

Latino Unemployment Rate Drops Slightly to 8.6%

While unemployment is down for Latinos, the number of Latinos in the workforce has decreased this month.

INDICATORS	National	Latinos
Unemployment Rate Share of the labor force that is unemployed	6.3%	8.6%
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	10.1 million	2.4 million
Employed Working people over the age of 16, including those temporarily absent from their jobs	150 million	26.4 million
Labor Force Participation Rate Share of the population over the age of 16 that is in the labor force	61.4%	65%

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/empst.pdf> (accessed February 5, 2021), Table A and A-3.

Employment in January 2021

Overall, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the economy added only 49,000 jobs in the month of January, representing a small gain following the significant losses in December, but by far the smallest single-month gain in jobs since May 2020. Additionally, BLS revised the December 2020 report to show that the economy lost 87,000 more jobs last month than was reported, putting the total number lost for December at 227,000.

The number of jobs added each month began trending downward in the fall of 2020, with an average of less than 30,000 jobs added per month, signaling a slow crawl towards economic recovery.

- At 8.6% in January, Latino unemployment remains at more than double the pre-pandemic average of 4%. With the small gain this month, 10 million people still remain unemployed compared to 5.7 million in January of 2020. Additionally, as of this month, the economy as a whole remains down 9.9 million jobs from where it was in January 2020.

- The greatest employment growth happened in the professional and business services industry, which has little impact on Latinos, who only make-up 16% of workers in the industry.¹ The industries where Latinos are disproportionately represented continue to be among those suffering the most devastating job losses, including leisure and hospitality which lost 61,000 jobs this month after a devastating loss of 536,000 in December and remains 20% down from its pre-pandemic job levels, and the construction industry which largely stayed equal this month, losing 3,000 jobs. Overall, 3.9 million jobs have been lost in the leisure and hospitality industry since March 2020, leaving many Latino workers now long-term unemployed or facing permanent job loss. With the continued decline in these industries at the beginning of 2021, it becomes less clear that Latinos will see swift economic recovery anytime soon.
- While the overall Latino unemployment rate dropped .7% from December 2020, there was also a drop in Latino labor force participation, signaling that fewer people are working. The slight drop in the Latino labor force participation rate can be attributed to a loss of jobs among Latino male workers over 20 years of age. Latinas, however—who we know have been among the hardest hit populations by job and income loss due to COVID-19—saw a .6% drop in participation. As UnidosUS has documented, COVID-19 in many ways is a “she-cession.” Latinas have been hard hit not only because of the types of jobs they worked in prior to the pandemic, but because of systemic discrimination that has held Latinas back from educational opportunities, higher-wage jobs, and the tools and benefits necessary to build wealth. Now forced to balance work, full-time child care, and distance learning, Latinas have been dropping out of the workforce at nearly three times the rate of White women and four times the rate of Black women.² Between August and September of 2020, Latina women dropped out of work by 2.7%.³ All of these factors are likely contributing to the drop in labor force participation, which will have a long-term impact on the financial futures and economic security of all Latino households and the overall economy.

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 [https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2015/hispanics-and-latinos-in-industries-and-occupations.htm#:~:text=Among%20occupational%20groups%20in%202014,extraction%20occupations%20\(32.3%20percent\)](https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2015/hispanics-and-latinos-in-industries-and-occupations.htm#:~:text=Among%20occupational%20groups%20in%202014,extraction%20occupations%20(32.3%20percent)).

² NPR, ‘My Family Needs Me’: Latinas Drop Out of the Workforce at Alarming Rates, October 27, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/10/27/927793195/something-has-to-give-latinas-leaving-workforce-at-faster-rate-than-other-groups> (accessed November 30, 2020).

³ Ibid.