# Hispanic Map of the United States 2017 

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Topic: Spanish language and Latino Community in the United States

Summary: Analysis of Spanish language and the Hispanic population on the American economy, culture and social trends. Updated: November 2017.

Keywords: Spanish language, Hispanic, Latino, Culture, Economy, Education, Identity, Spanish Media, Social Media

## Introduction

This report examines the situation of the Spanish language and the Hispanic population in the U.S. through the trends observed in the United States over the last decades. In particular, this work examines data about Hispanic population demography and language use, educational attainment, use of the Internet and social media, economic and socioeconomic trends, Hispanic presence in politics and Spanish-language media in the U.S.

The fast growth of Hispanic population is already altering the ethnic makeup of the nation. As the proportion of Hispanic-Americans increases and that of white Americans declines, the Spanish language will reach larger proportions of the U.S. population. It is important for an accurate analysis to take demographic trends into consideration: U.S. born Hispanics account for most of the Latino population growth, and it is known that they become increasingly English dominant by the third and later generations. Identity issues are also relevant in order to examine the future of the Spanish-language in the country: while $71 \%$ of Latinos say speaking Spanish is not necessary to be considered Hispanic, 70\% of the U.S. population thinks being able to speak English is very important for being a truly American.

The factors, length of time in the U.S., educational attainment, income and language ability strongly determine the success of Latinos in the United States, more so than does ethnicity and language use alone. Those who complete high school and attain higher degrees gain proficiency in English and grow up in families with higher income, are more likely to succeed. In general, this also tends to be combined with less frequent use of Spanish, as well as a greater likelihood to consider oneself "American."

Nevertheless, despite strong indicators of progress in economic and educational issues, Hispanics still lag behind the other major racial and ethnic groups in a
number of key areas. One of particular concern is educational attainment. A higher level of education is correlated with higher income, better job prospects, higher proficiency in the English language, and better quality of life indicators. The inability to correct the education gap for American Latinos will likely impair this community's ability to maintain a strong path to assimilation.

Hispanics are far from attaining the political power they should hold given their demographic weight. Despite symbolic acts, such as candidates speaking Spanish during the presidential campaign in 2016, both the limited Hispanic presence in swing states and the demographic characteristics lined to low turnout are limiting Latinos from reaching more influence at a federal level. Furthermore, Hispanics are being especially impacted by Donald Trump's decisions, particularly those relating to immigration issues.

Finally, this report also elaborates on the use of the Internet and social media by Hispanics. It is also of great significance to this report the state of the Spanish language media, which is analyzed in a study of Spanish Journalism in the United States conducted by the Cervantes Observatory at Harvard University. This study reveals that a lack of quality use of Spanish in print and digital media is causing a significant reduction in readership and the use of Spanish in the U.S. For general information and knowledge, the content of this report is divided and ordered in the following sections: ${ }^{1}$

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## 1. Population Demographics

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2017 Hispanics made up $17.8 \%$ of the population in the United States, approximately 57.5 million.
- The Latino population is expected to account for $26.5 \%$ of the U.S. population by 2060.
- In recent years the number of U.S.-born Hispanics is growing more quickly than the number of Hispanic immigrants.
- The median age of Hispanics (28.9) is younger than that of United States population (37.9).
- The five U.S. states with the largest Hispanic population in 2016 were: California (15.3 million), Texas (10.9 million), Florida ( 5,1 million), New York ( 3.7 million) and Illinois ( 2.2 million).

About 57.5 million Hispanics live in the United States out of a total population of 323.1 million Americans (U.S. Census Bureau 2017a). This figure is expected to double within the next 30-40 years, to approximately 106 million out of 398 million in 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau 2014). This projected shift would raise the number of Latinos from $17.8 \%$ of the U.S. population to over a quarter of the population, at $26.6 \%$.

From 2000 to 2012, the Hispanic population grew by $50 \%$ while the entire U.S. population grew only by $12 \%$ (Brown 2014), and between 1970 and 2016 the Hispanic population increased more than six-fold, from 9.1 million to 57.5 million. The Hispanic population is further projected to grow to 106 million by 2050, and to reach 119 million by 2060, according to the latest projections from the U.S. Census Bureau (U.S. Census 2014). The share of Hispanics in the U.S.
population, currently is at $17.8 \%$, but is expected to reach $26.5 \%$ by 2050 and up to $28.6 \%$ by 2060 (Colby and Ortman 2015; U.S. Census Bureau 2017a).

Figure 1. U.S. population forecast by race/ethnicity until 2060. Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014.


This corresponds more broadly to a large demographic shift within the United States. Until the 1980s, whites of European descent are estimated to have made up approximately $80-90 \%$ of the U.S. population: in 2010, the proportion of nonHispanic whites, here on referenced simply as whites, in the U.S. had fallen to $64.1 \%$, and to $61.1 \%$ in 2016. By 2045, some analysts have estimated that Whites will make up less than half of the U.S. population (The Economist 2015a; Colby and Ortman 2015; U.S. Census Bureau-ACS 2016: DP05).

Figure 2. U.S. Hispanic population, in millions. Source: U.S. Census Bureau-ACS 2016: DP05.


Hispanics are the nation's largest minority and until recently, comprise the nation's fastest growing population, only recently surpassed by the growth amid the Asian population (Stepler and Lopez 2016). While the general U.S. birth rate is below replacement level ${ }^{2}$, the birth rate among Hispanics remains the only one above it, at $2,123.5$ total fertility rate (Martin et al. 2017). All this suggests that Hispanic population will continue being the fastest-growing population in the U.S. (The Economist 2015a). It is important to note that the Hispanic women birth rate is decreasing: from 98.3 births per 1,000 in 2006, to 71.7 in 2015 (Krogstad 2017).

[^1]Figure 3. U.S. population estimates by percent and race/ethnicity until 2016. Source: U.S. Census Bureau-ACS 2016: DP05.


Immigration vs. Natural Births

Despite the continuous growth of the Latino population in the United States, in a wave of 59 million immigrants in nearly five decades, and a record of 57.7 million Hispanics living in the United States as of 2016, growth has slowed. According to the last data by the Center for Immigration Studies, immigration from Latin America experienced an increase of $5 \%$ between 2010 and 2016, which shows an important slowdown compared to the increase of 31.9\% between 2000 and 2010. On the other side, considering return immigration and natural mortality, the overall Mexican-born population decreased 1\% between 2010 and 2016 (Camarota and Zeigler 2017). Thus with fewer arrivals, the U.S Census has had to lower Hispanic population projections for 2050 from 133 million in 2008 to 112 million in 2012.

While the majority of historical Latino population growth in the United States was driven by immigration, this is no longer the case. According to the Pew Research Center, the number of Latino immigrants reached a record of 18.8 million in 2010 but has since stalled (Krogstad and Lopez 2014). The constant Hispanic population growth has been driven mainly by U.S. Hispanics births in the last years, which will have relevant implications for some quality of life indicators, as this report examines, among others, language proficiency, educational attainment, income, home ownership, and identity. Figure 4, based on data from the Pew Research Center and the U.S. Census, shows Hispanic population growth, in millions, broken down by nativity (immigration and natural U.S. births).

Figure 4. Hispanic natural births vs. Immigration, in millions. Source: Krogstad and López 2014.


According to the U.S. Census Bureau, immigration from both China and India over took that from Mexico in 2013 (The Economist 2015b). In 2015, 110,000 immigrants came from India, followed by 109,000 from Mexico, and 90,000 from China (López and Bialik 2017). As the main driver of Hispanic population growth, the decline in the number of Mexicans entering the United States contributes to
an overall decline of the Hispanic immigration rate (Pew Research Center 2014). Though they continue to be the largest group among Hispanics, with a population at 34 million (The Economist 2015a). The Mexican-American population has expanded so quickly that since 2005, Mexico has opened up five new consulates across the United States (The Economist 2015c).

According to the Pew Research Center, Hispanic and Asian populations will continue driving demographic growth in the U.S., even though the percentage of foreign-born Hispanics and Asians is expected to decrease; that means the population growth will be due to U.S. births in both groups. The proportion of foreign-born Hispanics of all ages decreased to $35.5 \%$ in 2012, from approximately $40 \%$ in the early 2000s (Krogstad and López 2014). That proportion was $34.5 \%$ in 2015, and the U.S. Census Bureau expects it to decline to $27.4 \%$ in 2060 (Brown 2015; Krogstad 2017). Hispanic population increased in almost 7 millions between 2010 and 2016; 76,8\% of it was due to U.S. births and only $23.2 \%$ due to immigration (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPCCOMPN). Figure 5 below shows the estimated Hispanic population (in millions) by nativity from 1960-2015.

These figures could be deeply impacted if new immigration laws are passed with more restrictive conditions to enter the U.S. than the current one: the Immigration and Nationality Act from 1965. The Reforming American Immigration for Strong Employment Act or RAISE act, introduced in the Senate by two Republican Senators and supported by the President of the United States, Donald Trump, would impose hard restrictions on non qualified immigration, as well as on familiar reunification; it would also require certain English proficiency, all requirements that could strongly influence Hispanic migration (Calcino 2017).

Figure 5. Hispanic population estimates in millions, by nativity, 1960-2015. Source: Stepler and Brown 2016.


Age
Another significant statistic of Hispanic population growth is that Hispanics are the youngest demographic group in the United States. In 2016, the median age for Hispanics in the U.S. was 28.9 years, compared to 43.4 for whites, 33.9 for blacks, 36.9 for Asians, and 37.9 for the entire U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B01002I). In addition, the median age of U.S. born Hispanics is actually lower than that for those who are foreign born, at 19 years and 40 years, respectively (Krogstad, Stepler y López 2015; Stepler y Brown 2016). In 2014, there were almost twice as many U.S.-born as foreignborn Hispanics, a comparison of 37.7 million to 19.6 million, and those born in the U.S. made up $65.8 \%$ of the U.S. Hispanic population. Consequentially, twothirds of the U.S. Latino community is substantially younger than other demographics in the United States.

Hispanics tend to be concentrated in the Western states (California, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, among others). Previously clustered in a few key cities and states, Hispanic population has now spread more broadly across the United States, especially to the South West; this trend has slowed down since the Great Recession (Krogstad 2017). Figure 6 shows a map of the Hispanic population across the United States. The counties with the largest Hispanic population tend to be concentrated in the Southwest of the country and also in Southern Florida.

Figure 6. Distribution of U.S. Hispanic population by counties as of ACS 2015 (5-years estimates).


New Mexico has the largest number of Hispanics as a portion of the overall population, at $48.5 \%$, while California has the largest overall number of Hispanics, at 15,3 million (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPASR6H). From 2000-2010, the Hispanic population has grown most rapidly in the South and in the Middwest (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
2017). Northeastern counties, predominately those in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York, demonstrated a larger share of national Hispanic growth post2007 than during the period 2000-2007 (Stepler and Lopez 2016). Notably, the three counties demonstrating the greatest growth in their Hispanic population were all found in North Dakota.

In 2016, the five U.S. states with the largest Hispanic population were: California ( 15.3 million), Texas ( 10.9 million), Florida ( 5.1 million), New York ( 3.7 million) and Illinois (2.2 million) (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPASR6H). The states where Hispanics made up the largest share of the population (in 2016) were: New Mexico (48.5\%), Texas (39.1\%), California (38.9\%), Arizona (30.5\%) and Nevada (28.5\%) (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPASR6H). More than 50\% of U.S. Hispanics live in California, Florida and Texas; adding New York, Arizona, Illinois, New Jersey and Colorado to the group incorporates over 75\% of all Hispanics in the United States (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 2017). Between 2000 and 2015, the states with the fastest-growing Hispanic populations were Georgia (118.8\%), Florida (85.6\%), Texas (60.4\%), Arizona (62.4\%) y Colorado (58.4\%) (Flores 2017).

