

Latino Unemployment Climbs Upward to 9.3%

Unemployment for Latinos is up nearly 1% from last month compared to only a 0.1% increase for non-Hispanic White workers.

INDICATORS	National	Latinos
Unemployment Rate Share of the labor force that is unemployed	6.7%	9.3%
Unemployed Those who are available to work, trying to find a job, or expect to be called back from a layoff but are not working	10.7 million	2.7 million
Employed Working people over the age of 16, including those temporarily absent from their jobs	149.8 million	26.4 million
Labor Force Participation Rate Share of the population over the age of 16 that is in the labor force	61.5%	65.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment Status of the Hispanic or Latino Population by Sex and Age," *Current Population Survey*, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf> (accessed January 8, 2021), Table A and A-3.

Employment in December 2020

Overall, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the economy lost 140,000 jobs in the month of December, representing the first monthly decrease in jobs since since recovery began in May. The number of jobs added has been trending down, with BLS reporting only 245,000 jobs added in November, the smallest single month jobs gain since the pandemic began in March. With the loss of 140,000 jobs in the month of December, the economy will have recouped only 12.5 million or the 22.2 million jobs that were lost in March and April of 2020.

- At 9.3% in December, Latino unemployment remains at more than double the pre-pandemic average of 4%. Latinos continue to be disproportionately impacted by the continued strain that COVID-19 has placed on the economy due to the industries they are represented in. In December, the leisure and hospitality and service industries saw overall declines in jobs, losing 520,000 jobs collectively. Given that Latinos make up a disproportionate share of workers in these industries—24% in the service sector, for example—it is clear that this recent loss in industry jobs, coupled with the already slow recovery, will continue to negatively impact Latino workers. Overall, 4.3 million jobs in these industries have been lost since February, leaving many workers now long-term unemployed or facing permanent job loss. Long-term unemployment makes it harder for workers to reenter the workforce, and for those whose jobs

have disappeared, new opportunities must be created before they can return to work. The decline in jobs in these sectors suggests that Latinos will continue to see increases in unemployment and economic hardship as we enter 2021.

- The continued spread of COVID-19 is not only keeping businesses shuttered, but with increased infection rates at the end of the year, new restrictions are being implemented daily. The industries where Latinos are most likely to work have been the hardest hit by closures since March, and the new resurgence of protective measures is no different. With the slow rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine—especially among the essential workforce where many Latinos are concentrated—closures will continue to impact Latinos abilities to return to their jobs, find new opportunities, and work safely. In December, the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) index of service industry employment showed that business owners were limiting hiring and employment because they needed less staff in restaurants because of restrictions and had to reduce their workforce further to cover costs.¹
- Coronavirus cases began to surge again across the United States in mid-November, which experts felt was not fully captured by last months jobs report.² This month’s report likely captures the full impact of the surge occurring since Thanksgiving both in the number of service industry jobs lost this month and permanently. As states with large Latino populations, such as California, continue placing restrictions on dining and other activities, Latino service industry workers will face additional challenges finding employment or returning to work.

About US

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is the nation’s largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an [Affiliate Network](#) of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos at the national and local levels.

For more than 50 years, UnidosUS has united communities and different groups seeking common ground through collaboration, and that share a desire to make our country stronger. For more information on UnidosUS, visit www.unidosus.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

1 Reuters, U.S. labor market recovery faltering; layoffs hit record in 2020, January 7, 2020, [U.S. labor market recovery faltering; layoffs hit record in 2020 | Reuters](#) (accessed January 8, 2020).

2 NBC News, U.S. Economy Gains just 245,000 jobs in final report of 2020 as recovery stalls with COVID surging, December 4, 2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/economy/u-s-economy-gains-just-245-000-jobs-final-report-n1249983> (accessed January, 8, 2020).