Senate, the websites of nine of the 18 senators who represent the nine states with the highest percentage of Hispanics did not have any information in Spanish, and 11 did not use Spanish on their social networks.

As for the use of Spanish in communications from the White House, the Spanish version of the White House website ceased to be available on January 20, 2017, the day that Donald Trump was sworn in as president of the U.S. Although the Director of Media Affairs, Helen Aguirre, explained that they were working on that content (Bierman 2017), the Spanish version of the website has still not been reactivated. According to a survey by the Observatory of the Cervantes Institute at Harvard University, 55.4% of Hispanics indicated that the White House shutting down its Spanish website was part of an English-only policy, while 40.8% attributed it to the Republican ideology, and 40% to the elimination of linguistic diversity (Hernández-Nieto and Moreno-Fernández 2017).

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The Spanish version of the White House website was launched during the George W. Bush administration and maintained during Barack Obama's two terms, along with the Head of Hispanic Media Communications, which was also eliminated by the current administration (Associated Press 2017). The White House Twitter account (@LaCasaBlanca) is still active, but its posts are sporadic and are not aligned with the official English profile. The current U.S. president already made his

¹⁶ This analysis is based on social media use in August 2017 and the information available on the officials' websites in that same month.

position on Spanish clear during his primary campaign for the Republican nomination in 2015, when, in a debate with the other candidates, and in response to another candidate, Jeb Bush, using Spanish, Donald Trump stated that “This is a country where we speak English, not Spanish” (CNN 2015).

The president’s position, however, is nothing new in U.S. politics; it fits well within the arguments of lobby groups like U.S. English, which advocates for the use of English as the nation’s sole language and as a point of unity for the country. This notion is also reflected in several state laws that declare English as the official language and that, in one way or another, reflect the linguistic situation of official U.S. processes: English is the national language, and only in certain very narrowly defined situations does the government consider using other languages (Hernández 2019).

6. Media, Film, and Social Networks

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- In 2016, 54% of Hispanics consumed news in both English and Spanish, 29% consumed news only in English, and 17% consumed news only in Spanish.
- The Spanish-language news audience for the two largest Hispanic television groups, Univision and Telemundo, continued to shrink in 2017.
- Hispanics represent 23% of individuals who go to the movies at least once per month, and the average annual Hispanic movie attendance in 2016 was 4.6.
- 72% of Hispanics are on social networks, and Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp are more popular among Hispanics than among other groups within the U.S. population.

The demographic changes in the Hispanic population in the last few years (see Part 1), with a decrease in Latin American immigration and an increase in Latinos born in the U.S., have led to an increase in English monolingualism and English-Spanish

bilingualism. This has translated into an increase in consumption of English-language news, which has, in turn, had an impact on the audience revenue of the major Spanish-language media aimed at Hispanics. According to figures from Pew Research (Flores and Lopez 2018), 29% of Latinos consumed news only in English in 2016, 54% consumed news in both English and Spanish, and 17% consumed news only in Spanish.

Table 2: News consumption among the Latino population by language. Source: Lopez and Gonzalez-Barreda 2013; Flores and Lopez 2018.

	2006	2008	2012	2016
English and Spanish	55%	51%	50%	54%
Only Spanish	22%	27%	35%	29%
Only English	22%	22%	18%	17%

The preference for Spanish is increasing for those born abroad, with 89% consuming at least some news in Spanish, while among millennials, there is a contrary trend: 91% report consuming at least some news in English, compared to 68% who consume at least some news in Spanish (ibid.). In any case, as can be seen in table 2, there is no easily discernible pattern.

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6.1. Television

The Spanish-language television audience continued to decline in 2017. Although Univision’s revenue remained constant, at around \$3 billion (Pew Research 2018b),¹⁷ both Univision and Telemundo, the main Spanish-language television channels, saw notable losses to their news audiences: the audience during the afternoon time slot (4 p.m. to 7 p.m.) dropped by a total of 6%, 1.1 million fewer viewers for Univision and around 700,000 fewer for Telemundo; the late-night time slot (11 p.m. to 2 a.m.) decreased by 7% for Univision and 5% for Telemundo. Finally, Univision had a major drop (17%) in its morning time slot audience (6 a.m. to 9 a.m.). This drop also affects the viewership of these channels’ news affiliates:

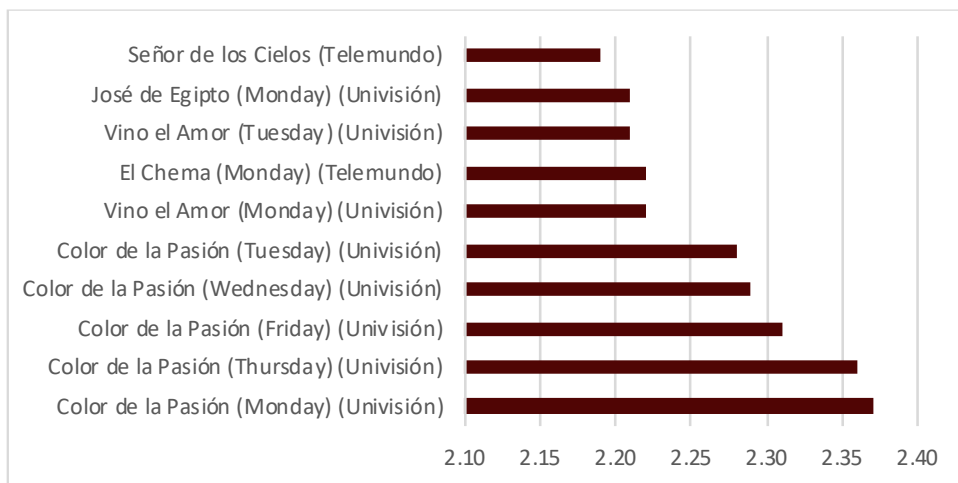
¹⁷ No data available for Telemundo.

Univision’s have lost 35% of their late-night news audience and 8% of their morning news audience; Telemundo has lost 2% of their late-night news audience, 6% of their afternoon news audience, and 11% of their morning news audience.

Although the change in Pew Research’s source of audience data¹⁸ makes it difficult to compare the last two years with preceding years, earlier figures showed a drop in Univision’s audience and that of its affiliate channels beginning in 2013, while at Telemundo, the drops began in 2014 and, in the case of “Noticiero Telemundo,” the audience grew (Pew Research 2017a).

However, this data only covers news programs, which prevents us from making a broader generalization about Spanish TV chains’ audiences. While the most popular news programs (the Univision afternoon time slot) had 1.14 million viewers in 2017 (Pew Research 2018b), the audience for all of the ten most viewed regular Spanish programs in 2017 exceeded 2 million (Statista 2018a).

Figure 22. Most viewed regular Spanish programs in the U.S., 2017 (millions of viewers)
Source: Statista 2018a.



¹⁸ From Nielsen comScore TV Essentials and comScore StationView Essentials.

6.2. Radio

In 2017, Spanish-language news radio stations saw a 4% drop in their average income with respect to the previous year (from \$1.26 million to \$1.21 million) (Pew Research 2018b). As for Spanish-language radio advertising, the latest available data is from 2015 (Statista 2017a) and indicates an annual average of \$855,000, following a steady decline since 2007, when they exceeded \$1.5 million.

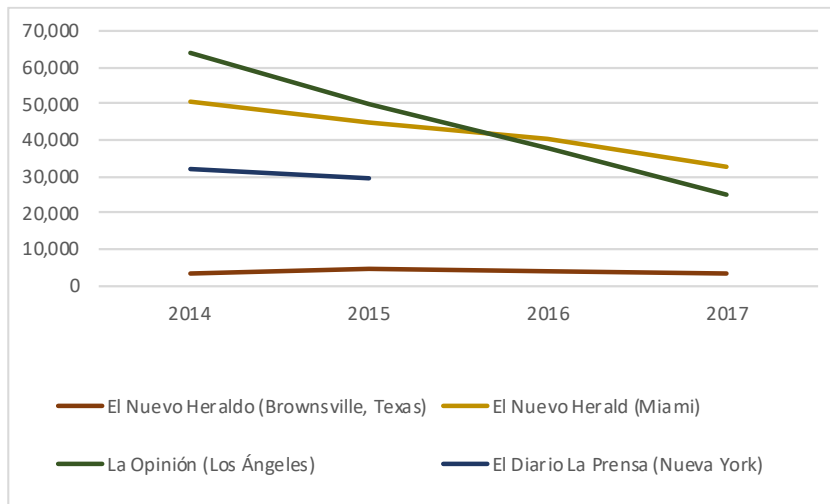
Every week, 42.4 million Hispanics listen to national radio, averaging 12 hours and 50 minutes of listening time. The Latino audience represents 17% of the total radio-listening population (Nielsen 2017), a percentage that approaches the group's demographic weight (currently 18.1%). According to Nielsen, the preferred format among Hispanic radio listeners is regional Mexican, except among those ages 12 to 17, who prefer pop hits, and among Hispanics whose dominant language is English, who prefer English-language music, news, commentary, and country music. The regional Mexican format—that is, musical styles from Mexico—prevails among Spanish-language radio stations, second only to stations with religious programming (González-Tosat 2017).

