

FACTS & FIGURES

From the Economic Policy Institute

This fact sheet does not yet include 2005 income data, to be released in late August.

Hispanics

Immigration

A majority of Mexican immigrants, 63.0% of men and 57.0% of women, do not have a high school education. Only 3.4% of Mexican immigrant males and 4.5% of Mexican immigrant females were college graduates.

Benefit and union coverage

Percent Distribution of Educational Attainment of Immigrants, 1940-2000

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Male workers							
<i>Mexican immigrants</i>							
High school dropouts	94.6	91.2	88.3	82.6	77.2	70.4	63.0
High school graduates	3.0	6.7	6.7	11.7	14.3	19.0	25.1
Some college	1.0	1.5	2.7	3.6	5.7	7.8	8.5
College graduates	1.4	0.6	2.4	2.2	2.9	2.8	3.4
<i>Non-Mexican immigrants</i>							
High school dropouts	84.4	76.4	64.5	45.5	30.2	21.0	17.0
High school graduates	9.2	14.5	16.8	23.9	26.7	26.0	25.8
Some college	2.8	4.0	8.3	11.7	15.2	21.3	20.9
College graduates	3.7	5.1	10.4	18.9	27.9	31.7	36.3
Female workers							
<i>Mexican immigrants</i>							
High school dropouts	84.5	82.4	83.9	77.3	72.9	64.7	57.0
High school graduates	12.5	10.3	11.4	16.9	17.7	21.9	26.6
Some college	2.1	4.4	2.7	4.5	7.0	10.5	11.8
College graduates	0.9	2.9	2.0	1.4	2.4	3.0	4.5
<i>Non-Mexican immigrants</i>							
High school dropouts	79.2	68.5	59.3	43.9	30.1	20.0	15.5
High school graduates	15.8	22.3	25.5	33.7	35.2	31.1	27.6
Some college	2.8	5.0	9.6	12.6	16.8	24.0	24.4
College graduates	2.2	4.2	5.7	9.9	17.9	24.9	32.6

Source: Borjas and Katz (2006) Table 2.

- ❖ The growth in the number of immigrant workers, relative to native labor force growth, has doubled in each decade starting in 1970: the immigrant share grew 1.3 percentage points in the 1970s, followed by 2.3 percentage points in the 1980s and 4.4 percentage points in the 1990s. Roughly half the growth in immigration as a share of the workforce has resulted from Mexican immigration, especially among men.
- ❖ Whereas immigrants made up 5% of the workforce in 1970 they now (as of 2005) constitute 15%, roughly three times as important a presence.
- ❖ Both black and white workers saw pension coverage erode in the 1980s, but Hispanics experienced the largest decline—an 11.9 percentage-point drop from 1979 to 1989.
- ❖ Over the entire 1979-2004 period, pension coverage was down 13.1 percentage points among Hispanics.

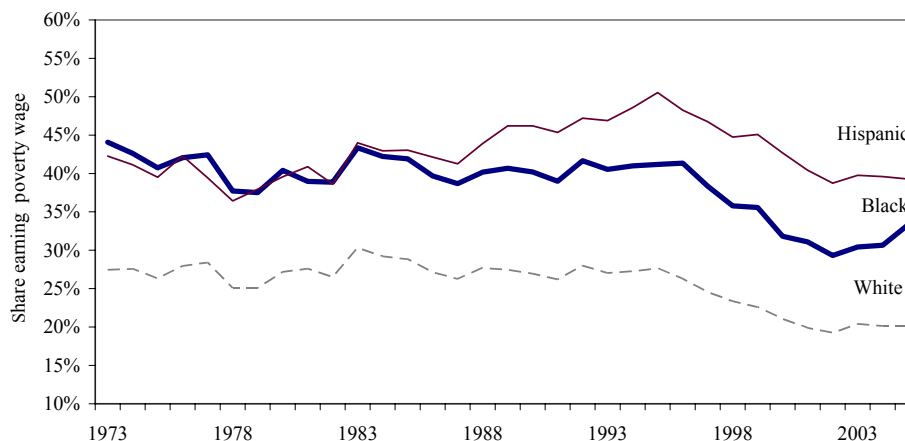
Benefit and union coverage

- ❖ Over the 1979-2005 period, Hispanics suffered by far the largest drop in health care coverage—20.6 percentage points.
- ❖ There are sizable differences in union wage premiums across demographic groups, with Hispanics having union premiums of 21.9%, far higher than the 13.1% union premiums for whites. Consequently, unions raise the wages of minorities more than of whites, helping to close racial/ethnic wage gaps. Hispanic and black men tend to reap the greatest wage advantage from union membership.

Low wages and poverty

The proportion of minority workers earning low wages is substantial—33.3% of black workers and 39.3% of Hispanic workers in 2005.

Share of Workers Earning Poverty-Level Wages by Race/Ethnicity, 1973-05



Source: Authors' analysis

- ❖ While the share of Hispanic women in low-wage work has declined over the long term (down to a still high 45.7% in 2005 from 60.6% in 1973), the share of Hispanic men in low-wage work has risen (up to 35.0% in 2005, from 31.7% in 1973).
- ❖ In 2004, the median Hispanic household income was \$35,401, only 62.4% of what the average white household income was (\$56,700).
- ❖ About 29% of Hispanic children (under 18) were living in poverty in 2004.
- ❖ As of 2004, 21.9% of all Hispanics were living in poverty, a slight increase from 2000 and a sharp reversal from the 1995-2000 period when their rates declined by 8.8%
- ❖ Among Hispanic or African American households headed by someone 47-64, 39% were likely to see their incomes drop by half or more in retirement. The comparable percentage for whites is 24.1%.
- ❖ In 2005, 68.9% of households owned their own homes, but only about half—49.5%—of Hispanic households did.
- ❖ Home ownership has risen 4.0 percentage points for Hispanics since 1999.

Wealth & home ownership

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