Table 1. Hispanic Population by U.S. state. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPASR6H.

|  |  | Estado | Hispanic population 2015 | Hispanic population 2016 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 1 | California | 15,184,548 | 15,280,773 |
|  | 2 | Texas | 10,670,101 | 10,881,124 |
|  | 3 | Florida | 4,964,077 | 5,126,975 |
|  | 4 | New York | 3,726,804 | 3,747,125 |
|  | 5 | Illinois | 2,175,116 | 2,181,439 |
|  | 6 | Arizona | 2,098,410 | 2,144,775 |
|  | 7 | New Jersey | 1,762,181 | 1,786,668 |
|  | 8 | Colorado | 1,164,274 | 1,181,219 |
|  | 9 | New Mexico | 1,001,258 | 1,009,873 |
|  | 10 | Georgia | 955,434 | 972,698 |

Table 2. Hispanics as a percentage of population by U.S. state. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPASR6H.

|  | State | Hispanic population |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | New Mexico | $48.5 \%$ |
| 2 | Texas | $39.1 \%$ |
| 3 | California | $38.9 \%$ |
| 4 | Arizona | $30.5 \%$ |
| 5 | Nevada | $28.5 \%$ |
| 6 | Florida | $24.9 \%$ |
| 7 | Colorado | $21.3 \%$ |
| 8 | New Jersey | $20 \%$ |
| 9 | New York | $19 \%$ |
| 10 | Illinois | $17 \%$ |

Table 3. U.S. counties with largest Hispanic population. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: PEPASR6H.

|  | County | Hispanic population |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | Los Ángeles, CA | $4,918,830$ |
| 2 | Harris County, TX | $1,945,621$ |
| 3 | Miami-Dade County, FL | $1,835,413$ |
| 4 | Cook County, IL | $1,318,879$ |
| 5 | Maricopa County, AZ | $1,302,419$ |
| 6 | Riverside County, CA | $1,156,169$ |
| 7 | Bexar County, TX | $1,155,997$ |
| 8 | San Bernardino County, CA | $1,129,893$ |
| 9 | San Diego County, CA | $1,112,325$ |
| 10 | Orange County, CA | $1,086,961$ |

U.S. Hispanics trace their heritage to more than twenty Spanish-speaking countries. Of these groups, six have populations in the U.S. greater than one
million. The 14 largest origin groups are listed below in Table 4. Arrivals and descendants from these 14 countries account for $95 \%$ of the U.S. Hispanic population.

Table 4. U.S. Hispanic population by country of origin, in miles. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B03001.

| Country of Origin | Number | \% of Hispanics |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Mexico | $36,255,589$ | $63.2 \%$ |
| Puerto Rico | $5,450,472$ | $9.5 \%$ |
| Cuba | $2,212,566$ | $3.9 \%$ |
| El Salvador | $2,195,477$ | $3.7 \%$ |
| Dominican Republic | $1,914,120$ | $3.3 \%$ |
| Guatemala | $1,416,175$ | $2.5 \%$ |
| Colombia | $1,104,535$ | $1.9 \%$ |
| Honduras | 948,587 | $1.7 \%$ |
| Spain | 773,447 | $1.3 \%$ |
| Ecuador | 715,270 | $1.3 \%$ |
| Peru | 627,538 | $1.1 \%$ |
| Nicaragua | 401,743 | $0.7 \%$ |
| Venezuela | 366,443 | $0.6 \%$ |
| Argentina | 269,421 | $0.5 \%$ |
| Total | $57,398,719$ |  |

As immigration from Mexico continues to decrease, the percentage of Hispanics of Mexican origin has decreased to $63.2 \%$ or 36.3 million (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B03001). The second biggest source of Hispanic population in the U.S. are Puerto Ricans whose number has increased to 5.4 million, then follow Salvadorians, Cubans, Dominicans, and Guatemalans. Hispanics from Paraguayan, Uruguayan, Bolivian, and Costa Rican origin, make up less than 200,000 in all cases.

Table 5 and Figure 7 give the numbers and percentages of Hispanics according to country or region of origin.

Table 5. U.S. Hispanic population by region of origin. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B03001.

| Region | Number |
| :--- | :---: |
| Mexico | 36.255 .589 |
| Puerto Rico | 5.450 .472 |
| Central America | 5.319 .873 |
| Cuba | 2.212 .566 |
| Dominican Republic | 1.914 .120 |
| South America | 3.460 .404 |
| Other | 2.785 .695 |

Figure 7. U.S. Hispanic population by origin. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B03001.


## 2. Language Use and Ability

- Spanish is the first non-English language in the United States.
- According to the 2016 American Community Survey, there are 40.5 million Spanish speakers in the U.S., without considering undocumented immigrants.
- $76 \%$ of Hispanics are Spanish-dominant or bilingual.
- $95 \%$ of U.S. Hispanics believe it is important for future generations to continue to speak Spanish.
- By the third generation the percentage of Hispanics who are Spanishdominant or bilingual declines significantly: just one third considers themselves bilingual and only $47 \%$ say they speak Spanish proficiently.


## Background

It is difficult to precisely calculate the current number of Spanish speakers in the United States and the growth of this demographic, particularly among nonHispanics that have come to dominate Spanish but do not speak it at home. There is additional difficulty counting the number of foreign-born Hispanics that may have immigrated to the U.S. at a young age and do not have mastery over Spanish, but nevertheless under the Census are assumed to speak Spanish. Thus, the numbers in the Census and the American Community Survey (ACS) should only be seen as rough estimates.

The U.S. Census introduced a self-rating question in 1980 in order to quantify the number of speakers of the different languages in the United States, as well as the English proficiency of non-English speakers. The English-ability question's validity has been examined and validated by various analyses (Vickstrom, Shin, Collazo y Bauman 2015). Figure 8 presents the three questions used to determine respondents' language use in the Census and the ACS. Even though there are
limitations, U.S. Census comprises the most reliable data of language use in the United States.

Figure 8. Reproduction of the Questions on Language in the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/ACS 2017.
 who speak Spanish at home ( 2.8 million in 2011 and 2.6 million in 2013) (Krogstad and González-Barrera 2015).

According to 2016 ACS, 37.9 million of Hispanics older than 5 years old speak Spanish at home (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: C16006); adding 2.6 million of Non-Hispanic population speaking Spanish, the number is about 40.5 million. Undocumented immigrants should be also taken in
consideration. Despite the difficulties to measure this population accurately, according to the last estimations available by the Department of Homeland Security, from 2012, there were 11.4 million unauthorized immigrants in the U.S., from which at least 8.8 million came from Spanish-speaking countries (Baker and Rytina 2013).

The significant number of Spanish speakers in the United States places it second among the countries with the largest population of Spanish speakers, behind Mexico (112.3 million), and ahead of countries like Colombia ( 47.5 million), Spain (46.7 million) and Argentina (41.6 million) (Escobar and Potowski 2015). Currently, the Instituto Cervantes estimates that there are 572 million Spanish speakers worldwide, including natives and foreign language learners (Instituto Cervantes 2017).


In 2011, the last Language Use report from the U.S. Census Bureau claimed that about $12.9 \%$ of U.S. population spoke Spanish; an increase from the $12 \%$ reported in 2005 and the 11\% in 1980 (Ryan 2011). A related report by the U.S. Census Bureau projects that the number of Spanish speakers in the United States will increase on top of the already 55 million anywhere between 39 million and 43 million by 2020; however, this number will depend largely upon future patterns of migration (Ortman and Shin 2011).

Though the wave of Latino immigration has receded in recent years, it has put forth a large number of Hispanic cultures with one thing in common in most cases, the Spanish language. The increasing number of Hispanics in the United States and the growing popularity ${ }^{3}$ of the Spanish language have made it the second most-common language used in the United States.

Despite the growing global influence of the Spanish language, there are reports of a loss of language ability among the native Hispanic population in the United States. As reported in previous editions of the "Hispanic Map," by the third generation, the number of Hispanics that retain Spanish and can be classified as bilingual declines substantially compared to first-generation and secondgeneration Hispanic immigrants (Steinmetz 2015).

English monolingualism and consequently the loss of Spanish language, seems the predominant trend of all Hispanics by the third generation. In general, bilingualism tends to be strongest between Hispanic of first generation and second-generation. Nearly all second-generation children are proficient in English and can speak their parent's language. However, by the third generation, English dominance becomes increasingly prevalent. This trend makes it less likely that third-generation Hispanics will grow up to become bilinguals (Alba 2004). While 61\% of the first generation of Hispanics has Spanish as the dominant language, this percentage decreases to $8 \%$ in the second generation, and only $1 \%$ in the third generation. At the same time, the percentage of Hispanics with English as the dominant language increases: 6\% in the first generation of Hispanics, 40\% in the second generation, and $69 \%$ in the third one. Bilingual Hispanics represent $33 \%$ of the first generation, $53 \%$ of the second generation, and $29 \%$ in the third generation.

[^2]Despite the loss of Spanish language by the third generation, Hispanics still consider it important for all generations to speak Spanish and to try to preserve it. Up to $75 \%$ of Hispanics consider that it is very important for future generations to continue to speak Spanish, and 20\% think it is somewhat important (Taylor, Lopez, Martínez y Velasco 2012). Perhaps indicatively, the rate of bilingualism of Hispanics, even by the third generation, remains higher than that of other ethnic groups. Only 72\% of third generations Hispanics are English monolingual, in comparison to 92\% of Asians (Alba 2004).

It is significant to note that a diminishing share of U.S.-born Latinos who speak Spanish at home is pulling down the overall percentage. The share of U.S.-born Hispanic households speaking Spanish at home has declined from 67\% in 1980 to $59.5 \%$ in 2016 (Krogstad, Stepler y López 2015; U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B16005I). On the other hand, the overall percentage of Hispanics who speak Spanish at home decreased from 78\% in 2000 to $72.8 \%$ in 2016 (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B16005I).

Though the percentage of Spanish speakers age 5 and older who speak Spanish at home is slowly declining, the number of Hispanics who speak Spanish at home has drastically increased from 9.8 million in 1980 to 37.9 million in 2016. Conversely, the percentage of foreign-born Hispanics who speaks Spanish at home remains high, relatively unchanged from 1980 (Krogstad, Stepler y López 2015). Even though the number of Spanish speakers is expected to continue growing as the Hispanic population does, demographic trends need to be considered. U.S.-born Hispanics represent an increasing share of the Hispanic population and immigration is declining, which facilitates highest level of English proficiency among this population, but a decrease in Spanish proficiency.

Figure 9. Number of Hispanics age 5 or older who speak Spanish at home, in millions. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B16006, C16006.


## English among Hispanics

Contrary to popular belief Hispanic immigrants assimilate to American culture and the English language the same way as earlier immigrants of European decent (The Wall Street Journal 2013). As an example, children of Hispanic immigrants are able to learn English better than their parents. In 2007 a study by the Pew Research Center found that while $23 \%$ of recent immigrants felt they speak English "very well" and 88\% of their adult U.S.-born children reported speaking English "very well". For later generations of adult Hispanics the figure rises to 94\% (Hakimzadeh and Cohn 2007).

While most Hispanics speak some Spanish (72,8\% age 5 or older in 2016) English usage has been shown to increase with each generation (Escobar and Potowski 2015; Krogstad and González-Barrera 2015). In 2000, 78\% of U.S. Hispanics said they spoke Spanish at home. In 2013, this portion had dropped to 72.4\%. By contrast the percentage of Hispanics who speak English proficiently increased from 59\% in 2000 to 68\% in 2013 (Krogstad, Stepler y López 2015).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau projections, the number of Hispanics who speak only English at home will rise from $26 \%$ in 2013 to $34 \%$ in 2020 and the number of Hispanics who speak Spanish at home will decrease form $75 \%$ in 2010 to 66\% in 2020 (Krogstad y González-Barrera 2015; Ortman y Shin 2011).

English proficiency is also strongly affected by whether Hispanics are foreign born or native. In 2013, Latino adults who are the children of Hispanic immigrants i.e. second generation were the most likely to be bilingual at 50\% (Krogstad and González-Barrera 2015). As a comparison, only 35\% of first generation Hispanic immigrants are bilingual and only $23 \%$ of Hispanics with U.S. born parents i.e. third generation Hispanics are bilingual (Krogstad and González-Barrera 2015). These statistics indicate that Spanish proficiency is strongest among first and second generation Hispanics but begins to decline by the third generation.

A study by the Pew Research Center reveals that in 2013, 36\% Hispanics were bilingual, 38\% mainly spoke Spanish or where Spanish dominant, 25\% were English dominant; for those who primarily spoke English: 59\% were bilingual (Krogstad and González-Barrera 2015). Additionally, in 2013 a record number of Hispanics ( 33.2 million) spoke English proficiently, this is about $68 \%$ of all Hispanics (Krogstad, Stepler and López 2015). Thus, as Hispanic population continues to increase in the United States, mainly driven by the increase of USborn Hispanics, English proficiency among Hispanics is expected to increase with each generation. That increase is "almost entirely due to the growing share of younger Hispanics born in the U.S.," (Krogstad 2016c).

Figure 10. Percent of Hispanics (ages 5 and older) who speak only English at home. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B16006.


Figure 11. Number of Hispanics age 5 or older who speak only English at home, by nativity. Source: Stepler y Brown 2016.


As shown in Figures 10 and 11, even though the overall number of Hispanics in Spanish-speaking homes increases, the percentage of Hispanics speaking Spanish is declining and the share of Hispanics speaking only English is rising.

Among all Latinos ages five and older, approximately 16.2 million who speak Spanish at home also report speaking some English or nothing at all (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B16005I). Overall, the percent of Spanishspeaking Hispanics who are not proficient in English has decreased from 54\% in 1980 to $44 \%$ in 2013 (Krogstad, Stepler y López 2015). This is a significant decline of ten percent and indicates that more and more Hispanics are learning to speak English.

