



Postsecondary National Policy Institute

Latino Students in Higher Education

CENSUS OVERVIEW

According to the Census' American Community Survey, in 2022 [19.1%](#) of the total U.S. population identified as Hispanic or Latino (of any race).¹ Among Latino residents aged 25 or over, [19.1%](#) had earned a bachelor's degree or higher. This rate is up from [13%](#) in 2010, but falls short of the national rate of [34.3%](#).

ENROLLMENT

- In [Fall 2021](#), Latino students made up 19.6% of all postsecondary enrollment.
- In 2021, 33.4% of the 18–24-year-old Latino population were [enrolled](#) in college compared to 38.1% of the overall U.S. population.
- Since Fall 2010, Latino student enrollment has increased from 2.75 million to 3.67 million, a 33% increase:
 - Undergraduate enrollment increased from 2.55 million to 3.31 million, a 29.6% increase
 - Graduate enrollment increased from 197,800 to 358,200, an 81.1% increase
- Latino students are much more likely to [attend](#) public versus private institutions of higher education.
 - In Fall 2021, 80.4% of Latino students attended public institutions:
 - 48% attended public four-year institutions
 - 32.3%² attended public two-year institutions
- 55.8% of all [Hispanic undergraduates](#) were enrolled in [Hispanic-Serving Institutions \(HSI\)](#) in Fall 2021.
- [46%](#) of the Fall 2021 enrollment at HSIs were Hispanic students.

FINANCIAL AID

- According to the National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey, [57.8%](#) of Latino students received some form of federal Title IV financial aid in the 2019-20 academic year, compared to 54.9% of all students.
 - [49.5%](#) of Latino students received a Pell grant, compared to 40.2% of all students.
 - [25.9%](#) of Latino students received a federal student loan, compared to 34.5% of all students.
- Among Latino students who received federal Title IV aid, the [average amount](#) received was \$7,508.
 - The average Pell grant amount for Latino students was \$4,246.
 - The average Federal student loan amount for Latino students was \$8,014.

¹ Terms used in this report (Latino, Hispanic) reflect the terms found in the data source material, defaulting to “Latino.”

² Due to rounding in the Digest of Education Statistics, percent values may not completely add-up.

COMPLETION/DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- [59.1%](#) of first-time, full-time Hispanic students attending four-year institutions beginning in 2015 graduated within six years, compared to 64% for all students.
- At two-year institutions, among first-time, full-time students beginning in 2018, [32.3%](#) of Hispanic students graduated within three years, compared to 34.6% overall.
- Of the more than two million [bachelor's degrees](#) conferred in the 2020-21 academic year, 324,848 (15.7%) went to Hispanic students.

EARNINGS AND WEALTH

- According to the Baccalaureate & Beyond study, ten years after receiving a bachelor's degree, Latino graduates who reported having an income averaged a gross income of [\\$66,830](#), compared to the national average of \$76,370.
- Wealth accumulation can be [measured](#) differently from income. Ten years after graduating:
 - [53%](#) of Latino graduates reported owning a home, compared to 63% of all graduates
 - [80%](#) of Latino graduates had some form of a retirement account, compared to 87% of all graduates

POPULATION-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Latinos are much more likely to be first-generation college students than other racial/ethnic groups.
 - In the [2019–20 academic year](#), more than half of Latinos (51%) were the first in their family to attend college, compared to Black (38%), Asian (30%), and White (22%) students.
- In 2021, 19% of Hispanic children under age 18 [lived in households where no parent](#) had completed high school, a higher rate than other racial/ethnic groups.
- In the 2019-20 academic year, a significant percentage of Latino students [enter college as low-income students](#).
- Despite increased completion rates for Latino people overall, foreign-born Latino people are less likely to have earned a bachelor's degree or higher than Latino people born in the United States.
 - As of 2022, 17.3% of the [immigrant Latino population](#) aged 25 or higher had earned a bachelor's degree or higher compared with 17.6% of U.S.-born Latino people.
 - 9% of Mexican immigrants have a bachelor's degree or higher
 - 11.6% of immigrants from other Central American countries have a bachelor's degree or higher
 - 24.3% of Caribbean immigrants have a bachelor's degree or higher
 - 37.2% of South American immigrants have a bachelor's degree or higher

DATA SOURCES

[American Community Survey](#). & [Current Population Survey](#). U.S. Census Bureau, December 2023.

[Baccalaureate & Beyond Survey](#). National Center for Education Statistics, December 2023.

[Digest of Education Statistics](#). National Center for Education Statistics, December 2023.

[National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey](#). National Center for Education Statistics, December 2023.