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6.3. Press and Online Media

The average circulation of Hispanic newspapers decreased in 2017, including for dailies, weeklies, and semi-weeklies (Pew Research 2018b). In terms of daily papers, the three for which data is available reveal an 18% drop (ibid.) on top of the decline in circulation that has been noted for several years.

Figure 23. Circulation of Hispanic newspapers (average Monday to Friday circulation). Source: Pew Research 2018b.



Data on the 20 Hispanic weeklies and semi-weeklies with the widest circulation suggests a far more moderate decline, with circulation dropping by 0.3% between 2016 and 2017, and by 8.7% since 2013 (Pew Research 2018b).

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Like the rest of the population, the percentage of Latinos getting their news online has increased from 37% in 2006 to 74% in 2016 (Flores and Lopez 2018), in tandem with a decrease in the percentage who get their news from television (from 92% to 79%), radio (from 64% to 55%), and newspapers (from 58% to 34%). The Observatory of the Cervantes Institute at Harvard University has identified a total of 321 U.S.-based online newspapers in Spanish across 39 states and Washington D.C. (González-Tosat 2015).

6.4. Online Platforms

According to data from Morning Consult gathered by Statista (2018), 73% of Hispanics subscribe to or have access to Netflix, making them the group that most uses this online video content platform, ahead of African Americans (65%), whites

(58%), and other groups (69%). It is also the most popular video content provider among Hispanics: according to data from March 2017, 51% of those surveyed indicated Netflix as one of the platforms they use, followed by cable television (43%), YouTube (39%), and satellite television (30%) (Statista 2018c).

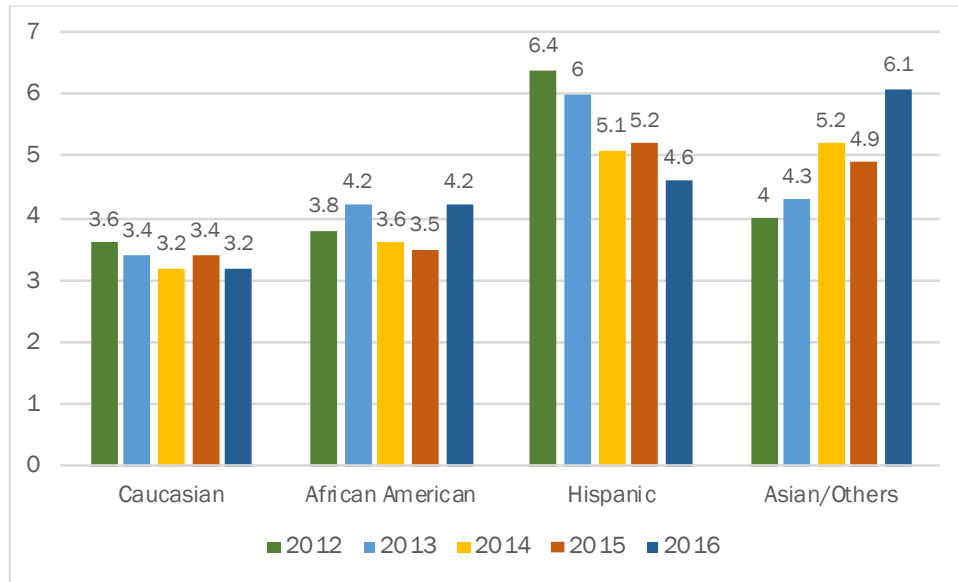
Furthermore, Hispanics use Netflix most frequently, with 32% accessing the platform several times a day, compared to 21% of the white population, 26% of the African American population, and 29% of other groups (Statista 2018d).