Barriers to English proficiency
English proficiency is on the rise among Latinos in the United States, mainly due to the increasing share of the U.S. born Latinos. About 36.1 million Hispanics speak only English or speak English proficiently. However, the rise of English proficiency among Latinos seems to coincide with the decline of percentage of Latinos who speak Spanish at home. Nonetheless, it should be noted that though the percentage has decreased the number of Latinos who speak Spanish at home has increased reaching a record number of 35.9 million (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: C16006).

Despite the overall growth in English language proficiency, nonetheless, there are still many Hispanics who do not speak English or who speak it less than "very well." In 2016, 30.9\% of all Hispanics who were 5 years of age or older said in the ACS they spoke English "less than very well" (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B16005I). The barriers that Hispanics in the United States encounter to become proficient in English have not changed since those reported in the "Hispanic Map of the United States 2015." Age, gender, nativity, educational attainment, and length of time in the United States are still the most important factors that affect language use and ability of Hispanics to speak English.

Among these factors, age continues to be the biggest obstacle to English language use among Hispanics. Approximately 70\% of immigrant children (ages 5-17) say they speak only English or speak English "very well", in comparison only $32 \%$ of immigrant adults report the same (Krogstad and López 2014). Overall, older Hispanics tend to be less proficient in English. In fact, 21\% of Hispanics who do not speak any English are 65 years of age or older. Among Hispanics who speak some English but do not speak it very well, another 9\% are also 65 or older. Likewise, among Hispanics who are English-proficient, only 4\% are in this same age group (Krogstad, Stepler y López 2015).

> Hispanics English proficiency is increasing in the U.S., mainly due to the increasing share of the U.S. born in the overall population

Gender also influences whether Latinos speak English proficiently, although the impact is less significant than age. Among Hispanics who do not speak any English, 57\% are female. Women also account for slightly less than half (49\%) of the Hispanics who can speak proficient English (Krogstad, Stepler and López 2015). Educational attainment is another factor of importance for English proficiently among Hispanics. Hispanic immigrants age 25 and older who speak only English at home or are bilingual and speak English "very well" about 15\% have less than a high school diploma compared to $61 \%$ with a Bachelor degree or more.

Nativity continues to be the third most influential barrier to English language ability. Almost all (93\%) of those Latinos who do not speak English are foreignborn, as opposed to $76 \%$ of those who speak English "less than very well", and
only 19\% of foreign born Hispanics are English-proficient (Krogstad, Stepler and López 2015). Among adult Hispanics who are foreign born, the percentage who speak only English at home, or who speak English "very well", has increased only slightly since 1980. It increased from $29 \%$ in 1980 to $34 \%$ in 2016. Foreign-born Hispanics continue to predominantly be Spanish speakers.

Figure 12. Effect on age, gender, educational attainment, and nativity on English proficiency. Source: Krogstad, Stepler and López 2015.


Finally, length of time spent in the United States is another important factor affecting English language use among Hispanics. Data from the Pew Research Center shows that Hispanic immigrants residing longer within the United States have higher levels of English proficiency, both among adults and children (Krogstad, Stepler and López 2015). ${ }^{4}$

[^3]Being the second language most commonly used among U.S. Latinos, Spanish is also the most widely studied language in the United States across all levels of education. Spanish is the most studied language in Elementary and Secondary Education (K-12), with 7.4 million of students during the academic year 20142015 (American Councils for International Education 2017). After Spanish, French is the language with the highest enrollment (1.3 million), followed by German (330.898) and Chinese (227.086). Only 19.66\% of K-12 students are enrolled in a foreign language course, and important differences between states can be observed: Arizona, Arkansas and New Mexico enrollment rates are below 10\%, while Washington D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, Vermont, and West Virginia have more than $30 \%$ of $\mathrm{K}-12$ students in foreign language courses. Up to 16 states don't have foreign language graduation requirements. In addition, the numbers show a decrease in foreign language enrollment, from 4.2 million students in Primary Education, and 10.5 million in Secondary Education (Rhodes and Pufhal 2014), to 10.6 million of K-12 students (Primary and Secondary education) (American Councils for International Education 2017). In 1997, the numbers were 2.2 million of students of a foreign language in Primary education and 12 in Secondary education (Rhodes and Pufhal 2014).


According to the mentioned American Councils' report, there are 8,177 Spanish language programs in public and private high schools, $46 \%$ of the 17,778 foreign
language programs. French programs account for $21.03 \%$, and German and Latin programs, for $8.71 \%$ and $8.51 \%$, respectively. Chinese language represents $6.43 \%$ of the overall foreign language programs.

After years of restrictions to bilingual education, nowadays a change in the trend seems to be happening. In November 2016, California repealed the requirement of teaching all classes only in English (Hopkinson 2017). A similar law passed the House and the Senate in Massachusetts, Governor's approval pending. In addition, 27 states and Washington D.C. approved the "Seal of Biliteracy," an award designed to recognize high school students who attained proficiency in two or more languages. ${ }^{5}$

Spanish is also the most widely studied language at university (both two and four year institutions) and graduate schools with a total enrollment of 790,756 students in the United States alone, according to the last Modern Language Association (2013) nationwide survey on foreign language enrollment and trends. Although, in recent years the study of Spanish language declined for the first time in the history, the Modern Language Association survey reported that in 2013, the total enrollment in course of Spanish nationwide exceeded the total number of students enrolled in all other languages, which combined numbered 771,423 (Modern Language Association 2013). Figure 13 shows Spanish language enrollment at the post-secondary level from 1960 to 2013.

[^4]Figure 13. Post-secondary enrollment in Spanish language courses. Source: Modern Language Association 2013.


## 3. Educational Attainment

- Hispanic students make up over $25 \%$ of all public school students.
- The high school dropout rate for Hispanics has dramatically declined from $29.4 \%$ in 1992 to $9.2 \%$ in 2015. Nonetheless, Hispanics dropout rate remains the highest among other racial and ethnic groups.
- Among Hispanics, males in general and afro-Hispanics are less likely to have some college education.
- Hispanics enrollment in two and four-year institutions increased from 25\% in 2005 to $37 \%$ in 2015.

The overall percentage of Latinos successfully achieving each degree has steadily risen since the 1970s, with substantial progress in the last few years, particularly for high school completion. The high school drop out rate of Hispanics has
declined dramatically, college enrollment of Hispanics has tripled since 1993 and today Hispanics are the largest minority group on college campuses. In addition, Hispanics are more likely than average Americans to believe that a college education is essential to achieving the "American dream" (The Economist 2015c). In 2016, Hispanics pointed out that education was one of their main concerns in order to decide their vote in presidential elections, at the same level of healthcare or terrorism and only behind the importance of economy (Krogstad 2016a).

Despite the improvements, Hispanics remain the racial/ethnic group least likely to achieve each educational level. Economic factors are frequently cited as the major barriers to Hispanics pursuing higher education, other factors such as gender and race also present some difference in the educational attainment among Hispanics (Krogstad 2016b).

Primary and secondary school enrollment and completion
At the primary and secondary school level, the number of enrolled Hispanic students has been continually rising over the last fifteen years. Latino students made up $19 \%$ of all students in these educational levels, and that percentage increased to $25 \%$ in 2013. The National Center for Education Statistics (2017) projects they will represents $29 \%$ of the U.S. students by 2025. Regarding preprimary education, $22 \%$ of Hispanic children regularly received center-based care in 2012, once again below the rest of racial and ethnic groups; Latino children in kindergarten represent $25.1 \%$ of the overall enrollment (U.S. Census Bureau 2017b).

However, despite the high enrollment numbers, Hispanics complete secondary school at a lower rate than other ethnic and racial groups in the U.S. As of 2016,
$30 \%$ of the Hispanic population ages 18 and over hadn't completed a secondary education, compared to $7 \%$ of non-Hispanic white population, $14 \%$ of afroAmericans, and 10\% of Asian population (U.S. Census Bureau 2016a). Up to $80.4 \%$ of Hispanics ages $18-24$ had high school completed, which reflects a significant improvement from $71.5 \%$ in 2010 , even though the figures are still worse than those of other groups (National Center for Education Statistics 2016: 104.40).

Figure 14. Percent of Hispanic youth ages $18-24$ who has completed high school, by race and ethnicity. Source: National Center for Education Statistics 2016: 104.40.


High school dropout rate is another indicator of Hispanic educational attainment improvement. From 29.4\% in 1992, high school dropout among Hispanics ages $18-24$ reached an historic low of $9.2 \%$ in 2015. The overall rate for the U.S. in 2015 was 5.9\% (3.3\% more than the Hispanic rate), compared to $18.4 \%$ registered in 1992 (National Center for Education Statistics 2017: 219.70). The evident advances are still not enough for Hispanics to be at the educational
attaintment levels registered by other racial and ethnic groups. Among Hispanic youths, the reasons most frequently given for dropping out of high school are: need to provide financial support to family (75\%), poor English skills (50\%) and dislike of school or belief they do not need more education (40\%) Figure 15 shows the dropout rates by race/ethnicity from 1992 to 2015.

Figure 15. High school dropout rates, by ethnicity, from 1992 to 2015. Source: National Center for Education Statistics 2017: 219.70.


## College level enrollment

In addition to the steady decline in high school dropout rate, the percentage of Hispanic high school graduates enrolled in two and four-year programs has risen from 25\% in 2005 to 37\% in 2015 (National Center for Education Statistics 2017: 219.70); the gap between non-Hispanic White and Hispanic population decreased from 18 to $5 \%$ in ten years. The overall enrollment rate in college is 40\%, 42\% for non-Hispanic White population, 35 for Afro-American population, and $63 \%$ for Asian population. The percentage of Hispanic high school graduates immediately enrolling in college has risen from 52\% in 1990 to 67\% in 2015.

Nevertheless, there is a need for nuance about these numbers. Despite the growth of Hispanic students in college, 19.1\% of total in 2016 (U.S. Census Bureau 2017b), an analysis by The New York Times noted that affirmative action couldn't narrow the gap between Hispanic and Afro-American population collegeaged and the actual percentage of these groups among freshmen. Hispanic population college-aged represented $22 \%$ of total in 2015, while Hispanic freshmen in colleges were only 13\% of total, a difference of 9\%; that gap was just 3\% in 1980 (Ashkenas, Park y Pearce 2017). According to experts, this underrrepresentation "often stems from equity issues that begin earlier" (ibidem).

Race and ethnicity can also have an impact in the number of years needed by a student to complete a degree. According to a report on students starting their degree or certificate degree in 2010, 62.4\% finished in six years. Taking race and ethnicity into consideration, Hispanic students who completed their degree in six years were 45.8\%, only above afro-americans (38\%) (Shapiro et al. 2017); the percentage was $67.2 \%$ for non-Hispanic White population and $71.1 \%$ for Asian population.

The number of Hispanic youths ages 18-24 who enroll in either a two or a fouryear college have tripled since 1993. In 2014, 2.3 million Hispanics were enrolled in college, compared to 728,000 in 1993; this represents an increase in college-level enrollment of Hispanics of 201\% (Krogstad 2016b). In 2011, enrollments of Hispanics in four-year bachelor degree programs for the first time exceeded enrollments of black students (1.1 million). This made Hispanics the largest minority group at four-year colleges and universities in 2011 (Fry and Lopez 2012).

But Hispanic students are still more likely than other ethnic and racial groups to attend a two-year institution as opposed to a four-year intuition. In fact, 49.6\% $(1,450,647)$ of Hispanic undergraduate students attended two-year institutions
compared to $38.9 \%$ for all other races/ethnicities (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 2017).

In 2014, Hispanics made up 11.9\% of all 18-24 years old who were enrolled in college, meanwhile Blacks made up only 7.9\%. The trend is the same at two-year colleges; in 2011, Hispanics made up $25.2 \%$ of all $18-24$ years old enrolled at two-year colleges, and surpassed black enrollment (908,000 Hispanics compared with 564,000 Blacks) (Fry and Lopez 2012).

Overall, educational attainment statistics have been on the rise for Hispanics. Along with the improvement in high school completion rates, the number of Latinos with a bachelor degree is also increasing.

Table 6. Breakdown of Hispanics historical educational attainment. Source: National Center for Educational Statistics 2016: 104.20.

| Year | High School | Bachelor's | Master's |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1980 | $58.0 \%$ | $7.7 \%$ | - |
| 1985 | $60.9 \%$ | $11.1 \%$ | - |
| 1990 | $58.2 \%$ | $8.1 \%$ | - |
| 1995 | $57.1 \%$ | $8.9 \%$ | $1.6 \%$ |
| 2000 | $62.3 \%$ | $11.2 \%$ | $2.1 \%$ |
| 2005 | $63.3 \%$ | $11.2 \%$ | $2.1 \%$ |
| 2010 | $69.4 \%$ | $13.5 \%$ | $2.5 \%$ |
| 2013 | $75.8 \%$ | $15.7 \%$ | $3.0 \%$ |
| 2014 | $74.7 \%$ | $15.1 \%$ | $2.9 \%$ |
| 2015 | $77.1 \%$ | $16.4 \%$ | $3.2 \%$ |
| 2016 | $80.6 \%$ | $18.7 \%$ | $4.1 \%$ |

Up to $22 \%$ of Hispanics ages 18 and older hold a university degree, wether a twoyear associate degree, a bachelor's degree, a master's or a professional degree or a doctorate degree. This percentage reaches $40 \%$ of the U.S. population, and 45\% for non-Hispanic White population (U.S. Census Bureau 2016a).

