

HISPANAS ORGANIZED *for* POLITICAL EQUALITY



2024 Economic Status of Latinas in California

A STATEWIDE REPORT AND ROADMAP TO
ACHIEVE ECONOMIC PARITY





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*A Statewide Report and Roadmap to Achieve Economic Parity
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Economic Status of Latinas in California report is a comprehensive analysis that sheds light on the strides made and the challenges faced by Latinas in achieving economic parity.

Hispanas Organized for Political Equality® (HOPE) presents its fourth report on the Economic Status of Latinas in California, highlighting Latina progress toward economic parity and the barriers they encounter as they strive for better lives and greater financial security. National, state, and regional indicators of Latina economic, leadership, health, and educational progress are updated and compared to their White peers. A series of interviews with a cross-section of Latinas representing various metropolitan regions of the state contextualize the data and provide insights into how they can be better supported in their career and business trajectories. The findings show uneven educational outcomes, wage and leadership inequities, and population shifts as Latinas adapted to high inflation and continued to recover from the devastating economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are finding success despite these impediments, while others struggle.

POPULATION FINDINGS

- California has the largest Hispanic population and the highest concentration of Latinas of any state. In 2022, Latinas comprised 20% of the total population (7.78 million) and 40% of all women.
- While California experienced a net decline of -1.3% of the total population between 2020 and 2022, the population of Hispanics stayed relatively stable, increasing by approximately 350,000. In most of the largest metropolitan regions where Hispanics are concentrated, their share of the total population increased.
- The regions with the largest populations of Latinos/as are the Los Angeles metropolitan region, the Inland Empire, and the San Diego metropolitan region. Of the top five regions by population of Latinos/as, the Fresno region has the highest concentration (55%).

ECONOMIC FINDINGS

- Latinas with any earnings in California were paid only 42 cents for every dollar earned by a White, non-Hispanic man in 2022, compared to 71 cents for White women.
- In 2022, Latino household income in California was only 73% of White household income, increasing from 69% in 2020. Latino per capita income was 55% of White per capita income.
- The unemployment rate for Latinas in California dropped to 4.9% in 2023, below the pre-pandemic level, after reaching 12.6% in 2020.
- The Latino homeownership rate in California increased by 3.7 percentage points between 2021 and 2022, while the Total rate remained unchanged. The homeownership rate in the Bakersfield metro region grew by 3.5 percentage points and by 2 percentage points in the Inland Empire while falling nearly 5 percentage points in the San Jose metro region.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL LITERACY FINDINGS

- The number of Latina-owned employer businesses in California grew 26.5% between 2018 (16,560) and 2021 (20,943).
- Latina-owned employer businesses in California (20,943) generated nearly 147,000 jobs with an annual payroll of \$5.92 billion.
- Latina interview respondents expressed regret that their level of financial literacy is limited, especially regarding retirement savings and budgeting for California's high cost of living. They expressed ongoing concern about the effects of inflation on their household and their community's general economic health.

EDUCATION FINDINGS

- In 2022, 56% of students enrolled in K-12 public schools were Hispanic, increasing from 54% in 2017. Over half of all children enrolled in the state's public schools are Hispanic.
- The high school graduation rate for California's Latinas dipped to 87% in the 2022-23 academic year but remained higher than the overall state graduation rate of 86%. The gap in the graduation rate between Latinas and White women (91%) was 4 percentage points, less than in 2019.
- The rate of chronic absenteeism among public K-12 Latino students (28.9%) remains more than double what it was before the pandemic and far exceeds that of White students (19.7%).
- In 2022, 33% of Latino graduates took an AP exam in high school, increasing from 27% in 2012. By comparison, 38% of White graduates took an AP exam in high school in 2022, up from 32% in 2012.
- More than 18% of Latinas aged 25 and over in California had at least a bachelor's degree in 2022, nearly 2 percentage points above the 2018 figure but significantly less than nearly 48% of White women.

HEALTH FINDINGS

- Life expectancy at birth declined by 4.1 years for Latinas and 3.1 years for Black women between 2019 and 2021, compared to 1.8 years for White, non-Hispanic women, an indicator of the outsize effect of COVID-19 on their mortality rates. Life expectancy at birth is rebounding, but at a slower pace for Latinas than for White women.
- 40% of Black women and 37% of Latinas reported experiencing discrimination while receiving maternity care. Between 2018 and 2020, the maternal mortality rate among Black women in California stood at 45.8 per 100,000 births, surpassing that of any other racial group. Although lower for Latinas, at 14.8, their maternal mortality rate remains disproportionately higher compared to their white counterparts and surged by 44% nationally during the pandemic.
- The uninsured rate for Latinas in California was a historic low of 8.8% in 2022, compared to the total rate of 6.5%, but both are expected to rise as pandemic-era policies expire. The 2022 national uninsured rate for Latinas was three and a half times the uninsured rate for White non-Hispanic women.

LATINA LEADERSHIP FINDINGS

- In 2021, only 1.5% of corporate board seats in the state were held by Latinas. The representation of Latinas on corporate boards in California doubled between 2020 and 2021 but remained exceptionally low. Latinas held 3.3% of board seats in 2023.
- Among appointments made by the governor to the state's public serving government boards and commissions Latinos account for only 17.3% of all appointments made in 2023, and Latinas represent 9% of all appointments.
- The number of Latinas elected to statewide office have risen multifold since 2015. The percentage of Latina state senators was above parity at 25.0%. The number of Latina state senators and representatives combined increased from 6 in 2015 to 24 in 2024. Latinas elected to national office continues to be extremely low, with only 4 Latina congressional members out of the 52 U.S. House of Representatives seats filled by Californians.