



DATA SHOWS POVERTY AND INCOME AMONG LATINOS REMAINS UNCHANGED

On September 17, 2013, the U.S. Census Bureau released new data measuring poverty in the U.S. during 2012. The statistics show that poverty and income remained unchanged between 2011 and 2012 for Latinos and all Americans. The official poverty figures released today do not count the value of many critical government anti-poverty efforts such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Earned Income Tax Credit, or the Child Tax Credit. If the value of these programs were counted as income, the number and percent of people in poverty would be significantly lower. The following is an analysis of the latest poverty data among Latino families.

Latino poverty in 2012 was unchanged from its level in 2011.

- The Hispanic poverty rate remained statistically unchanged at 25.6% in 2012; among all Americans, the rate also remained unchanged compared to 2011 at 15.0% in 2012. In 2012 there were 13.6 million Latinos living in poverty, which included 5.9 million Latino children in poverty.¹ In 2010, a four-person family was considered poor if income fell below \$23,283.²

Hispanic family income remained unchanged.

- Latino median household income of \$39,005 in 2012 remained statistically unchanged from its 2011 level, and is still much lower than its pre-recession income level of \$43,025 in 2006. The same pattern held true for all American households with median household income holding steady at \$51,007 in 2012, which is also lower than the pre-recession median household income of \$55,627 in 2007.³

Falling unemployment among Latinos is not leading to lower poverty or higher income.

- While the employment picture for Hispanic workers improved between 2011 and 2012, this has not translated into lower poverty or higher household income. The Latino unemployment rate fell from 11.5% in 2011 to 10.2% as of September 2012 and has continued to drop to 9.3% as of August 2013.⁴

Poverty is higher among communities of color.

- In 2011, the poverty rate for Latinos was 25.6%, compared to 9.7% for Whites, 27.2% for Blacks and 11.7% for Asians.⁵

Latino child poverty rate falls for second year in a row.

- The Latino child poverty rate was 33.8% in 2012, which is slightly lower than the previous two years: in 2011 it was 34.1% and in 2010 it reached a high of 34.9%. The poverty rate of 21.6% among Latino adults in 2012 was slightly higher than its 2011 level of 21.1%. There are 16 million poor children overall in the United States, and 5.9 million (37.2%) of them are Latino.⁶

Social Security keeps the majority of Hispanic seniors out of poverty.

- The poverty rate among Hispanic seniors rose to 20.6% in 2012 compared to its level in 2011 of 18.7%. The 20.6% poverty rate among Latino seniors is twice that of all seniors (9.1%).⁷ Previous studies have shown that without Social Security, the poverty rate among Latino seniors would be approximately 50%.⁸

* 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.

Endnotes

¹ Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012*. U.S. Census Bureau. Washington, DC, 2012, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-245.pdf> (accessed September 2013), Table 3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

³ Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage*, Table 1.

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Data Retrieval: Labor Force Statistics," *Current Population Survey*. Washington, DC, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsatabs.htm> (accessed September 2013), Tables A-2 and A-3.

⁵ Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage*, Table 1.

⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Historical Poverty Tables," *Current Population Survey*. Washington, DC, 2012, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/people.html> (accessed September 2013), Table 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Fernando Torres-Gil, Robert Greenstein, and David Kamin, *The Importance of Social Security to the Hispanic Community* (Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2005), <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=436> (accessed September 2010).