6.5. Film

Hispanics represent 23% of individuals who go to the movies at least once per month (Motion Picture Association of America 2017). In 2016, 8.3 million Latinos saw a film every month, versus 18.3 million Caucasians, 5.6 million African Americans, and 3.9 million Asians. The Hispanic population is also slightly overrepresented among moviegoers with respect to its demographic weight, independent of frequency and tickets sold, making up 20% of attendees and 21% of tickets sold. The percentage of moviegoers who are Hispanic has remained stable in recent years, though the number of tickets sold to Hispanics has decreased slightly since 2012 (ibid.). Average annual movie attendance among Hispanics has gradually decreased since 2012; it reached 4.6 in 2016. On the other hand, for the group “Asian/other,” that figure has grown from four times a year in 2012 to 6.1 in 2016.

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Figure 24. Per-capita movie attendance by ethnicity. Source: Motion Picture Association of America 2016.



Twenty-six percent of the audience for *Finding Dory*, one of the highest-grossing films of the year, was Hispanic, the highest figure for any film in 2016. Given that this report is based on figures from 2016, it does not account for *Coco*, a Pixar production about the Mexican Day of the Dead celebration, which became the 13th highest-grossing film in the U.S. and the 11th highest-grossing worldwide. Beyond its box-office success, *Coco*, which hit theaters at a moment in which anti-Hispanic rhetoric was gaining ground in public discourse in the wake of statements and policies of President Donald Trump, included a number of Hispanic consultants on its production team (including, among others, the film’s codirector, Adrian Molina; Ugwu 2017), trying to achieve an approach to Mexican culture that would avoid accusations of cultural appropriation. Furthermore, *Coco*’s audience heard characters speak in Spanish, at times without subtitles (ibid.), and heard those same characters speak English with various accents; most of the voice actors for the Spanish-language dubbed version of the film were Mexican, including Gael García Bernal and Anthony González.

That said, Hispanics are not a common sight on the silver screen. According to analysis by the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism (Smith, Choueiti, and Pieper 2016), of all the films, programs, and TV series produced by the ten largest media companies, only 5.8% of characters with names or dialogue are Hispanic. Furthermore, when Latino characters do appear on-screen, they are often typically associated with negative stereotypes: for example, 50% of fictional Latino immigrants appear committing an illegal act, as versus 9% of white immigrants (Villafañe 2017).

6.7. Social Media

Social media use among Hispanics is slightly higher than among other groups: 72% of Latinos use social media, as versus 68% of the white population and 69% of the black population (Pew Research 2018c). As is clear from table 3, it is possible to find differences among racial and ethnic groups in their use of different platforms.

Table 3: Percent of adults using each social media platform. Source: Pew Research (2018c).

	White population	Black population	Hispanic population
Facebook	67%	70%	73%
Instagram	32%	43%	38%
LinkedIn	26%	28%	13%
Twitter	24%	26%	20%
Pinterest	32%	23%	23%
Snapchat	24%	36%	31%
YouTube	71%	76%	78%
WhatsApp	14%	21%	49%

Hispanics use Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp more, and LinkedIn less, than the white and black populations. In terms of WhatsApp, this disparity could largely be explained by differences in cell phone services and rates (Quirós 2015).

In terms of Hispanics' preferred language on social media, in the case of Facebook, 38.5% use Spanish as their main language, 34.6% use English, and 26.9% use the site bilingually (Facebook n.d.).¹⁹

Conclusions

Ever since branches of the U.S. government began gathering data specifically on the Hispanic or Latino population, that group has only improved according to every metric. The group's spectacular demographic growth has been complemented by an improvement in average education level, an increase in per-capita income, and a decrease in the percent of the population living below the poverty level. The rates at which Latinos own their own home, are covered by health insurance, and own their own businesses have all increased. In the long run, and in isolation, the past 50 years tell a story of success for Hispanics in the U.S. The table below summarizes the progress of the main indicators reviewed in this report.

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Table 4. Demographic, linguistic, educational, and socioeconomic indicators for the Hispanic population in the U.S.

Indicator	Indicator, date 1	Indicator, date 2	Difference
Hispanic population	9.1 million (1970, U.S. Census Bureau n.d.).	58.9 million (2017, U.S. Census Bureau 2018a).	+ 49.8 million (+ 547.2%)
Percent Hispanic	4.5% (1970, U.S. Census Bureau n.d.).	18.1% (2017, U.S. Census Bureau 2018a).	+ 13.6%
Immigrant population by birthplace	908,309 (1960s, Migration Policy Institute n.d.).	22,294,730 (2016, Migration Policy Institute n.d.).	+ 21,386,421 (+ 2,454%)
Spanish speakers	11.12 million (1980, Ortman and Shin 2011).	41 million (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2018: C16006; C16005)	+ 29.88 million (+ 238.7%)

¹⁹ Facebook's "Monthly Active Users" include anyone who has logged into and used Facebook within one month.

