

Executive Summary and Analysis: Florida

The following executive analysis is a compilation of UnidosUS primary and secondary research. The analysis and data presented is focused on the most important issues for the next president to address, including health care, jobs and the economy, and immigration.

Latinos in Florida

- Florida is home to more than five million Latinos.¹ Currently, Latinos make up 26% of the state's population.² Nearly three-quarters (74%) of Hispanic adults in Florida are U.S. citizens;³ among non-citizens, about 62% are legal permanent residents.⁴
- In Florida, Latino households contributed more than \$23.5 million in federal, state, and local taxes in 2017. They also possessed a spending power exceeding \$77.2 million that year.⁵
- Ninety-one percent of Hispanic children in Florida (ages 0-17) are U.S. citizens;⁶ nearly half have at least one foreign-born parent.⁷
- In 2018, more than half of Latinos in Florida were burdened by the high cost of rent, meaning that they spent more than 30% of their income on it.⁸ Latinos in Florida are more likely (61%) to be burdened by high rental costs than Floridians (56%) overall.⁹
- Hispanic workers in Florida continue to play outsized roles in major U.S. industries, most notably, in the construction and agricultural industries. In 2017, Latinos accounted for 39% of construction workers and 52% of agricultural workers in the state.¹⁰

Latinos and the 2020 Election

- In 2020, Latino voters will play a decisive role in at least 23 of the most competitive House races, including one in Florida.
- In the 2016 presidential election, nearly one in five Floridians who cast a ballot was Latino.
- The number of potential voters is much greater—nearly 40% of eligible Latino citizens of voting age in the state are still in need of registration. In the last presidential election, 87% of registered Latinos voted in Florida.¹¹
- In Florida, there are about three million U.S. citizens of voting age.¹²

- According to an UnidosUS poll, 86% of Florida's Latino voters are motivated to vote in the November 2020 election for president, Congress, and other offices.
- Among these voters, 86% say that participating in voting and elections can make a real difference in their lives.
- In Florida, registered Latino voters say that the most important issues that the next president should focus on are health care, jobs and the economy, and immigration.
- The most important candidate qualities for Florida Latino voters are someone who values diversity and brings people together; who has realistic, achievable policy ideas and goals; and who fights for their priorities and is willing to compromise to get things done.¹³

Health Care. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) resulted with historic coverage gains and consumer protections that are vulnerable to being reversed. We must continue to strengthen the law so that it works for more Americans, including Latinos. More work is needed to increase access, affordability, and quality so that more families have the opportunity for health coverage and care.

- The uninsured rate for Florida Latinos in 2018 was 18%, compared to 29% in 2013.¹⁴
- More than 3.2 million Floridians, including children, seniors and veterans are on Medicaid and Latinos account for one-third of participants (1.1 million).¹⁵
- Approximately 190,000 Latinos in Florida fall into the Medicaid coverage gap.¹⁶
- According to an UnidosUS poll, 40% of Latino voters polled in the state said that reducing health care costs would most help them save money for an emergency expense or for the future.
- According to the poll, 63% of Latinos in Florida say they would be much more likely to support a candidate who favored policies to lower the cost of prescription drugs, and another 52% would be much more likely to support a candidate who favored policies that provide increases in financial help to lower the cost of buying health insurance.

Jobs and the Economy. The national economy may be growing, but Latinos continue to struggle to get ahead. After paying bills and essentials, the majority of Latinos have no extra money at the end of the month.

- According to an UnidosUS poll, 81% of Latino voters in Florida say that in this economy, housing costs keep going up, and many hardworking Americans can't afford a place to live.
- In Florida, 21% of Latino voters said they spent more than 40% of their income on housing costs.
- Nearly half (46%) of Latino voters say that reducing housing costs would most help them save money for an emergency expense or for the future.
- Another 81% of Latino voters say wages are stagnant, and many people need to work two or three jobs to get by.
- More than one-third (33%) of voters said higher wages would make the most positive difference in their lives right now.
- According to the poll, 50% of Latinos in Florida said they would be much more likely to support a candidate who favored paid family and sick leave policies that allow all workers and employees to have some income while they take time away from work.