Figure 16. Percentage of the population age 18 and older possessing an associate, bachelor, professional or doctorate degree. Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2016a.


Overall, Hispanics have the lowest educational attainment of all groups as Figure 16 reveals. According the Pew Research Center, this gap is likely caused by a number of factors, including that Hispanics are less likely to enroll in a four-year bachelor's degree-granting program, they tend to attend less academically selective colleges, and are less likely to enroll full-time, which can make it more difficult and take more time to finish a degree program (Krogstad 2016b).

Gender, Race and Education

Gender seems to play a significant role in Hispanic educational attainment. Females are more likely than males to complete high school. In 2016, 78.3\% of Latino males completed high school, compared to $83.2 \%$ of Latino females (National Center for Education Statistics 2016).

Figure 17. Educational attainment of 25-29 year Hispanics compared by gender in 1995 and 2016. Source: National Center for Education Statistics 2017.


The gender gap appears as well in higher education degrees. According to the most recent data from U.S. Census Bureau, $16.2 \%$ of Hispanic males had completed a bachelor degree completed, compared to $21.5 \%$ of Hispanic females; in addition, $2.1 \%$ males ages 25-29 hold a master's degree, compared to $6.3 \%$ females. Observing the trend, the gap between males and females keeps on increasing (National Center for Education Statistics 2016).

On the other hand, race also introduces differences in Hispanic educational attainment. Hispanics are a racially diverse group, and although many of them tie their ancestry to their place of origin, Hispanics may also look to their indigenous, African and European roots to define their identity. In 2014, the Pew Research, National Survey of Latinos found out that a large minority of Hispanics identify as mixed race (34\%), indigenous (25\%) and afro-Latino (24\%), white (41\%), and 30\% consider their race to be Hispanic or Latino (Pew Research 2015).

When analyzed according to race, afro-Latinos have a lower educational attainment than the rest of Hispanics. The number of Hispanics that identify as afro-Latino is significant. According to the Pew Research Center National Survey of Latinos from 2011 to 2014, about a quarter of the U.S. Hispanic population describe themselves as having some African descent. According to the Pew Research National Survey of Latinos in 2014 afro-Latinos in general were less likely to have some college education, 24\% compared to $37 \%$ of all Hispanics (López and González-Barrera 2016).

## 4. Socioeconomic Trends

- The purchasing power of Hispanics in the United States was $\$ 1.4$ trillion in 2015 and is expected to reach \$ 1.7 trillion in 2020.
- Median per capita income for Hispanic households was 18,389 dollars in 2016, half of non-Hispanic Whites income.
- Hispanics below poverty level reached its historic low in 2016, 19.46\%; only Afro-American population registered higher numbers.
- The median income for Hispanic women is $13 \%$ less than that of Hispanic men and is increasing, however, the gender pay gap among Hispanics is less than the national percentage of $20 \%$.
- Hispanics are less likely than other racial and ethnic groups to have health insurance.

The growing U.S. Hispanic population is already influencing U.S. socio-economic trends, and it will do so strongly as Latino population keeps on growing. However, as well as with educational indicators, Hispanics' economic performance is behind that of other groups. Hispanics, in general, are less likely to own their own homes than other Americans, and were impacted more strongly than other racial
and ethnic groups by the 2008 financial crisis (The Economist 2015a). In contrast, they are also gaining an increasing share of U.S. purchasing power: even though their income per capita is still inferior to other groups, it is growing again after the Great Recession, and the rate of Hispanics under poverty level is decreasing.

Purchasing Power
According to the Selig Center for Economic Growth, the purchasing power of Hispanics in the United States was $\$ 1.4$ trillion (Weeks 2017), which is larger than the GDP of Mexico and of Spain, the biggest and the richest Spanish speaking countries in the world. The purchasing power of Hispanics increased in $181 \%$, from 495 billions in 2000, and currently represents $10 \%$ of the total. As the Hispanic population grows faster and is younger than the U.S. population at large, these two characteristics will benefit a larger growth in purchasing power. Relating to consumer trends, Hispanics are more likely to spend their wages on products like groceries, clothes, cellphone services and car insurances; meanwhile, they are less likely to spend money on tobacco, healthcare, entertainment, personal insurances and furniture (Weeks 2017).

Hispanic purchasing power has increased 181\% since 2000, from 495 billion to 1.4 trillion nowadays

Minorities are experiencing the fastest growth in purchasing power. The purchasing power of Latinos has increased from 0.21 trillion in 1990 to 1.4 trillion in 2016. Within the Hispanic population, Mexican-Americans, the largest group, represent $\$ 797$ billion of the overall purchasing power; Puerto Ricans, the second largest group, account for $\$ 146$ billion (Weeks 2017), 59.9\% and 10.4\%,
respectively, below its demographic share the former and slightly above it the latter (63.2\% and 9.55\% respectively).

The number of Hispanic-owned business and its economic value is another indicator of the economic relevance of Latino population. According to Geoscape (2017), Hispanic-owned business in the U.S. increased 31.6\% between 2012 and 2017, compared to a $13.8 \%$ growth among other racial and ethnic groups. The 4.37 million Hispanic firms are generating over $\$ 700$ billion in revenue for the U.S. economy. $56 \%$ of these businesses are owned by Hispanic men, and the number of Hispanic females owning a business grew from 800,000 firms in 2007 to 1.5 million in 2012, $87 \%$.

Figure 18. Number of Hispanic-Owned Business in the United States, in millions. Source: Geoscape (2017).


Income and poverty
Hispanics report being increasingly confident in personal finances and see better economic times ahead. Since the Great Recession, Hispanics have reported a $17 \%$ increase in their positive attitude towards the state of the economy, and
about 40\% said their personal finances are in "excellent" and "good" shape; meanwhile, for the general American public their confidence about the economy has remained almost flat, at $43 \%$ in 2008 and $47 \%$ in 2015 (López, Morin and Krogstad 2016). But a detailed analysis of the economic trends of Hispanics in the U.S. show few economic gains for the Hispanic community since the financial crisis that began in 2008, called the Great Recession (López, Morin and Krogstad 2016).

Hispanic median income per capita is currently $\$ 18,389$ (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B19301I), compared to $\$ 36,938$ for nonHispanic White population, \$21,452 for Afroamericans, 36,350 for Asian population, and $\$ 31,128$ for the U.S. population overall (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: S1902). Median income per capita for a Latino is half of a white person income, and it stands below all racial and ethnic groups. All-time low Hispanic income per capita around the years of the Great Recession was registered in 2008, with $\$ 14,461$, compared to $\$ 26,059$ for the overall U.S. population. Regarding the household median income, it is currenly \$47,675 among the Hispanic population; \$81,431 for Asians; \$65,041 for nonHispanic whites, and 39,490 for blacks (Semega, Fontenot y Kollar 2017).

Figure 19. Median per capita income in 2016 by ethnicity/race. Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: B19301I.


Furthermore, poverty level decreases slowly. Up to 33.2\% of the Hispanic population were below that level in 1980; reaching its peak in 1991, $41.5 \%$ of the Latinos. After the all-time low in 2006 (26.9\%), it increased again during the Great Recession. In 2016, the percentage of Hispanic population below poverty level was at the lowest, with 19.46\% (U.S. Census Bureau 2016b), compared to 12.7\% for the overall U.S. population; $8.8 \%$ for non-Hispanic White; $22 \%$ for blacks and 10.1\% for Asians (ibidem).

Figure 20. Percent of Hispanics living below poverty line, 2002-2016. Source: U.S. U.S. Census Bureau 2016b.


As with education and language ability, nativity tends to impact work and income prospects of Hispanics. For instance, the unemployment rate among the Hispanic population was $4.7 \%$ during the second quarter for 2017, two tenths below the lowest level before the Great Recession, 4.9\% in 2006. The rate was $5.6 \%$ for U.S.-born Hispanics, compared to $3.8 \%$ for foreign-born Latinos (Kochhar y Krogstad 2017). Other economic indicators shows how, despite the improvement, the situation is not still at pre-Recession levels.

On average, foreign-born Hispanic youths live in households with lower incomes than those of their native-born peers. Foreign-born Hispanics are also more likely than native-born to live in poverty (Pew Research Center 2009). Foreign-born Hispanic youth (ages 16-25) are more likely than their native-born counterparts to be employed in low-skill occupations, $52 \%$ and $27 \%$ respectively. Native-born Hispanic youth are also more broadly dispersed across occupations, including both low-skill and higher-skill occupations. As with youth, Hispanic adults are also
impacted by lower skilled work and lower incomes. In 2015, Hispanic adults were half as likely than whites to work as managers or professionals (The Economist 2015a). Thus, as a result of lower family incomes, Hispanic youth are more likely than youth of other races and ethnicities to live in families whose income is below poverty level (Pew Research Center 2009).

Furthermore, Hispanics are twice as likely (30\%) as whites (16\%) and blacks (17\%) to say that finding information on job, career and education opportunities is difficult. Foreign-born Hispanics and more likely to, report having trouble finding this information (42\%) compared to U.S. born Hispanics (18\%). Hispanics are also more likely to find it difficult to locate information on government support and benefits programs (35\%) (Brown and López 2015). Certainly related to limited proficiency in English, the difficulty locating information on job and education may make it more difficult for Hispanics to effectively take advantage of government programs that may help them contribute to the well being of their households, and therefore may be a factor in reducing their economic well being.

Similarly to the national trend for women, Hispanic women also tend to earn less than Hispanic men. In 2016, the median income for Hispanic women, 16 years and over that worked full time was $\$ 30,482$, compared to $\$ 35,069$ for Hispanic men (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: S2002). Hispanic women earn $86.9 \%$ of the Hispanic men's income, a better rate than that of the U.S. population overall, with $80.3 \%$. However, the gap is widening: Hispanic women's income was 89.3\% of Hispanic men’s in 2005 and 92.2\% in 2015 (compared to 86.9\% presently).

Figure 21. Median income for Hispanics in 2016 in by gender. Source: Fuente: U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: S2002.


Home ownership
Another interesting indicator of economic strength is the rate of home ownership. According to data provided by the Pew Research Center, 46\% of households headed by Hispanics are owner-occupied, compared to $71.9 \%$ of white households, $55.5 \%$ of Asian households, and $42.2 \%$ of black households (Hispanic Wealth Project 2016). The rate of home ownership is slightly higher among native-born Hispanics than for immigrant households, which is $48 \%$ to 44\%, respectively (Krogstad and López 2014).

The rate of home ownership is also higher among Hispanic households who have lived in the United States the longest. Among those who arrived to the U.S. prior to $1990,59 \%$ are homeowners, as compared to $14 \%$ of those who arrived in 2006 or later (Krogstad and López 2014). Figure 22 shows home ownership by race/ethnicity. For Hispanics, the data is also broken down by race and ethnicity.

Figure 22. Rates of home ownership by race/ethnicity. Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2016c.

U.S. born Hispanics are about 10\% less likely than Asians, but 5\% more likely than blacks to own their own home. The average home ownership for foreign-born Hispanics and Hispanics is slightly higher than that for blacks; however, recent Hispanic arrivals are the least likely group to own homes.

Health insurance
Up to $16 \%$ of Hispanics in the U.S. remain uninsured in 2016, compared to $6.3 \%$ of whites, 10.5 of blacks, and $7.6 \%$ of Asians (Barnett and Berchick 2017). Among the Hispanic population with health insurance, $52.4 \%$ has private health insurance coverage, the lowest rate of all racial and ethnic groups. 40.1\% has government health insurance, only overcome by black population, with 43.7\% (ibidem). These numbers are another indicator of the Hispanic population economic status in the U.S.

From the 10.2 million Hispanics without health insurance coverage, more than half are age 25 to 44 (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2017: B27001I). Considering, the high number of uninsured Hispanics these ages, and also the fact that most of uninsured Hispanics are males, who also comprise the great majority of immigrants, it is not implausible to assume that a large part of uninsured Hispanics may be immigrants, the most vulnerable of the population. Thus, the economic burden that comes from lack of health insurance may fall among the poorest of the Hispanic population.

As with home ownership, the rates of health insurance coverage are greatly affected by whether or not Hispanics are foreign-born or U.S-born. In 2012, 50\% of foreign-born Hispanics lacked health insurance, compared to $18 \%$ of nativeborn Hispanics. Among Hispanics who are non-citizen immigrants, the proportion lacking health insurance was even higher, 61\% (Krogstad and López 2014). As indicated before, the growth of Hispanic population in the U.S. is due mainly to U.S.-born Hispanics and less so toimmigration, so it can be expected that health insurance coverage will improve in the future.