Indicator	Indicator, date 1	Indicator, date 2	Difference
Students enrolled in university Spanish courses	126,303 (1958, Looney and Lusin 2018)	712,240 (2016, Looney and Lusin 2018)	+ 585,937 (+ 464%)
Percent of the population (18-24 years old) that has finished secondary school	59% (1992, National Center for Education Statistics 2017)	88% 2016, National Center for Education Statistics 2017)	+ 29%
Secondary school dropout rate	29.4% (1992, NCES 2017: 219.70)	8.6% (2016, NCES 2017: 219.70)	- 20.8%
Percent of the population with completed university studies	9.3% (1992, NCES 2017. 104.10).	17.2% (2017, NCES 2017. 104.10).	+ 7.9%
Per-capita income	\$12,136 (1973, U.S. Census Bureau n.d.-b)	\$20,937 (1973, U.S. Census Bureau n.d.-b)	8,801 (+72.5%)
Percent of population living below the poverty level	22.8% (1972, U.S. Census Bureau 2018b).	18.3% (2017, U.S. Census Bureau 2018b).	- 4.5%

However, these achievements are dimmed by the comparative performance of other groups and the national average. The percent of Hispanics aged 18 to 24 who had completed their secondary education has increased by 29% since 1990, reaching 59%, yet it remains 34% lower than the national average. The dropout rate at this education level has decreased by 20 percentage points since 1992, but it remains 2.5% below the national average. Hispanics complete post-secondary university degrees at a rate of 7.9%, 4.9 points lower than the national average.

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The situation is worse when we turn to socioeconomic benchmarks: average income has improved, but it remains at nearly half that of the non-Hispanic white and Asian populations, and below that of the black population. The homeownership rate is lower than that of all other groups except for African Americans. Finally, the percent of the Hispanic population living at or below the poverty level is more than ten points higher than that of the white and Asian populations, and lower only than the African American population. The homeownership rate is lower than that of all other groups except, again, for African Americans.

In areas such as poverty, voter registration, and voter turnout, the behavior of the Hispanic population is mainly the same as the general population's. Thus, the few advances in the past few decades have been the same advances experienced by all other groups. Voter registration and turnout in both presidential and midterm elections have only increased slightly, and, in a few cases, have decreased, both among Latinos and in the general population. As there are major disparities in registration, if the performance of the Latino population remains the same as the general population's, these disparities will remain.

All of these comparisons are based on the Hispanic population in general. If we break the analysis down by place of birth—that is, drawing a distinction between Latinos born in the U.S. and those born abroad—divergences between the latter and all other demographics are greater in every category. To give one example, while 18% of U.S.-born Latinos do not have health insurance, that figure reaches 49% for those born abroad.

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The drop in migration from Latin America, and specifically from Mexico, means that the proportion of U.S. born Hispanics in the total Latino population is increasing. As this U.S.-born group has better educational and socioeconomic results than the group born abroad, it is appropriate to expect that, in keeping with this evolution, the overall situation of the Hispanic population will improve: the rates at which young people finish secondary school and university degrees will climb, the percentage of the population without insurance will decrease, and the number of Hispanics with the right to vote will increase.

Language, however, is one category in which the future is unclear for the U.S.-born Hispanic population. As with other languages, proficiency in Spanish gives way to English as the generations advance, either through bilingualism or English monolingualism. Spanish is the dominant language of 61% of Hispanics born abroad, while only 7% of this same group speaks mainly in English. By the third

generation, 75% speak mainly English and 24% are bilingual (Lopez, Gonzalez-Barreda, and López 2017). It stands to reason, then, that as the population arriving from Latin America decreases, so will the number of Spanish speakers in the U.S., despite the fact that 95% of Latinos believe that maintaining the language is important for future generations (Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, and Velasco 2012).

Furthermore, the issue of language is linked to other questions that are established around the Latino population and the Latino identity. For 70% of the population, speaking English is a key aspect of the U.S. identity (Stokes 2017); 71% of Hispanics believe that speaking Spanish is not necessary to be considered as such (Lopez 2016). Like language, Hispanic self-identification wanes with the generations (from 97% among those born abroad to 50% among fourth and subsequent generations; Lopez, Gonzalez-Barreda, and López 2017), a trend that would curb the use of Spanish in the U.S. even if it were a defining characteristic for U.S. Hispanics.

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