



HISPANIC UNEMPLOYMENT HIGHEST IN NORTHEAST METROPOLITAN AREAS

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When many people think of high Hispanic unemployment, they think of metropolitan areas like Las Vegas and Los Angeles. This is understandable since these areas have high levels of Hispanic unemployment and large Hispanic populations. But as this issue brief emphasizes, the Hispanic population is not only in the West. In fact, the two highest Hispanic metropolitan unemployment rates are in the Northeast: Providence, R.I., and Hartford, Conn. It is important to understand high Hispanic unemployment in the Northeast because solutions in this area may differ from the solutions for Hispanic job seekers in the West.

This issue brief looks at the Hispanic unemployment rates in the 38 large metropolitan areas for which we were able to derive estimates.¹ (A companion Issue Brief #315 on black metropolitan unemployment rates is available through the [EPI website](#).) The key findings of this issue brief are:

- In 2010, the two highest Hispanic metropolitan unemployment rates were in the Northeast: Hispanic unemployment was 25.2 percent in Providence, R.I., and 23.5 percent in Hartford, Connecticut. For Providence, 2010 was the second year in a row Hispanics had an unemployment rate over 20 percent.
- Hispanics in the Hartford metropolitan area were 3.4 times as likely as whites to be unemployed. In Providence, Hispanics were 2.5 times as likely as whites to be unemployed.
- Five California metropolitan areas made it into the top 10 metropolitan areas with the highest Hispanic unemployment rates: Fresno, Bakersfield, Riverside, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.
- Six Texas metropolitan areas were among the 10 with the lowest Latino unemployment rates: Laredo, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, El Paso, Houston, and Austin.
- Washington, D.C. had the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate.

Hispanic unemployment rates and increases in 2010

Table 1 shows Hispanic unemployment rates for selected metropolitan areas in 2009 and 2010. After Providence and Hartford, the metropolitan area that ranked third highest for Hispanic unemployment was Fresno, Calif., which had a rate of 21.1 percent in 2010. Las Vegas, Nevada ranked fourth with a rate of 19.4 percent, and Bakersfield, Calif. ranked fifth at 18.4 percent.

TABLE 1

Hispanic metropolitan unemployment rates for selected areas, 2009 and 2010

2010 rank	Metropolitan area	2009	2010	Percentage-point change
1	Providence-Fall River-Warwick, Mass.-R.I.	20.6%	25.2%	4.6
2	Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn.	15.9	23.5	7.5
3	Fresno, Calif.	21.8	21.1	-0.7
4	Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.	18.2	19.4	1.2
5	Bakersfield, Calif.	17.2	18.4	1.2
5	Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif.	17.2	18.4	1.2
7	Orlando, Fla.	14.5	16.4	1.9
8	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.	12.7	14.3	1.6
9	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, Calif.	13.2	13.4	0.2
10	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla.	11.9	13.2	1.3
11	Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, Calif.	11.0	12.9	1.9
12	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fla.	9.9	12.8	2.9
13	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Wash.	14.0	12.7	-1.4
13	Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, Ill.-Ind.-Wis.	11.4	12.7	1.3
15	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.	12.2	12.2	0.0
16	Denver-Aurora, Colo.	11.5	12.1	0.6
16	San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, Calif.	14.5	12.1	-2.4
16	Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, Calif.	13.9	12.1	-1.8
19	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.	10.3	11.5	1.3
19	Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, Conn.	15.6	11.5	-4.1
21	McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr, Texas	9.9	11.2	1.4
22	Brownsville-Harlingen, Texas	9.4	11.1	1.6
23	New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, N.Y.-N.J.-Pa.	10.7	11.0	0.2
24	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, Calif.	10.8	10.9	0.1
25	Tucson, Ariz.	12.4	10.8	-1.6
26	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Texas	9.2	10.2	1.1
26	Minneapolis-St Paul-Bloomington, Minn.-Wis.	13.9	10.2	-3.7
28	Albuquerque, N.M.	9.3	9.9	0.6
29	Laredo, Texas	8.8	9.6	0.8
30	Corpus Christi, Texas	7.9	9.5	1.6
30	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga.	10.6	9.5	-1.1
32	Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, Mass.-N.H.	13.7	9.4	-4.3
32	Salt Lake City, Utah	11.1	9.4	-1.7
34	San Antonio, Texas	8.0	9.3	1.3
35	El Paso, Texas	9.3	9.1	-0.1
36	Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Texas	8.5	8.9	0.5
37	Austin-Round Rock, Texas	6.6	8.8	2.2
38	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va.	7.2	6.9	-0.2
	National Hispanic rate	12.1%	12.5%	0.4

NOTE: 2009 estimates may differ from Austin (2010) because of revised inputs, reestimation, and new statewide controls in Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

SOURCE: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Five California metropolitan areas made it into the nation's top 10 in terms of highest Latino unemployment rates: Fresno, Bakersfield, Riverside, San Francisco, and Los Angeles (no California cities were in the lowest 10). Hispanics fared much better in Texas, which had six of the 10 metropolitan areas with the lowest Hispanic unemployment rates: Laredo, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, El Paso, Houston, and Austin. The lowest Latino unemployment rate in the country, however, was in Washington, D.C.

