

Latinos Well-Represented in Growth Industries, Insecure in Employment

Encouraging new data from the U.S. Department of Labor indicate that [new job growth](#) is occurring in industries where Hispanic workers have a strong presence. The service sector accounted for the bulk of the 192,000 new jobs between January and February 2011, thanks to industries such as administrative and waste services, nursing and residential care, and trucking. Annual averages from 2010 show that Latinos are highly represented in all of these industries, as depicted in the tables below. Despite these positive signs, however, worrisome trends and public opinion call for policies to improve the employment prospects for vulnerable workers.

Latinos Contribute to Service Sector Gains

The vast majority of jobs added last month were in the service sector. Of the 152,000 new service-providing jobs, 47,000 were in professional and business services, 40,000 were in education and health services, and 22,000 were in transportation and warehousing. Although Latinos are not overrepresented in these industries overall, they represent a significant share of sub-industries that are driving broader employment growth; therefore, Latinos likely benefited from these gains.

Table 1. Professional and Business Services

Industry	Latino share of total employed, 2010*	Employment (in thousands)		Over-the-month growth, Jan. to Feb. (in thousands) [†]
		Jan. 2011	Feb. 2011	
Professional and business services (total)	15%	16,937	16,984	47
Administrative and waste services	26%	7,587	7,624	36
Administrative and support services	14%	7,228	7,263	35
Employment services	21%	2,863	2,892	29
Temporary help services	N/A	2,202	2,218	16
Professional and technical services	7%	7,476	7,486	10

Latinos are overrepresented in administrative and waste services, the top driver of growth in professional and business services. Employment services—which includes temporary help services—is an industry that has experienced consistent growth over the last year and employs a disproportionately large share of Latinos.

* U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, Washington, DC, 2009, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat18.pdf> (accessed March 4, 2011), Table 18.

[†] NCLR calculation using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Employment Statistics*, <http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cesbtab1.htm> (accessed March 4, 2011), Table B-1.

Table 2. Education and Health Services

Industry	Latino share of total employed, 2010	Employment (in thousands)		Over-the-month growth, Jan. to Feb. (in thousands)
		Jan. 2011	Feb. 2011	
Education and health services (total)	10%	19,784	19,824	40
Health care and social assistance	11%	16,592	16,629	36
Health care	11%	13,931	13,965	34
Ambulatory health care services	N/A	6,057	6,074	17
Nursing and residential care facilities	15%	3,165	3,181	15
Home health care services	17%	1,106	1,113	8

Although Latinos are underrepresented in education and health care overall, they represent more than their total industry share in nursing and residential care facilities and in home health care services, which were both among the top drivers of growth in this industry between January and February.

Table 3. Transportation and Warehousing

Industry	Latino share of total employed, 2010	Employment (in thousands)		Over-the-month growth, Jan. to Feb. (in thousands)
		Jan. 2011	Feb. 2011	
Transportation and warehousing (total)	15%	4,224	4,246	22
Truck transportation	16%	1,255	1,266	11
Support activities for transportation	21%	546	550	4
Warehousing and storage	29%	629	633	4
Transit and ground passenger transportation	14%	444	446	2
Water transportation	14%	65	66	1

Latinos are overrepresented in all of the top sub-industries fueling the growth of the transportation and warehousing sector. This includes trucking, which accounted for half of the new job growth in this industry.

Latinos Anxious about Employment Prospects

The news is not all good for Hispanic workers, however. February was the third month in a row in which Latinos exited the labor force and consequently were not counted among the unemployed. This fact probably contributed to the slightly lower Latino unemployment rate, 11.6% in February compared to 11.9% in January. Between January and February alone, 187,000 Latinos dropped out of the labor force. This is a troubling trend for a group that historically holds the highest [labor force participation rate](#). A new [Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation-Harvard University poll](#) confirms that Latinos are more likely than other workers to have “given up looking for work because of a lack of good jobs.” In the same poll, Latinos were more likely to express anxiety about their job security; 33% of Latinos, 22% of Blacks, and 20% of Whites report feeling insecure about their jobs.

Concerns about [growth in low-wage, low-quality jobs](#) are very relevant for Latinos, who are more likely to lack the formal education and skills needed to compete for new jobs in higher-paying occupations. Policies to create jobs in hard-hit communities and effective [enforcement of federal labor laws](#) are among the ways to improve the quantity *and* quality of American jobs. Federal budget investments in [workforce development](#) programs can also bolster the economic security of Latinos and other vulnerable workers.

For more information, contact Catherine Singley, Senior Policy Analyst with the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), at csingley@nclr.org.