

Latino Millennials' Attitudes toward the Job Market

Latino Unemployment Rate Falls to 7.5% in August

The Great Recession exacerbated and prolonged the typically high unemployment rates for millennials—defined as individuals between the ages of 16 and 30 years old in 2012.^{*} Millennials of color face higher unemployment rates compared to their White peers. NCLR has been researching these disparities and engaging Latino millennials to better understand their perspective on the changing economy. This *Monthly Latino Employment Report* provides a snapshot of what we're learning.

Latino Employment Statistics for August 2014

The [latest report](#) from the U.S. Department of Labor shows lower-than-average employment growth in August compared to the last 12 months, but better outcomes for Latino workers who benefitted from job growth in key industries. U.S. payroll employment increased by 142,000 in August compared to the average monthly increase of 212,000. The Latino unemployment rate declined from 7.8% to 7.5%, likely due to job growth in industries with high Latino participation such as administrative and waste services (+23,000), food services and restaurants (+22,000 workers), and construction (+20,000 workers).

Table 1. The Employment Situation for Latino Workers in August 2014

Indicators	Latinos, August 2014
Employed —Working people over the age of 16, including those temporarily absent from their jobs	23.5 million
Unemployed —Those who are available to work, make an effort to find a job, or expect to be called back from a layoff but are not working	1.9 million
Civilian Labor Force —The sum of employed and unemployed people	25.4 million
Not in the Labor Force —People over the age of 16 classified as neither employed nor unemployed	13.1 million
Unemployment Rate —Share of the labor force that is unemployed	7.5%
Labor Force Participation Rate —Share of the population over the age of 16 that is in the labor force	66%
Employment-Population Ratio —Share of the population over the age of 16 that is working	61.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment Status of the Hispanic or Latino Population by Sex and Age," *Current Population Survey*, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t03.htm> (accessed June 6, 2014), Table A-3.

Latino Millennials Face Employment Disparities

The employment situation for millennials of color is troubling; unemployment rates for Blacks are nearly double those of Whites: a staggering 49% for Black men ages 16–19 and 42% for Black women ages 16–19 (see Table 2). Latino millennials face high levels of *underemployment*, which includes individuals who are out of work, working part-time but would prefer full-time work, or gave up searching for a job but are still available to work (see Table 3). NCLR’s latest report, [Giving Them an Edge? The Effects of Work Experience on the Employment Prospects of Latino Young Men](#) discusses in detail the structural factors that lead to underemployment among young Latinos.

Table 2. Millennial Unemployment Rates by Age and Race/Ethnicity, 2012

	Latino		Black		White	
Age	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
16–19	34%	31%	49%	43%	24%	20%
20–25	15%	16%	29%	25%	13%	10%
26–30	10%	12%	21%	19%	8%	7%

Source: NCLR calculations based on 2012 American Community Survey, one-year sample.

Table 3. Millennial Underemployment Rates by Age, Education, and Race/Ethnicity, 2014

Age and Educational Attainment	Latino	Black	White
Ages 17–20 with a high school degree only	41.9%	56.6%	36.8%
Ages 21–24 with a bachelor’s degree	16.3%	25.5%	15.8%

Source: Economic Policy Institute unpublished analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey* monthly microdata, seasonally adjusted.

Recent Polls Show Optimism, Frustration among Young Latino Workers

Young Latinos have mixed opinions about work and the economy. In a [national survey of Latino voters](#) conducted in July, 65% of respondents ages 18–39 reported that they believe the economy has gotten better over the past five years. Close to half say that their personal finances have improved. However, the weak labor market and career mobility are major concerns for young Latinos. Just under half of respondents noted that they were either worried about someone in their household losing his or her job or were already unemployed, and more than 75% said that they were very concerned about career advancement opportunities.

A Labor Day [poll of NCLR’s mobile network](#) found that career fulfillment is a high priority for the majority of young Latino workers. Of the 250 Latinos ages 16–30 who responded to the NCLR poll, more than 60% said that they would rather earn \$40,000 a year working at a job they love than make \$100,000 working at a job they think is boring. This is similar to the response rate of millennials who responded to a poll by the [Intelligence Group](#) last spring.

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* The exact age range of the so-called millennial generation varies by source. For a discussion on how millennials compare to other generations, refer to Scott Keeter and Paul Taylor, "The millennials," December 10, 2009, <http://www.pewresearch.org/2009/12/10/the-millennials> (accessed March 2014).