The five metropolitan areas with the largest Hispanic populations are Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Houston, and Riverside, Calif. (Frey 2011). Riverside ranked fifth with an unemployment rate of 18.4 percent, and Los Angeles was ranked ninth with an unemployment rate of 13.4 percent. Miami was ranked 12th, New York was 23rd, and Houston was 36th.

The Providence and Hartford metropolitan areas not only were first and second in terms of the highest Hispanic unemployment rates in 2010, but also had the first and second largest increases in Hispanic unemployment from 2009 to 2010. Hartford had the largest increase, 7.5 percentage points, while Hispanic unemployment in Providence increased 4.6 percentage points. In 18 of the 38 metropolitan areas, Hispanic unemployment increased by more than one percentage point.

The ratio of Hispanic-to-white unemployment

When comparing Latino and white unemployment rates, Providence and Hartford again stand out. Hartford led with the highest ratio of Hispanic-to-white unemployment rates in 2010, and Providence ranked second (**Table 2**). In 2010, Latinos in the Hartford metropolitan area were 3.4 times as likely as whites to be unemployed, while those in Providence were 2.5 times as likely to be unemployed. Not only did these metropolitan areas have high Latino unemployment rates, but the Latino unemployment rates were much higher than that of whites. (For the white and overall unemployment rates, see the appendix.)

Providence and Hartford also had above average Hispanic-to-white unemployment rate ratios in 2009. In 2009, the national Hispanic-to-white unemployment rate ratio was 1.6-to-1, but Providence and Hartford had ratios over 2-to-1. The Hispanic-to-white unemployment disparity spiked in Hartford in 2010. In 2009, the ratio was 2.4-to-1 in Hartford, but, in 2010, it was 3.4-to-1.

In the 2010 Hispanic-to-white unemployment rate ratio, San Antonio, Texas, and Orlando, Fla. tied for third with a Hispanic-to-white unemployment ratio of 1.9-to-1. Fresno and Bakersfield in California tied with Minneapolis for fifth with ratios of 1.8-to-1.

Of the five metropolitan areas with the largest Latino populations, Riverside, Calif., and Miami had the largest disparities in 2010, both with a ratio of 1.7-to-1. New York had a ratio of 1.6-to-1. Los Angeles and Houston had ratios of 1.4-to-1.

The industrial profile of the Hispanic labor force in Hartford and Providence

It is beyond the scope of this issue brief to explore in detail the possible factors behind the high Hispanic unemployment rates and Hispanic-to-white unemployment rate ratios in the Hartford and Providence metropolitan areas. A brief examination of the industrial profile of the Hispanic labor force in these areas suggests that the dynamics driving the employment situation in Hartford and Providence may be different than those at work in other metropolitan areas. While we examine the industrial distribution of Hispanics in these areas, factors unrelated to the industrial distribution may also be important to understanding the high ratios in Hartford and Providence.

In 2007, before the start of the recession, Hispanics in Hartford and Providence were less than half as likely as those in other metropolitan areas to work in construction (**Table 3**). Construction has been a key driver, first of employment in general, and then of unemployment for Hispanic workers in recent years (Kochhar 2008; 2011). The low share of Hispanic workers in the construction industry in these metropolitan areas suggests that there may be different factors behind Hispanic employment and unemployment trends in Hartford and Providence in comparison with other parts of the country.

TABLE 2

Hispanic-to-white unemployment rate ratios for selected metropolitan areas, 2009 and 2010