Figure 23. Percent of each group within Hispanics that lacked health insurance in 2012. Source: Krogstad and López 2014.


Hispanics are one of the groups that have seen the greatest benefits from the Afordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010, as revealed in The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey. The high rate of uninsured Latinos is due in part to the large share of undocumented Latinos residing in the United States. However, the majority of Latinos living in the United States are legal immigrants or U.S. born. Thus, other reason besides illegal immigration accounts for the disproportionate rate of uninsured Latinos. A major reason may be that a large part of the Latinos reside in the states that have not expanded their Medicaid program. For example Texas and Florida, together comprise about 15 million Latinos. Overall, the percent of adults age 19 to 64 who were uninsured by July 2014 in states that have expanded Medicaid was 24\%; meanwhile, the rate of uninsured Latinos in states that have not expanded Medicaid was almost double (46\%) (Doty, Beutel, Rasmussen and Collins 2015).

Nearly half of Latinos remain uninsured in states that have not expanded Medicaid since the Affordable Care Act was signed into law in 2010 (Doty, Beutel, Rasmussen and Collins 2015). The Commonwealth Fund described the demographics of uninsured Latinos to be in its majority males (59\%), most of them possessing less than a high school degree (47\%), mostly married and with children (45\%), and who predominantly speak Spanish (74\%) or can speak English a little or not at all (79\%) (Doty, Beutel, Rasmussen and Collins 2015).

A second report by the same fund reveals a decline in the difference between black and Hispanic population to health care coverage and the rest of the population between 2013 and 2015; that decline was greater in the states that had expanded Medicaid (Hayes et al. 2017). Uninsured Hispanic adults ages 19 to 64 , decreased from $36 \%$ in 2013 to $22 \%$ in 2015 in the states that expanded Medicaid, which means that the gap between White and Hispanic population narrowed by $8 \%$. Comparatively, the percentage of Hispanic adults uninsured decreased from $47 \%$ to $36 \%$ in states with unexpanded Medicaid, having the gap
with White population reduced by $6 \%$ (Hayes et al. 2017). It can be said then that having the ACA repealed would have a negative impact in Hispanic population health care coverage rate. Unidos, ${ }^{6}$ one of the biggest Latino organizations in the U.S., claims that ACA repeal would result in 6 million of Hispanics loosing their health care insurance (National Hispanic Leadership Agenda 2017).

Figure 24. Percentage of population (19-64) uninsured in the U.S. by states that did not expand Medicaid compared to other racial/ethnic groups in 2015. Source: Hayes et al. 2017.


Marriage has the potential to influence both Hispanic identity and economic prospects. According to the last data from ACS, $45.8 \%$ of Hispanic population was married (married and separated), compared to $53.4 \%$ of whites, $59.2 \%$ of Asians, and 32.5\% of blacks (U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder 2016: S1201). The percentage of Hispanic married-couple with children younger than 18 is

[^5]$57.5 \%$ in 2016 , compared to $39.5 \%$ of the overall U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau 2017e).

In addition, the percentage of Hispanic married couples with children under 18 who are both employed is significantly below the national average, $46 \%$ and 59.7\% respectively (U.S. Bureau 2015). Overall, these numbers amount to more children in Hispanic households and less couples being married and employed. These results mean that Hispanic families are economically less stable than the national average.

Additionally, intermarriage is another significant factor influencing identity. Intermarriage across ethnic and racial groups proliferates among Hispanics. 27\% of Hispanic marriages are with people from other races or ethnicity (Livingston and Brown 2017), compared to 29\% of Asians. Interracial marriage rates are similar for Hispanic men and women. The couples formed by white (male-female) and Hispanic (male-femaile) represent $42 \%$ of the interracial marriages. It can also be observed that the interracial marriage percentage has barely increased among Hispanics between 1980 and 2015, from 26 to 27\%.

Figure 25. Proportion of population in interracial marriages, by race and ethnicity. Source: Livingston y Brown 2017.


Finally, marriage can also impact the economic well being of Hispanic households. A Pew Research analysis of the combined income for newlyweds by race shows that couples with an Asian husband and white wife have the highest median combined earnings (\$71,800). Among Hispanic marriages, median combined earnings tend to be highest for couples with a white husband and Hispanic wife ( $\$ 60,990$ ). Couples with a Hispanic husband and white wife have median combined earnings (\$53,000). Couples with two Hispanic spouses have the lowest median combined earnings of all racial and ethnic matches $(\$ 35,578)$ (Wang 2012).

## 5. Politics

- Despite the increase in the amount of eligible voters, Hispanic turnout remained stable, $47.6 \%$ of eligible voters compared to $48 \%$ in 2012.
- Above half of all Hispanics live in only 65 out of 435 U.S. Congressional Districts, a distribution with important consequences for Hispanic vote.


## Context of U.S. Latino Politics

It is common to read and hear about potential Latino political power. Politicians try to connect with this electorate with symbolic acts. For instance, Tim Kaine, vice-presidential candidate in the 2016 Democratic ticket Clinton-Kaine, gave a complete speech in Spanish in Miami (Florida); Ted Cruz, candidate for the Republican nomination for the President of the U.S. and Senator for Texas also used Spanish in a TV debate. However, despite these gestures and the expectations generated election after election, Latino vote doesn't reach the expected influence. The 2016 presidential elections were not an exception.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey, 27.3 million Hispanics were eligible voters for presidential elections of 2016. This is an increase of four million form the figure of 2012 ( 23.3 million), the highest percentage compared to other racial and ethnic groups, $17 \%$ versus $16 \%$ for Asians, 6\% for African Americans and 2\% for whites (Krogstad 2016a).
$48 \%$ of the Latino population was eligible to vote in 2016 , compared to $64 \%$ of white population, $67 \%$ of the black population, and $47 \%$ of the Asian population. Currently, although Hispanics represent 17\% of the total U.S. population, they are only $11 \%$ of the voting population (Cohn 2014). Two factors may explain this situation. On the one hand, the characteristic youth of the Hispanic population, makes Hispanics the youngest demographic in the United States. This makes $28 \%$ of Hispanic Americans too young to vote (compared with $22 \%$ of whites), but,
at the same time is one of the reasons for the increase of eligible voters, because since 2012 a total of 3.2 million young Hispanics have reached the age to vote.

Moreover, attention should be paid to the percentage of Hispanics with US citizenship. While only 69\% of Hispanics over 18 are citizens of the United States, both naturalizations and the fact that more Hispanics are born in the United States and non-immigrants will cause the number of Hispanics to increase with citizenship. In 2016 only $20 \%$ of whites, $28 \%$ of African Americans and $44 \%$ of Asians were not eligible to vote for the same reasons (Krogstad, López, López, Passel and Patten 2016).

Hispanic vote in the presidential elections of 2016 The expectations of an increase in the Latino turnout in the 2016 elections, based on the rise of eligible voters, wasn't met: Hispanic turnout didn't experience changes compared to that of 2012 ( $47.6 \%$ and $48 \%$, respectively) (Krogstad and Lopez 2017). Figure 26 presents the percentages of registered eligible voters and of registered voters who actually voted, by race and ethnicity.

Only Asians have a lower percentage of registered voters than Hispanics. Furthermore, a $16 \%$ difference among Hispanic and white population can be observed. More than $40 \%$ of Hispanic eligible voters didn't register. Latino turnout didn't surpass 50\% of eligible voters; that percentage was only surpassed once during the last years: in the 1992 presidential elections, with George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and the independent Ross Perot as candidates (Valdés 2016).

Figure 26. Percentage of registered elegible voters and of registered voters voting in the 2016 presidential elections, by race and ethnicity. Fuente: U.S. Census Bureau 2017c.


The U.S. Census Bureau asked registered voters the main reasons why they didn't vote. The main reason was they didn't like the candidates or the campaign issues. That was the case for $25.2 \%$ of Hispanics, $26 \%$ of whites, $19.6 \%$ of blacks, and $22.3 \%$ of Asians (U.S. Census Bureau 2017c). The lack of interest is the second most claimed reason not to vote, $16.2 \%$ of Hispanics and Asians, $13.9 \%$ of whites, and $13.5 \%$ of blacks. Registration difficulties are pointed out as a reason by $5.4 \%$ of Hispanics, a higher percentage than that of other racial and ethnic groups, but it should be noted that the U.S. Census Bureau only asked this question to registered voters, making it impossible to know how many eligible voters didn't register due to difficulties during the process.

As indicated, expectations of an important increase in Latino turnout weren't met, despite the increase of Hispanic eligible voters as well as the speech on Mexico and immigration from the Republican candidate, Donald Trump. The increase in the number of Hispanic voters is explained mainly by demographic reasons (Suro 2016). Hispanic voters represented $9.2 \%$ of the overall voters, compared to
$73.3 \%$ of white voters, 11.9 of black voters, and $3.6 \%$ of Asian voters (Krogstad and Lopez 2016).

In a paper on Latino turnout in presidential elections, DeSipio and De la Garza (2002) pointed out how a big part of the gap among Hispanic and "anglo" citizens turnout is explained by demographic reasons: among any population, young people, those with lower levels of education and less income are less likely to vote, and all these groups are overrepresented in the Hispanic population.

Hispanic demographic characteristics, such as you its youth, low levels of education and limited income, help to explain the low turnout of Hispanics in elections

According to the exit polls, 66\% of Hispanic voters supported the Democratic candidate, Hillary Clinton, compared to $28 \%$ supporting the current President of the U.S., Donald Trump. Clinton's support was almost equal to that of Barack Obama in 2008 (67\%), and it declined compared to the one Obama obtained in 2012, 71\%. 57\% of whites, 8\% of blacks, and 27\% of Asians supported the current president of the U.S.

Subsequent studies revealed how the exit poll offering this data, conducted by Edison Research, overestimated Hispanic support of Donald Trump. According to Pedraza and Wilcox-Archuleta (2017), who analyzed census information together with voting data, 83\% of Latinos supported Hillary Clinton in California (71\% according to the exit poll). In the same way, a survey by the research firm Latino Decisions shows a 79\% Latino support for Clinton and 18\% for Trump, and it
points out sample selection problems in the Edison Research poll (Latino Decisions 2017). This research reveals possible sampling errors that could be underrepresenting Hispanics in surveys.

In any case, these results confirm some observed trends: Hispanics do not strongly identify with any American political party, they tend to vote overwhelmingly democratic, since a great majority feels that the Republican Party is simply not inclusive of Latinos and remains too strongly a white upper-income party (The Economist 2015d).

A 2015 report by The Economist suggests that party culture may be as responsible for swaying Latino voters as the actual political issues and ideologies (The Economist 2015d). This means that although many Hispanics today tend to lean Democratic because they agree with the political ideology of the party, others may do so because they do not feel like they can be part of or fully support the Republican Party. In recent years there has been a slowdown of Latino support for the Democratic Party, nonetheless, Democrats remain in advantage among Hispanics, and Latino voters still favor Democratic candidates by a margin of two to one (López, González-Barrera, Krogstad 2014). Figure 27 shows Latino vote in 2016 presidential elections by voter generation and the language in which the interview was conducted.

Figure 27. Percentage of vote for each candidate by voter's generation and language of the interview. Source: Latino Decisions 2016.


In any population segment analyzed, Hispanic support is predominately in favor of the Democratic candidate.At the same time, Figure 27 shows how Latino support to the Republican candidate increases with each generation, from 13\% in the first generation to $25 \%$ in the third generation. Donald Trump's support is higher among voters who took the survey interview in English (21\%), compared to the Hispanic voters who took the interview in Spanish (9\%), something that, again, is related to the generation and the time spent in the U.S.

Another relevant element to determine Hispanic vote influence in presidential elections is related to Latino's geographical distribution and to the states in which they are concentrated. Presidential elections use the Electoral College system: voters elect a certain number of voters in each of the states (plus the District of Columbia), which together total 538, and they are the ones who elect the president. In most of the cases, the number of voters assigned to each state is not distributed proportionally among the candidates according to the votes
received, but is a majority system: the winner in the popular vote gets all the electors of the corresponding state.

Moreover, there are traditionally Democratic and other traditionally Republican states that hardly change the direction of their vote. There are other states, the so-called "swing states" (undecided or competitive) which become the stage of the electoral battle every four years since a handful of votes can make dozens of voters for one or another candidate. Figure 28 shows the number of voters assigned to each state and, in turn, states traditionally Democratic, Republican and traditionally swing states.

Figure 28. Number of electoral vote per state, broken down by competitiveness of the state. Source: USA Today Research.


It can be observed that, among the states with a higher percentage of Hispanic population, only four are swing states: Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, and Florida. For 2016 presidential elections, the percentage of Latino voters in key
states was still low: Florida (18,1\%), Nevada (17,2\%) y Colorado (14,5\%) (Krogstad, López, Passel y Patten 2016). In the rest of the swing states, Hispanic population represents less than 5\% of the eligible voters.