Immigration. Hispanic immigrants play a critical role in our nation's economy. Federal policies attacking the security of Latino immigrants and their families, especially U.S.-born children, is placing the health, education, and economic outlooks of an entire generation of American young people at risk. And, by extension, the current trajectory of our immigration policy and political landscapes are undermining the nation's long term economic, social, and political health and vitality as well. We must urgently correct course.

- In 2017, more than half of three million Hispanic entrepreneurs in the United States were immigrants.¹⁷
- While Hispanic immigrants made up only 6% of the U.S. population in 2017, they comprised nearly 10% of the country's entrepreneurs.¹⁸
- Roughly 25,190 Floridians are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.¹⁹ Estimates show as many as 7,200 U.S.-born children in Florida may have a DACA recipient parent.²⁰
- As of 2017, 12,300 Hispanic Floridians had Temporary Protected Status (TPS).²¹ They have at least 3,900 U.S.-born children.²²
- If the DHS public charge regulation goes into effect, the ripple effects are expected to cost the Florida economy \$618 million to \$1.2 billion and 4,200 to 8,400 jobs.²³

About

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an Affiliate Network of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos at the national and local levels.

For more than 50 years, UnidosUS has united communities and different groups seeking common ground through collaboration, and that share a desire to make our country stronger. For more information on UnidosUS, visit www.unidosus.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

Endnotes

- 1 UnidosUS calculations using U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 2 UnidosUS calculations using U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey," Table B05003I.
- 4 Migration Policy Institute analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2012–2016 pooled American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation, with legal status assignments using a unique MPI methodology developed in consultation with James Bachmeier of Temple University and Jennifer Van Hook of the Pennsylvania State University, Population Research Institute (unpublished tables, Migration Policy Institute, 2018).
- 5 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B05003I," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 7 UnidosUS calculations using IPUMS-CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org.
- 8 U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey," Table S0201.
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey," Table S0201.
- 10 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>

- 11 U.S. Census Bureau, "Reported Voting and Registration, by Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin, for States: November 2016," Table 4b, *Current Population Survey*, November 2016. UnidosUS calculation.
- 12 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 13 UnidosUS June 2019 Latino Electorate poll, https://www.unidosus.org/Assets/uploads/files/voting/UnidosUS_2020latinoelectoratesurvey_june2019.pdf
- 14 https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Marketplace-Products/2019_Open_Enrollment
- 15 <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/distribution-by-raceethnicity-4/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedDistributions=white--black--hispanic--asiannative-hawaiian-and-pacific-islander--total&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>
- 16 <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/the-coverage-gap-uninsured-poor-adults-in-states-that-do-not-expand-medicaid/>
- 17 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 18 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 19 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (2020), *Approximate Active DACA Recipients: As of September 30, 2019*, https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/DACA_Population_Receipts_since_Injunction_Sep_30_2019.pdf (accessed February 2, 2020).
- 20 Nicole Prchal Svajlenka, "What We Know About DACA Recipients, by State," (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, September 2019), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2019/09/12/474422/know-daca-recipients-state/> (accessed February 5, 2020).
- 21 Temporary Protected Status is a designation that USCIS can grant eligible nationals who are present in the U.S. at the time that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) deems their country of residence temporarily unsafe for return, e.g., due to ongoing conflict or natural disaster.
- 22 Robert Warren, "A Statistical and Demographic Profile of the U.S. Temporary Protected Status Populations from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti," *Journal on Migration and Human Security* (August 8, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1177/233150241700500302> (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 23 David Dyssegaard Kallick, "Only Wealthy Immigrants Need Apply: The Chilling Effects of 'Public Charge'" (Washington, DC: Fiscal Policy Institute, November, 2019), <http://fiscalpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/FINAL-FPI-Public-Charge-2019-MasterCopy.pdf> (accessed November 25, 2019).