2010 rank	Metropolitan area	2009	2010
1	Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn.	2.4	3.4
2	Providence-Fall River-Warwick, Mass.-R.I.	2.1	2.5
3	San Antonio, Texas	1.6	1.9
3	Orlando, Fla.	1.8	1.9
5	Fresno, Calif.	2.7	1.8
5	Bakersfield, Calif.	1.5	1.8
5	Minneapolis-St Paul-Bloomington, Minn.-Wis.	2.1	1.8
8	Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif.	1.6	1.7
8	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.	1.6	1.7
8	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fla.	1.3	1.7
11	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.	1.7	1.6
11	Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, Conn.	2.4	1.6
11	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Texas	1.4	1.6
11	Denver-Aurora, Colo.	1.6	1.6
11	New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, N.Y.-N.J.-Pa.	1.6	1.6
11	Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.	1.7	1.6
17	Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, Ill.-Ind.-Wis.	1.3	1.5
17	Albuquerque, N.M.	1.8	1.5
17	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Wash.	1.6	1.5
17	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va.	1.6	1.5
21	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.	1.3	1.4
21	Tucson, Ariz.	2.3	1.4
21	Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Texas	1.6	1.4
21	Austin-Round Rock, Texas	1.1	1.4
21	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, Calif.	1.5	1.4
21	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga.	1.5	1.4
27	Salt Lake City, Utah	1.8	1.3
27	San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, Calif.	1.6	1.3
27	Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, Mass.-N.H.	2.0	1.3
30	Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, Calif.	1.8	1.2
30	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla.	1.2	1.2
32	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, Calif.	1.3	1.1
32	Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, Calif.	1.1	1.1
	Brownsville-Harlingen, Texas	na	na
	Corpus Christi, Texas	na	na
	El Paso, Texas	na	na
	Laredo, Texas	na	na
	McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr, Texas	na	na
	National	1.6	1.6

NOTE: Some ratios are not available because the sample size is too small for reliable estimates; 2009 estimates may differ from Austin (2010) because of revised inputs, reestimation, and new statewide controls in Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

SOURCE: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

TABLE 3

Share of Hispanic labor force by industry for Hartford, Providence, and other metropolitan areas, 2007

Industry	Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn.	Providence-Fall River-Warwick, Mass.-R.I.	Other metropolitan areas
Agriculture and mining	1.7%	2.3%	4.9%
Construction	5.5	5.0	13.9
Manufacturing	15.6	24.5	11.7
Transportation and utilities	4.1	5.8	6.5
Wholesale and retail trade	24.8	23.9	23.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate	5.6	5.9	5.1
Services	13.1	16.2	13.9
Education and health services	25.4	15.8	17.7
Public administration	4.2	0.5	2.8

SOURCE: Author's analysis of American Community Survey data from Ruggles et al. (2010).

Manufacturing is a relatively more important industry to Latinos in Hartford and Providence than in other metro areas. The share of Latino workers in manufacturing is 3.9 percentage points higher in Hartford than in other metro areas, and in Providence, Latinos are about twice as likely to be in manufacturing compared with other metropolitan areas. Education and health services have been growing sectors since the recession (Kochhar 2011). Although a quarter of Hispanics in Hartford are in these fields, the area still experienced high Hispanic unemployment since the recession.

The factors behind the high unemployment rate in Hartford and Providence appear to be different from the factors driving high unemployment for Hispanics in other metropolitan areas. Construction has been an important part of the Hispanic unemployment story nationally, but it is probably less important in these metro areas. Further research is necessary to understand the causes and solutions to high Hispanic unemployment in Hartford and Providence.

Endnotes

1. Unemployment rate estimates were created for metropolitan areas that had a sufficient Hispanic sample size in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey for reliable estimates in 2007.

References

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APPENDIX

**Metropolitan unemployment rates for selected areas for all,
Hispanics, and whites, 2009 and 2010**

Metropolitan area	Race	2009	2010
Albuquerque, N.M.	All	7.2%	8.8%
Albuquerque, N.M.	Hispanic	9.3	9.9
Albuquerque, N.M.	White	5.1	6.5
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga.	All	9.7	10.2
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga.	Hispanic	10.6	9.5
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga.	White	7.2	7.0
Austin-Round Rock, Texas	All	6.9	7.1
Austin-Round Rock, Texas	Hispanic	6.6	8.8
Austin-Round Rock, Texas	White	6.1	6.4
Bakersfield, Calif.	All	14.4	15.9
Bakersfield, Calif.	Hispanic	17.2	18.4
Bakersfield, Calif.	White	11.4	10.4
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, Mass.-N.H.	All	7.6	7.7
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, Mass.-N.H.	Hispanic	13.7	9.4
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, Mass.-N.H.	White	6.7	7.4
Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, Conn.	All	7.9	8.5
Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, Conn.	Hispanic	15.6	11.5
Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, Conn.	White	6.5	7.3
Brownsville-Harlingen, Texas	All	9.7	11.2
Brownsville-Harlingen, Texas	Hispanic	9.4	11.1
Brownsville-Harlingen, Texas	White	na	na
Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, Ill.-Ind.-Wis.	All	10.0	10.2
Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, Ill.-Ind.-Wis.	Hispanic	11.4	12.7
Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, Ill.-Ind.-Wis.	White	8.5	8.2
Corpus Christi, Texas	All	7.0	8.0
Corpus Christi, Texas	Hispanic	7.9	9.5
Corpus Christi, Texas	White	na	na
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Texas	All	7.8	8.3
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Texas	Hispanic	9.2	10.2
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Texas	White	6.5	6.5
Denver-Aurora, Colo.	All	8.5	9.0
Denver-Aurora, Colo.	Hispanic	11.5	12.1
Denver-Aurora, Colo.	White	7.3	7.8
El Paso, Texas	All	8.8	9.5
El Paso, Texas	Hispanic	9.3	9.1
El Paso, Texas	White	na	na
Fresno, Calif.	All	15.0	16.8
Fresno, Calif.	Hispanic	21.8	21.1
Fresno, Calif.	White	8.0	11.7