On one hand, Hispanic concentration in some states and their cohesive voting patterns are benefit Latino political influence; on the other hand, parties are not going to invest in campaigns in states where the vote is already decided (DeSipio and De la Garza 2002). The influence of Latino vote will possibly be limited to strengthening existing voting trends. Indeed, some authors point out how these almost fixed voting patterns could actually discourage Hispanic millenial turnout (Krogstad, López, Passel y Patten 2016).

Geographical distribution can also determine Hispanic electoral influence in congressional elections, particularly to the House of Representatives, as elections to the Senate each state chose two senators, regardless of its population. Hispanics represent a small share of the overall population in most of the states, being above the media only in nine cases; therefore, they don't have a strong political influence in 41 states, which constrains their electoral power (Cohn 2014). Around $50 \%$ of Hispanics in the U.S. live in just 65 of 435 districts in the House of Representatives, this distribution limits Hispanics' electoral impact.

Next to the territorial distribution of voters, there is a qualitative factor which gives more weight to Latinos in the presidential election: the perception that their vote may be decisive for these presidential elections than for midterm, legislative elections, given that the latter are organized in a system not always understood by the population, Hispanic and non-Hispanic (Maisel 2016).

Regarding matters or major issues for Hispanic voters, a survey by the Pew Research Center, asked Hispanics about their top concerns for the 2016 presidential elections, the survey reveals that the state of the economy is a top
concern for Latinos. Healthcare follows as the second most important issue for Latinos, followed by the fight against terrorism, education and immigration. In the last place are concerns about abortion and treatment of the LGBT community (Krogstad 2016e). The following chart breaks down these facts more concretely.

Figure 29. Percentage of Hispanic who say each issue if "very important" for the presidential elections of 2016. Source: Krogstad 2016a.


Hispanic political representatives
The political gap between Hispanics and other groups doesn't appear just in percentages or registered voters or turnouts, but is also clear in terms of political representation. Hispanics account for $17.8 \%$ of the U.S. population, but there are only three Hispanic senators out of a total of 100 (3\%), and 29 Hispanic representatives in the House, 6.7\%, according to The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund (NALEO Educational Fund 2016).

Figure 30 shows the number of Hispanic political representatives in the federal and state houses of representatives and senates, by political party.

Figure 30. Hispanic political representatives in the U.S. federal and state congresses. Source: NALEO Educational Fund 2016.


With the exception of the U.S. Senate, most Hispanic political representatives are Democrats, up to $75.9 \%$ of Hispanic members of the Federal House of Representatives, $87.7 \%$ of state senators, and $75 \%$ of Hispanic state representatives. It can also be observed that Hispanic women don't represent more than one third of the Latino political representatives in any of these institutions: they are $31 \%$ of the Hispanic representatives at a federal level, $31.5 \%$ of the Latinos state senators, and $32.3 \%$ of Hispanic politicians in the state houses of representatives. There are no Hispanic women in the Senate of the United States (NALEO Educational Fund 2016).

The day of Donald Trump's inauguration, January 20th 2017, the White House's web page Spanish version became no longer available. Helen Aguirre, White House director of media affairs, informed they had just arrived into the Presidency and they were working on the content (Bierman 2017). As of October 2017, the content is still not available. Even though the White House official answer to the Spanish version website disappearance pointed to logistic issues, the President of the U.S. has made clear his position regarding the use other languages in the United States: "We have a country, where, to assimilate, you have to speak English," the current president affirmed criticizing Jeb Bush, candidate in the Republican primary elections, who answered a question from a journalist in Spanish (Associated Press 2017). The Spanish version of the White House website was launched by George W. Bush administration, and was maintained through Barack Obama's administration. In addition, Obama's administration created the Hispanic media director position, also eliminated by the current administration.

According to a survey completed by the Observatorio of the Instituto Cervantes, 55.4\% of the Hispanics linked the removal of the Spanish version of the White House website with English-only policies

The Observatorio of the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University conducted a survey in February 2017 concerning the Spanish version removal. 56.6\% of U.S. Hispanics assured their disagreement with the decision, although up to $17.8 \%$ were in complete agreement with it (Hernández-Nieto and Moreno-Fernández
2017). It was found that $52.7 \%$ of respondents considered the disappearance to be something "symbolic". 48.9\% thought the action was of "little intelligence", while $60 \%$ related the elimination of the Spanish web page with an antiimmigration sentiment.

When asked for the causes of the disappearance of the White House's Spanishlanguage site, 55.4\% of respondents pointed to English-only policies, while 40.8\% believed that Republican (GOP) ideology was responsible, and 40\% identified the language diversity elimination as one of the reasons.

The main consequence of the Spanish-language web page's disappearance among respondents was that it will be difficult to convey official communications to Latino citizens (62.3\%). Moreover, $52.3 \%$ believe that it will contribute to segregation of U.S. communities. $50.8 \%$ reports that this removal will help reinforce English as the language of the United States, although only 23.8\% of respondents believe that the removal will contribute to an increase in learning English.

## 6. Identity and Social Attitudes

- There are no clear preferences in the U.S. about the use of the terms "Latino" or "Hispanic.
- $54 \%$ of Hispanics link their identity to their country of origin.
- The percentage of Latinos who identify as Americans increases over generations, reaching 59\% in the third and subsequent ones.
- Even though $95 \%$ of Hispanics consider it important for future generations to maintain Spanish language, up to $71 \%$ don't think speaking Spanish is important to identify as Latino; on the contrary, 70\%
of the U.S. population affirm that being able to speak English is very important to be a "truly American."

Hispanic vs. Latino
The meaning of being Hispanic in the U.S. still needs to be defined and, in addition, is not shared by the Hispanic population overall. Nativity and the amount of years in the U.S. influence the way Hispanic perceive themselves.

The first example of the Hispanic identity indetermination is related to the debate between the use of the two terms "Latino" vs. "Hispanic", around which no agreement exists. While the term "Latino", more precisely refers to geography and commonly identifies those from an ethnic background from Latin America. The U.S. Census Bureau and other research centers like the Pew, use these two terms interchangeably. The same can be observed in the main Latino associations in the country: sometimes they use "Latino" in their names (for instance, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials), although it is more common to see the term "Hispanic". On the contrary, the academic discipline studing Latino population in the U.S. is referred as "Latino Studies", and this is also the term commonly used in academic programs and university departments.

Regarding the Hispanic population's preferences on these two terms, some research shows a preference for "Hispanic" over "Latino" (Taylor, López, Martínez and Velasco 2012), while other data indicate Hispanics most often refer to their ethnic origin using the term "Latino" (Rodríguez 2014). Additionally, in popular culture there are numerous television shows, music genres, and celebrities that refer to "Latino" rather than "Hispanic" (Rodriguez 2014).

Another element related to the indetermination of the Hispanic identity appears when Latinos in the U.S. are asked about their shared values. Only 39\% consider they have a lot in common with Hispanics from different countries; 39\% say they share some values, while $15 \%$ say they have only a little in common and $5 \%$ affirm to have nothing in common with Latinos from other countries. The lack of definition of the Hispanic identity, as well as the disaggregation of Latino identities can challenge the creation of a easily distinguishable imaginary around the "Hispanic" and the articulation of clear demands with which all Hispanics can identify.

Who is Hispanic in the U.S.?
Another example of the lack of definition of what it is to be Hispanic in the U.S. is revealed when Latino's self-identification or their opinion about shared values are examined. Up to $54 \%$ use their country of origin to describe their identity. $23 \%$ describe themselves as Americans, and 20\% as Hispanic or Latino (Lopez 2013). Nativity introduces important differences: 66\% of foreign-born Latinos describe themselves as Mexicans, Salvadorians, Cubans, etc., compared to 36\% of U.S. born. On the contrary, only 10\% of foreign-born Hispanics describe themselves as Americans, compared to $42 \%$ of U.S. born Latinos.

In the same way, the percentage of Hispanics describing themselves as Americans grows over generations, at 30\% for the second generation and 59\% for the third and subsequent ones. Self-identification also depends on the predominant language for Hispanics, an element related to nativity and length of time in the U.S. While 51\% of English-dominant Hispanics consider describe themselves as Americans, that percentage is only 6\% for Spanish-dominant Hispanics. It has to be noted that neither nativity nor the years in the U.S. or the dominant language is important to determine the percentage of Hispanics describing themselves as Hispanic or Latinos; it only varies from 17 to $22 \%$,
which could be showing once again the difficulties in identifying with something that is not clearly defined.

Figure 31. Hispanic self-identification, by language, generation, and nativity Source: Lopez 2013.


If we look to data about Mexican-American identity, $64 \%$ of Hispanic population in the U.S., a similar trend is observed. The percentage of Mexican-Americans that describes themselves as Mexicans decreases over generations, with 66\% among immigrants and $32 \%$ in the third generation, while the self-identification as American grows (3\% among immigrants and $45 \%$ in the third generation). A decline in the Mexican-americans describing themselves as Hispanic can be observed, with $29 \%$ for immigrant population and $21 \%$ for the third generation (Desilver 2013). Up to 71\% of third generation of Mexican-Americans describe themselves as "typical Americans."

This urges us to consider what is the meaning of being American or being Hispanic. According to the Global Attitudes Survey by Pew Research, only 32\% of Americans think that being born in the country is very important to being truly American (Stokes 2017). When it comes to defining American identity, 70\% consider being able to speak English very important to being truly American. This percentage reaches $81 \%$ in population ages 50 and more, and decreases to $78 \%$ in people ages 18 to 34 (ibidem). Up to 45\% affirm that sharing national customs and traditions is very important, and $32 \%$ remark the relevance of being Christian.

On the contrary, being Hispanic is not necessarily linked to speaking Spanish, even though $95 \%$ of the Latino population considers it very important for future generations to preserve the Spanish language. Up to 71\% of Hispanics affirm speaking Spanish is not necessary to identify as Latino. Among foreign-born Hispanics, this percentage decreases to 58\%, while it increases to 87\% among U.S.-born Latinos. It has already being remarked in this report that Hispanic population growth is increasingly due to U.S. births, and immigration rates are less relevant. Thus, it can be expected that the U.S.-born Hispanic characteristics became predominant in the Hispanic population overall, in this case, the loss of relevance of Spanish language as a feature of Hispanic identity. The fact that Spanish language is not decisive for being Hispanic, while English language is important to being a truly American can impact the preservation of Spanish language among Hispanics.

Figure 32. Percentage of Hispanics that consider speaking Spanish is/is not necessary to be Hispanic. Source: Lopez 2013.


## 7. Technology: Internet and Social Media Use

- The tightening of the gap between White and Hispanic population in the use of the Internet is mainly due to the increase of foreign-born Hispanics using the Internet.
- Income, age, and educational attainment most strongly affect whether Hispanics use the Internet.
- Hispanics are the most active ethnic group on social media and more likely to own a smart phone.

The gap between White and Hispanic population in the use of the Internet has been decreasing since 2006, and it disappeared in 2016, when $88 \%$ of adults in both groups used the internet; the percentage was $85 \%$ for Black population (Pew Research Center 2017). In 2012, 78\% of Latinos used the Internet at least
occasionally. According to the Pew Research Center, this increase in Internet usage among Latinos is most likely related to the growing number of foreign-born and Spanish-dominant Hispanics using the Internet. Nonetheless, although there are more foreign and Spanish-dominant Hispanics using the web, Internet use remains highest among English speakers and the bilingual population. Nearly all (94\%) of English-dominant Hispanics use the Internet, at least occasionally, as do $86 \%$ of bilingual Hispanics. By contrast, only $74 \%$ of Spanish-dominant Hispanics use the Internet at least occasionally (Brown, López and Lopez 2016). On the other hand, the difference between Hispanic and white population in the percentage of households with broadband connection remains constant, $58 \%$ for Hispanics compared to 78\% for whites (ibidem).

Factors such as income, educational level, age, and whether or not a household has children also have a strong impact on use of the Internet. Hispanic families with higher incomes are more likely to use the Internet than their less well-off counterparts. Young Hispanics, age 18 to 29, are also more likely to use the Internet at least occasionally than older Hispanics. Among Hispanic youth, ages 18 to 29, $95 \%$ of them use the Internet at least occasionally, while $93 \%$ between 30 and 49 years old. Conversely, only $67 \%$ between 50 and 64 use the Internet. Only $42 \%$ of those age 65 and older, report using the Internet at least occasionally (Brown, López and Lopez 2016).

Figure 33. Internet use among U.S. Hispanics, 2009-2015, by nativity and language proficiency. Source: López, González-Barreda y Patten 2013; Brown, López y Lopez 2016.


As shown in Figure 33, the increase in the use of the Internet among Hispanics is mainly due to the foreign-born Hispanics, therefore Spanish-dominant Hispanics, with the U.S. born Hispanics use the Internet even less than they did in 2012. The lowest Internet use is among Spanish-dominant Hispanics (74\%), Hispanics without a high school diploma (67\%) and Hispanics ages 65 and older (42\%). The percentage of use of the Internet has grown for all groups since 2012, the highest increase experienced by Spanish-dominant Hispanics (Brown, López and Lopez 2016).

