

Afro-Latinos in 2017: A Demographic and Socio-Economic Snapshot

Afro-Latinos are a significant portion of the Latino community and a vital part of the rich fabric of Latino* culture. In recognition of Black History month, the following fact sheet outlines demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Afro-Latino community and the need for targeted policies that address this segment of the Latino community.

Afro-Latino: an individual of African descent from Latin America or an individual who has one parent of African descent and another of Latino descent.

Using data from the 2017 U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, this fact sheet examines the demographic breakdown of Afro-Latinos and their economic well-being compared to the larger Latino population and their White counterparts.

Demographics

Population Size and Location:

In 2017, there were more than three million Afro-Latinos in the United States.

- Most Afro-Latinos reside in New York (23%), California (15%), and Florida (12%).

Age and Gender:

Afro-Latinos—like the Latino population overall—is a young population, especially in comparison to Whites.

- In 2017, the median age of Afro-Latinos was 27, nearly the same median age of all Latinos—which was 29 years old.
- Afro-Latinos were 12 years younger than Whites, who had a median age of 39 in 2017.

* The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race.

Immigration Status:

Afro-Latinos have higher rates of native-born citizenship status than Latinos overall, but lower rates than Whites.

- In 2017, 73% of Afro-Latinos were native-born citizens, compared to 65% of all Latinos and 87% of Whites.
- Only 10% of Afro-Latinos are naturalized citizens, while 16% of Afro-Latinos are non-citizen immigrants.

Economic Well-Being

Education:

Afro-Latinos have similar rates of educational attainment as Latinos generally, but at rates significantly less than Whites.*

- Nearly 27% of Afro-Latinos did not complete high school in 2017, compared to 30% of all Latinos. This is more than double the rate of Whites who did not complete high school (12%).
- In 2017, 31% of both Afro-Latinos and all Latinos only had high school diplomas, compared to 22% of Whites.
- In 2017, one-in-four (24%) Afro-Latinos had completed some college education—the same rate as Whites and 2% higher than all Latinos.
- Nearly 18% of Afro-Latinos have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 17% of all Latinos and 25% of Whites in 2017.

Workforce and Income:

Afro-Latinos have similar workforce trends compared to Latinos overall.

- Afro-Latinos (79.5%) are nearly as likely as Latinos in general (81%) to work full-time.
- Afro-Latinos (28.3%) are more likely than Latinos in general (25.2%) to work in service occupations, which tend to pay lower-wages.
- In 2016[†], Afro-Latino median household income was nearly the same as general Latino median household income (\$58,616 compared to \$59,402), but significantly less than White household income (\$73,810).

Poverty:

Afro-Latinos experience higher rates of poverty than Latinos overall.

- With 23% of Afro-Latinos living in poverty, Afro-Latinos experience poverty at higher rates than the 18.3% of all Latinos who lived in poverty in 2017.[‡]
- In 2017, nearly 27% of Afro-Latinos received SNAP benefits in 2017 compared to 18.9% of Latinos overall.

Conclusion

While these indicators are not a definitive measure of the Afro-Latino community, they help to shed light on the current profile of the community and the need for more substantive research and policy interventions.

* All U.S. Census Bureau education data are for adults over the age of 25.

[†] 2017 household income by race and ethnicity was not available during the time of this factsheet

[‡] UnidosUS analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey and the 2018 Current Population Survey's March Annual Social Supplement data.