cont. on page 7

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

**Metropolitan unemployment rates for selected areas for all,
Hispanics, and whites, 2009 and 2010**

Metropolitan area	Race	2009	2010
Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn.	All	8.3%	9.2%
Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn.	Hispanic	15.9	23.5
Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn.	White	6.7	6.8
Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Texas	All	7.6	8.5
Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Texas	Hispanic	8.5	8.9
Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Texas	White	5.4	6.3
Laredo, Texas	All	8.5	8.6
Laredo, Texas	Hispanic	8.8	9.6
Laredo, Texas	White	na	na
Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.	All	12.7	15.2
Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.	Hispanic	18.2	19.4
Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.	White	10.7	12.5
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, Calif.	All	10.9	11.9
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, Calif.	Hispanic	13.2	13.4
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, Calif.	White	8.6	9.8
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr, Texas	All	10.5	11.8
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr, Texas	Hispanic	9.9	11.2
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr, Texas	White	na	na
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fla.	All	10.0	11.5
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fla.	Hispanic	9.9	12.8
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fla.	White	7.9	7.7
Minneapolis-St Paul-Bloomington, Minn.-Wis.	All	7.9	7.2
Minneapolis-St Paul-Bloomington, Minn.-Wis.	Hispanic	13.9	10.2
Minneapolis-St Paul-Bloomington, Minn.-Wis.	White	6.7	5.8
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, N.Y.-N.J.-Pa.	All	8.7	8.9
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, N.Y.-N.J.-Pa.	Hispanic	10.7	11.0
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, N.Y.-N.J.-Pa.	White	6.6	7.0
Orlando, Fla.	All	10.2	11.4
Orlando, Fla.	Hispanic	14.5	16.4
Orlando, Fla.	White	8.0	8.9
Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, Calif.	All	9.9	10.8
Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, Calif.	Hispanic	13.9	12.1
Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, Calif.	White	7.6	9.9
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.	All	8.3	9.0
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.	Hispanic	12.2	12.2
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.	White	7.0	7.4
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.	All	9.1	9.2
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.	Hispanic	10.3	11.5
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.	White	7.8	8.0

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APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

**Metropolitan unemployment rates for selected areas for all,
Hispanics, and whites, 2009 and 2010**

Metropolitan area	Race	2009	2010
Providence-Fall River-Warwick, Mass.-R.I.	All	11.0%	11.7%
Providence-Fall River-Warwick, Mass.-R.I.	Hispanic	20.6	25.2
Providence-Fall River-Warwick, Mass.-R.I.	White	9.8	9.9
Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif.	All	13.2	14.5
Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif.	Hispanic	17.2	18.4
Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif.	White	10.9	10.8
Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, Calif.	All	11.1	12.6
Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, Calif.	Hispanic	11.0	12.9
Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, Calif.	White	9.7	11.8
Salt Lake City, Utah	All	6.9	7.5
Salt Lake City, Utah	Hispanic	11.1	9.4
Salt Lake City, Utah	White	6.1	7.1
San Antonio, Texas	All	6.7	7.3
San Antonio, Texas	Hispanic	8.0	9.3
San Antonio, Texas	White	5.1	5.0
San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, Calif.	All	9.6	10.5
San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, Calif.	Hispanic	10.8	10.9
San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, Calif.	White	8.4	9.9
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.	All	9.6	10.3
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.	Hispanic	12.7	14.3
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.	White	8.0	8.4
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, Calif.	All	10.9	11.3
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, Calif.	Hispanic	14.5	12.1
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, Calif.	White	9.3	9.4
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Wash.	All	9.0	9.3
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Wash.	Hispanic	14.0	12.7
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Wash.	White	8.8	8.5
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla.	All	10.7	12.1
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla.	Hispanic	11.9	13.2
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla.	White	9.6	11.5
Tucson, Ariz.	All	8.8	9.0
Tucson, Ariz.	Hispanic	12.4	10.8
Tucson, Ariz.	White	5.3	7.5
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va.	All	6.1	6.2
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va.	Hispanic	7.2	6.9
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va.	White	4.5	4.8

NOTE: Some rates are not available because the sample size for the white labor force is too small for reliable estimates; 2009 estimates may differ from Austin (2010) because of revised inputs, reestimation, and new statewide controls in Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

SOURCE: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.