Those with higher educational attainment are more likely to use the Internet. Among those without a high school diploma, as mentioned above, $67 \%$ use the Internet; 88\% with a high school diploma use the Internet at least occasionally; and $95 \%$ of those with some college education use the Internet very often (Brown, López and Lopez 2016).

Figure 34. Percentage of U.S. Hispanics who use the Internet at least occasionally. Source: López, González-Barrera and Patten 2013.


The expected growth of Hispanic Internet users in the U.S was $5.9 \%$ in 2015 compared to $7.4 \%$ in 2012. Although, the percentage growth has declined, the number of Hispanic Internet users continues to grow (Statista 2016).

## Smartphone Use

The factors of age, income, nativity, educational attainment, and being English or Spanish dominant, affect whether or not Hispanics can only access the Internet through their cellphones. 80\% of Hispanic Internet users access the Internet on a cellphone, tablet or other mobile device, at least occasionally. This portion increases to $94 \%$ for Hispanics ages 18-29 from families with incomes over \$50,000. Furthermore, 86\% of English-dominant Hispanics and 83\% of bilinguals access the Internet through a mobile device, compared to 71\% of Spanishdominant Hispanics (Brown, López and Lopez 2016).
U.S. born Hispanics are more likely to access the Internet on a mobile device than those born abroad. $86 \%$ of native-born Hispanic use a mobile device to access the Internet, compared to 75\% of foreign-born (Brown, López and Lopez 2016). Mobile Internet users are more likely to be English dominant or bilingual than Hispanic Internet users, who do not use the Internet on a mobile device. In 2015, among Hispanics who use a mobile device occasionally to access the Internet, $13 \%$ depended on smartphones for online access compared to $12 \%$ for blacks. This percentage is particularly striking compared to $4 \%$ for non-Hispanic whites (Smith 2015).

Overall, two thirds of Americans own a smartphone (Smith 2015). However, in comparison to blacks and whites, Hispanics are slightly more likely to own a smartphone. $71 \%$ of Hispanics own smartphones, compared to $70 \%$ of blacks and 61\% of whites (López, González-Barrera and Patten 2013). Additionally, Hispanics are more likely than whites to cancel or have their service cut off because the cost of the service was a financial burden, and $36 \%$ of Hispanics have ended cell phone service for financial reasons. Hispanics are also more likely than both blacks and whites to reach the maximum data allowed on their plans (López, González-Barrera and Patten 2013). Figure 35 shows smart phone use by race/ethnicity.

Figure 35. Number of smartphones used by race/ethnicity. Source: López, GonzálezBarrera and Patten 2013.


In 2015, The Nielsen Research Center reported that U.S. Hispanics are on their phones more than 14 hours a week, and on average use $34 \%$ more minutes per month than all other consumers. When broken down by subgroups, Hispanic who are bilingual spent significantly more mobile minutes than all Hispanics (762 minutes compared to 658 minutes per month) (Nielsen 2015).

Hispanics are the most active of all ethnic groups on social media. 72\% of Hispanic adults report using the Internet, in contrast to 68\% of blacks and 65\% of whites (Rodriguez 2014). 80\% of Hispanic Internet users are connected to social media sites, compared to $75 \%$ of blacks and $70 \%$ of whites. In June 2016, Hispanics spent more time in social media than any other demographic, averaging a total of 279 minutes. By large, Hispanic social media users are also reported to navigate and communicate on these platforms bilingually. The current number of Hispanic social network users is 34.2 million and is projected to grow to 40.6 million in 2019 (Statista 2016).

According to data from the Pew Research Center, Hispanics tend to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest at the same rate or more often than whites and blacks, although Hispanics use Linkedln, a professional networking site, less often than whites and blacks (Duggan et al. 2015).

Figure 36. Social Media use by race/ethnicity in 2014. Source: Duggan et al. 2015.


Regarding the preferred language for using social media, 38.5\% of Hispanics use Facebook mainly in Spanish, compared to 34.6\% mainly in English, and 26.9\% using this social media in a bilingual way ${ }^{7}$ (Facebook n.d.).

[^6]
## 8. Media and Publications

- A growing number of Hispanics consume news in English.
- Hispanics who are third generation or higher, that have household incomes over $\$ 50,000$, were born in the U.S., and have completed some college are much more likely to read news exclusively in English.
- When comparing revenue, ratings, and the number of stations owned, Univision is the largest Spanish-language media company in the United States.
- On average Hispanics spend nearly $30 \%$ more on music each year than other racial/ethnic groups.
- The Observatory of the Spanish Language and Hispanics Cultures in the United States of the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University identified 321 print and digital Spanish newspapers across the country in 39 different states, including Washington, D.C.

The demographics shift of Hispanics, caused by the slowdown of immigration from Latin America and the increase of U.S. born Hispanics, has resulted in higher English proficiency and bilingualism, with $25 \%$ of Hispanics using mainly English, and $36 \%$ being bilingual. This demographic change influences media aimed at Hispanics in the country. In the last years, many English language news stations that had launched ventures aimed at Hispanics, such as NBC Latino and CNN Latino, closed down or shifted their targeted audience to younger population (such is the case of Fusion, owned by Univision, which changed its audience from Hispanics to English speaking Millennials) (Shearer 2016).

Overall, the percentages of viewership and revenues from most Spanish media outlets even media giants such as Univision and Telemundo, radio stations, and established Spanish print newspapers have been declining, as more and more Hispanics consume media and publications in English. According to the last
available data (Lopez and González-Barreda 2013a), 82\% of Hispanics consumed at least some news in English in 2012, compared to $78 \%$ in 2006. The percentage of the Hispanic population consuming at least some news in Spanish has decreased from $78 \%$ in 2006 to $68 \%$ in 2012. Current reports are showing the same trend in news consumed and how media in Spanish keeps declining.

## News and Language

The state of the Spanish news has not drastically changed from that reported in previous versions of this report (Steinmetz 2015; Martínez 2016). The same trend continues: after several years of growth in circulation and readership of Spanish-language newspapers and television outlets, they have been in decline since 2013 (Shearer 2016). Nonetheless, newer and smaller organizations such as weekly and biweekly print newspapers have faired better than established daily print news (Matsa 2015a, Shearer 2016).

The Pew Research Center data suggest that a growing number of Hispanics consume news in English (López and González-Barrera 2013a). In 2012, 82\% of Hispanics said they got at least some of their news in English, this represents an increase from 78\% in 2006. On the contrary, the percentage of Hispanics who get at least some of their news in Spanish has declined from $78 \%$ in 2006 to $68 \%$ in 2012 (López and González-Barrera 2013a). The proportion of Hispanics who report receiving news in both languages is also declining, from $57 \%$ in 2010 to 50\% in 2012 (López and González-Barrera 2013a). An increasing number of Hispanics are also getting their news only in English; this represents an increase from $22 \%$ in 2006 to $32 \%$ in 2012. Similarly, the percent of Hispanic adults who consume news only in Spanish is declining from 22\% in 2006 to 18\% in 2012. This trends has only exacerbated in the last five years, most Spanish media outlets have reported declines in viewership and revenue, the same is true for established daily prints (Shearer 2017).

More than $70 \%$ of Hispanics consume media on line in English, $52 \%$ only in English and 21.7\% mostly in English, but some in Spanish (Statista 2017b). Only $14.1 \%$ of Latinos consume the same online content only in Spanish. The percentage of Hispanics consuming contents in different media only in Spanish (TV, reading, or radio) is never higher than that of Hispanics consuming content only in English. Figure 37 shows preferred language for media consumption among Hispanics.

Figure 37. Preferred language for media consumption among Hispanics in the United States in 2015. Source: Statista 2017b.


While the changes are not drastic, they indicate that in the last decade, Hispanics are gradually interacting more with English media and the use of Spanish in some areas is slowly declining. This could be due to several factors such as the growing share of bilingual Hispanics and English-speaking Hispanics (62\% in 2013), the decline of Hispanic immigrants from Latin America and the rise of U.S.-born Hispanics (who tend far more than foreign-born Hispanics to speak English).

Hispanic youths between ages 18 to 29 are mostly responsible for news consumption only in English (41\%). This contrasts with Hispanics over the age of 65, who receive news only in Spanish (43\%) (López and González-Barrera 2013b). Considering the Hispanic population is shaped by its younger demographic, the number of Hispanic youth consuming news in English is significant.

Hispanics with higher incomes and higher education are more likely to consume news only in English. Nativity also impacts the language used for news consumption. Those who are U.S.-born (a great share of them millennials) are substantially more likely to consume news in English, while those who are foreignborn primarily rely on Spanish news sources. Figure 38 shows the language used to consume news by nativity, generation, income, and educational attainment.

Figure 38. Language used for news consumption by nativity, generation, income, and education. Source: López and González-Barrera 2013b.


The report "Spanish-Language Journalism in the United States" commissioned by the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University, informs that 60\% of journalist surveyed in the study, believe that Spanish-language media in the U.S. helps preserve the Spanish language; nevertheless, they also believe that Spanish in these media outlets is not used correctly and is of questionable quality. However, the report concludes that despite errors, Spanish language journalism helps preserve the language. The report also states that, the fair/low quality of Spanish language media influences that these media sources are not widely read, and also concludes that regarding overall use of Spanish language in media, the quality is considerably better in Spanish-only media outlets than bilingual ones (Covarrubias 2016).

## Newspapers

The first newspaper in Spanish, El Mississippi, was published in New Orleans in 1808; since then, Spanish media has proliferated and extended to all corners of the country that recognize Hispanics as the largest minority group (Covarrubias 2016). However, in the recent decade, Spanish journalism, specifically daily print newspapers, have continuously dropped in circulation. Three of the most established Hispanic dailies in the U.S. have experienced significant drops in circulation in 2015 compared to previous years: El Nuevo Herald from Miami circulation dropped 14.2\%, El Diario La Prensa from New York dropped 8.7\%, La Opinión Contigo and La Opinión from Los Angeles dropped 13.2\% and 22.3\% respectively (Shearer 2016). The same trend can be observed in 2016, with the El Nuevo Herald criculation dropping 10.7\% and La Opinión dropping 23.8\% (Shearer 2017). On the other hand, the digital realm offered better prospects for Spanish newspapers; two out of three online Spanish newspapers have reported increases in digital readership. This is largely driven by increased mobile traffic and the fact that Hispanics comprise the minority group that own the most smartphones (Shearer 2016).

A survey commissioned by the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University, revealed that a the great majority of Spanish language media in the country is distributed for free or at a very low cost ranging from 5 cents to 5 dollars, and largely depend on advertisement to survive. The survey also reveals that three news agencies are most used by journalists, these include: Agencia EFE, The Associated Press (AP), and Agencia Reforma. In terms of gender distribution, the journalist industry still is largely male dominated: about $65 \%$ of those surveyed were men compared to $35 \%$ were women. The survey also asked those in the Spanish language journalist industry their opinion about the quality of Spanish language journalism. The consensus is of the opinion that the editorial quality is "fair" and a majority (54.3\%) believes that quality will increase to "good" in the future (Covarrubias 2016). Overall, Hispanic journalists believe that greater economic aid will allow them to continue informing, emphasize greater professionalism, better use of language and training of their personnel (ibidem).

Television
When comparing revenue, ratings, and the number of stations owned, Univision, which began in 1962 in San Antonio, Texas, is the largest Spanish language media company in the U.S. (Matsa 2015a). Univision has the largest audience about 1.8 million tuned in during most popular dayparts; meanwhile, Telemundo averages less than 700,000 viewers (Matsa 2015a). ${ }^{8}$ Thus, due to its importance and success Univision performance most significantly gauges the state or Hispanic television news.

Even though Univision has sometimes outperformed broadcast networks like ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox (López 2013), the network has experienced declines in

[^7]audience and revenue. In 2014, Noticiero Univision, Univision flagship program, steadily declined $7 \%$ to 1,86 million viewers from its peak, 2 million viewers in 2013 (Shearer 2016). This program lost another 3.5\% of audience share in 2016 compared to 2015 (Shearer 2017). Conversely, Telemundo flagship program Noticiero Telemundo grew its audience by 24.8\% between 2013 and 2016 (Shearer 2017). In revenue, Univision reported a slight decline in $2 \%$ in 2015, but reported an increase of $6 \%$ in 2016. Telemundo's revenue information is not available to the public (Shearer 2016, 2017).

Taking into account the general trend in decline in Spanish news outlets and the growth of Hispanics consuming news only in English, a decline in viewership of Spanish networks or a shift in their audience can be expected

Although Hispanic television networks only report slight changes in their audience and revenues, compared to the large and clear decline reported by Hispanic newspapers, their performance is unclear. Taking into account the general trend in decline of Spanish news outlets and the growth of English only news, we may expect a decline in viewership of Spanish networks or a shift in their audience, as has occurred to English media outlets that opened news outlets targeted at Latinos. The slight decline of the Hispanic media giants, Univision and Telemundo, may also be accompanied by the rise of foreign outlets focused on Latin America like Azteca America and Televisa, both Mexican mass media companies and other organizations such as the New York Times new Spanish Site and CNN in Español (Shearer 2016).
According to Nielsen, Univision operates 61 local affiliates in addition to its network broadcasting, and Telemundo operates 30 affiliates. Average evening
viewers of Univision's affiliates remained stable from 2013 to 2014, and late night viewers declined $5 \%$ to 1.8 million viewers. In comparison, for the same day and time slots, ABC affiliates attracted 7 million daily viewers (Matsa 2015b).

Analysts at the Pew Research Center, pointed out that the success of television Spanish networks like Univision seems to contradict their recent studies, which found that a growing proportion of Hispanics consume news, watch television and listen to music in English instead of Spanish (López and González-Barrera 2013b). However, this seeming contradiction can be explained by the rapidly growing size of the Latino population. Although the percentage of Hispanics who get their news in Spanish has declined, the actual number of Hispanic who speak Spanish and watch television news in Spanish has increased.

## Digital News

The number of visitors to digital Hispanic news sites is on the rise: in January 2015, Univision had nearly double the amount of web traffic as Telemundo, at 6.7 million compared to 3.2 million respectively, with mobile phone visits outnumbering those from computers (Matsa 2015a). There is a divided opinion among journalists about whether digital media will replace print media: 49.21\% believe "No" or are neutral and 50.70\% believe "Yes". Some, like Pedro Rojas who was the former director of La Opinión in Los Angeles, believe that digital media has already replaced print news and that their immediacy is undeniable. Despite the divided opinion, print media still has a place, although, it is increasingly limited (Covarrubias 2016).

According to the Observatory of the Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures in the United States of the Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University, 39 of the 50 states, including Washington D.C., have Spanish or bilingual newspapers. In total, the Observatory has identified 321 digital Spanish newspapers across the U.S. (González-Tosat 2015).

Figure 39. States with the largest number of distinct Spanish Digital publications, both digital and in print. Source: González-Tosat 2015.


The Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University reports the triumph of social media and mobile devices in channeling journalistic information. Its report informs that a considerable majority (83.3\%) believe that journalistic information will be increasingly channeled through social media and mobile devices (Covarrubias 2016).

When watching television, more Hispanics state that they watch English-language television programs than Spanish language programs, with $45 \%$ mostly watching English programming and $28 \%$ mostly watching in Spanish. Slightly more than a quarter of Hispanics (26\%) say they watch television in both languages. Important differences can be appreciated between generations. U.S. born Hispanics are more likely than immigrant Hispanics to report watching television in English. While 40\% of foreign-born Hispanics report primarily watching television in Spanish, only $25 \%$ of U.S. born Hispanics report mostly watching programs in

Spanish. Another 34\% of foreign-born Hispanics report watching television equally in English and Spanish (Pew Research Center 2012).

Among second generation Hispanics, 69\% report watching television mostly in English, 17\% watch Spanish and English television programs equally, and 12\% say they watch television mostly or only in Spanish. By the third generation, 83\% of Hispanics say they use only or mostly English to watch television. Among third generation Hispanics, 11\% watch equally in both languages, and 5\% watch television mostly in Spanish (Pew Research Center 2012).

Radio
Hispanics listen to the radio more than the U.S. population overall. According to data from June 2016, Latinos spend 832 minutes a week listening to the radio, compared to 784 for the overall population (Statista 2016). There are over 500 Spanish language radio networks in the United States. Only 31 of these air news programs. The stations are not dispersed evenly, about a third of them are in Florida (Matsa 2015a; Shearer 2016). A report by González-Tosat (2017) found nine states with no Spanish language radio stations. Religious genre is the most popular one among Spanish language radio stations, followed by the regional Mexican genre, that is musical styles with strong roots in Mexico.

From 2014 to 2015 revenue for these stations declined slightly by 2\%, though revenue had decline the past year by $7 \%$. The radio business has been in decline for many years. Since 2010 revenue has decline 17\% (Shearer 2017). The proliferation of online news and digital media may be responsible for the decline in revenue of these radio stations. The biggest drop in revenue was during the 2009 recession (Matsa 2015a). Figure 40 shows the average advertisement revenue for radio stations from 2007 to 2014. After a slight increase after the advertising investment drop in 2008, current revenue is still in lower levels than those registered before the Great Recession.

Figure 40. Average annual ad revenue, in thousands, for Spanish language radio networks. Source: Statista (2017a).


According to Nielsen statistics, the average Hispanic spends nearly 30\% more on music each year than other racial/ethnic groups. Hispanics spend on average \$135 each year on music, while the average U.S. consumer spends $\$ 105$ per year (Nielsen 2014a). This includes purchases of CDs, digital albums, satellite radio, and music streaming services.

Although the number of Spanish radio stations has increased in the country and thus have presumably increased the opportunities for Hispanics to listen to Spanish music in addition to Spanish news; only one third of Hispanics report listening to music only or mostly in Spanish, and another $36 \%$ report listening to music primarily in English, while 27\% report listening to music in both languages equally. The factor of nativity plays an important role in music choice.

Figure 41. Distribution of Hispanic Music Spending. Source: Statista 2016.


Foreign-born Hispanics are more than twice as likely to listen to music in Spanish as in English, at 49\% and 18\%, respectively. By the second generation, more than half of Hispanics report primarily using English to listen to music (54\%) as opposed to $18 \%$ who listen to music in Spanish. By the third generation, those who report using only or mostly English when listening to music rises to 74\%, and those using Spanish falls to 10\% (Taylor, López, Martínez and Velasco 2012). Figure 42 shows the results of the 2011 Pew Hispanic Research Center's National Survey of Latinos in regards to what language is primarily used when listening to music.

A survey conducted by Nielsen examined the demographic that listens to Latin music. The survey found that among those who listen to Latin music, 52\% are female and $48 \%$ are male. The survey also calculated the percentage of each race and ethnic group that listens to Latin music and found that $57 \%$ of Hispanics, $2 \%$ of Asians, $7 \%$ of blacks, $31 \%$ of those who identify as some other race or two or more races, and $55 \%$ of whites listen to Latin music (Nielsen

2014b). The survey also found that a majority (61\%) of those who report listening to Latin music have incomes less than \$50,000. A breakdown of the reported incomes is included in Figure 43. Because the survey was conducted only in English, it does not account for the preferences of non-English speakers (Nielsen 2014b).

Figure 42. Income breakdown for those of all races/ethnicities who listen to Latin music. Source: Nielsen 2014b.


## 9. Conclusion

The intense growth experienced by the Hispanic population in the U.S. is already increasing its influence in the country; according to demographic projections this trend will continue over the next decades. There are currently 57.5 million Latinos in the U.S., $17.8 \%$ of the population. As this report analyzes, educational, social, and economic indicators for Hispanic population have experienced some improvements, but differences with the rest of the U.S. population persist.

An important trend in the Hispanic demography can be observed. The Latino population growth increasingly comes more from U.S. births and less from immigration. Currently, more Mexicans are leaving the country than coming to the U.S., and this pattern could be strengthened by the approval of immigration laws more strict than the current ones.
U.S. born Hispanics representing a higher share of the overall Latino population would have a positive impact in educational and economic indicators, since nativity and the number of years in the U.S. usually introduce differences in educational attainment and poverty rates, among others. On the contrary, this evolution can become negative for the Spanish language status in the country.

Spanish is the second most spoken language in the U.S., apart from English, and the most studied one in all levels of education. In addition, nearly the whole Latino population considers it important for future generations to speak Spanish. However, English proficiency increases in each generation and more and more Hispanics consume media only in English. An identity element also needs to be taken into consideration: up to $71 \%$ of Hispanics think speaking Spanish is not relevant to being Hispanic; conversely, 70\% of the U.S. population consider being able to speak English very important to being truly American. Together with demographic and identity factors, interracial marriage ( $27 \%$ of Hispanic marriage) also influences retention rates of Spanish among Hispanics.

Improvements in Hispanic educational attainment have been constant over the last decades. High school dropout rate reached its all-time low in 2015, and the number of Hispanics enrolled in all educational level, from primary to higher education, is increasingly growing. However, the gap among Hispanic educational indicators and those of other racial and ethnic groups, as well as the medium ones, is still far to be overcome. It should also be observed that Hispanic women
complete the different educational levels at higher percentages than Hispanic men.

Even though Hispanic purchasing power is increasing from year to year, in general, Latinos economic indicators are lower than those of the rest of the U.S. population. The rate of Hispanic people living below poverty level reached its alltime low and the unemployment rate is back to levels previous to the Great Recession, but income per capita and household is inferior to the numbers registered by other groups. After the Great Recession, Hispanic population spent the last years trying to recover the economic status reached before 2008.

Moreover, Hispanics are still the racial and ethnic group with the highest percentage of people with no health care insurance coverage, among other reasons, because an important number of Latinos live in states that didn't extend health care insurance coverage with the Affordable Care Act of 2010. The eventual repeal of this act would have a negative impact on Hispanics, as shown in this report, one of the most benefitted groups of this legislation.

Even though the number of Hispanic eligible voters increased by four million, the Latino turnout in the 2016 presidential elections was at the same level than that registered in 2012. Hispanic demographic characteristics, young population with low educational attainment and low income, explains in part low Latino turnout. On the other hand, geographical concentration in states traditionally Democratic or Republican and limited presence in swing states helps explaining why Hispanics don't become as politically powerful as has been expected for years. It can also be observed that the percentage of Hispanic political representatives is far from the percentage of Hispanics in the overall population.

Regarding identity issues, the main observation is that Hispanic identity in the U.S. is far from being defined. One sign of this lack of definition is the unsolved
debate about the use of the terms "Hispanic" or "Latino," together with other elements; for instance, less than half of the Hispanic population considers they shared a lot of values with Latinos from other countries of origin. Self-definition as American increases over generations, while identification with the country of origin decreases; Hispanic/Latino identification being constant.

Hispanics reduced and eliminated the gap in the use of the Internet, mainly due to the increasing use registered among foreign-born Spanish dominant Hispanics. Latinos are the racial and ethnic group spending the most amount of time on social media, the group owning the most smartphones and the most dependant on their cellphones to access the Internet.

Finally, the Spanish media are experiencing a decline in revenue and viewership, as more Hispanics are consuming media and news in English. This trend can be observed in Hispanic media network giants, such as Univisión and Telemundo, as well as in radio networks or small publications. A reorientation affecting the products orientated to the Hispanic market can be expected in order to stop the drop in the sales volume.

As has been referenced in this report, Hispanic population is increasingly representing a larger part in the U.S. However, Latinos must face important challenges in order to have their demographic weight translated to better living conditions. Those challenges include reaching improvements in economic and social levels. In addition, an increase of Hispanic political presence, with Latinos in decision-making positions, would help increasing Hispanic population visibility and would influence public policies so they can improve their situation in the U.S.

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[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ This report examines data from a number of sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Pew Research Center, and the National Center for Education Statistics to more accurately present the current state of Hispanics across the United States. The terms Latino and Hispanic are used interchangeably in this report, as are U.S.-born and native-born. The terms foreign-born, immigrant, and migrant are also used interchangeably in this report. Foreign-born is used to indicate someone born outside of the U.S. and Puerto Rico. "English-dominance" or "Spanishdominance" is used to indicate when knowledge or use of one language is stronger than the other. "Bilingual" is used to indicate when both Spanish and English are spoken equally well. In most instances throughout this report, language dominance was determined by self-reported surveys submitted to the U.S. Census Bureau or the Pew Research Center.

[^1]:    2 "Total Fertility Rate estimates the number of births that a group of 1,000 women would have over their lifetimes, base don age-specific births rates in a given year" (Martin et al. 2017: 5).

[^2]:    ${ }^{3}$ The enrollment in Spanish Language clases in the Instituto Cervantes worldwide eight-fold between 1992 and 2016 (Instituto Cervantes 2017).

[^3]:    ${ }^{4}$ For a more detailed breakdown of English proficiency of Hispanics in the United States as it is affected by age, gender, nativity, educational attainment and length of time in the United States see Steinmetz 2015.

[^4]:    ${ }^{5}$ More information at sealofbiliteracy.org

[^5]:    6 Unidos is the former National Council of La Raza. It changed its name in July 2017.

[^6]:    ${ }^{7}$ Facebook includes in its estimations the "monthly active user", that is the people logging in Facebook and using it at least once in a month.
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[^7]:    8 Even though Univision and Telemundo are the two largest Spanish media companies, significantly trail behind national English media companies like Yahoo/ABC News, NBC New and CBS News, whose online audience ranges from 65 million to 47 million, meanwhile, Univision and Telemundo together online amass an audience of 9.8 million (Matsa 2015a).

