

Wisconsin Latino Family and Youth Study: Summary of Demographic Trends¹

This handout summarizes demographic data on a number of characteristics of Latinos that reside in the counties selected for this study.² In the full report, most measures include corresponding data for the non-Latino or total population to provide comparative perspective.³

Milwaukee, the state's largest county, also has the largest Latino population (more than one-third of the state's Latino residents); Brown, Kenosha, Racine and Dane have similar-sized Latino communities; the rural counties have relatively smaller populations.

Summary of key demographic trends

Population growth: Since 2000, the percentage population growth has ranged from 63 and 65 percent in Racine and Milwaukee counties to as high as 700% in Trempealeau County. In seven counties, the number of Latino residents has at least doubled since 2000. Milwaukee County, has added more than 50,000 Latino residents over the past fifteen years.

Age: The Latino population is on average younger than the non-Latino population: The median age of Latinos is approximately one-half that of the non-Latino population: 24.1 and 43, respectively. The share of Latinos

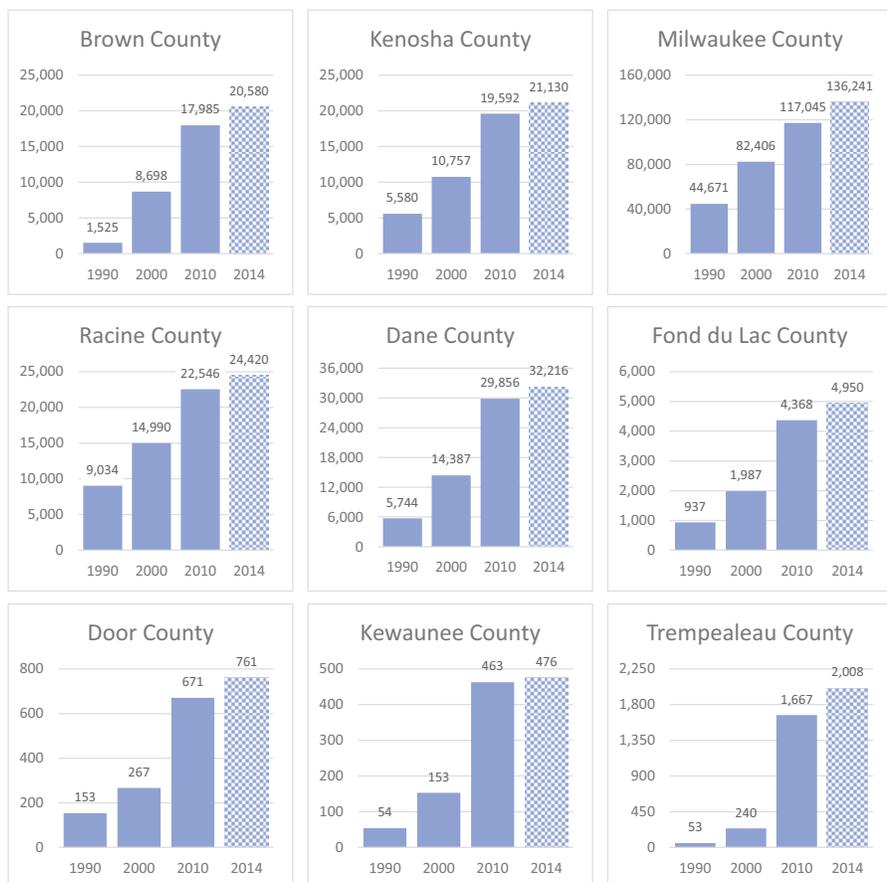
below the age of 15 is roughly twice the comparable share of non-Latinos and in the rural counties represented it is even greater.

Gender: The male to female ratio of Latinos are higher than the corresponding ratios for non-Latinos. This trend is most pronounced in the age 25-44 group where the ratios in this primary working-age category ranges from 102 (Kenosha) to 218 (Kewaunee) males to 100 females.

Home ownership: The proportion of Latino-headed households who are renters is much higher than among non-Latinos. In six of nine counties, approximately two-thirds of Latino households are renters but in the other three counties (Kenosha, Racine and Door) the percentages of Latino owners and renters are almost equal.

Housing type: Latino households are far more likely than non-Latino households to live in multi-family rather than single-family housing units. The percentage of Latinos who live in single family units range from a low of 30 percent (Dane) to 6 percent (Kewaunee). In contrast, the percentages of non-Latino households who live in single-family housing ranges from 55 percent (Milwaukee) to 6 percent (Kewaunee). In the rural counties, where multi-family housing is less common, Latinos reside in mobile homes at rates much higher than non-Latinos.

Household type: The Latino population tends to live in family households at rates greater than the non-Latino population.



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Household size: Latinos' average household and family sizes are larger than those of non-Latinos. In all nine counties represented, the average Latino-headed family is 30% to 40% larger than white non-Latino families.

Nativity: Nativity varies by county, but overall more than one-half of the Latino residents in all nine counties were born in the United States, with the percentage in some being over 70 percent. The shares of the Latino population who are foreign-born ranges from about one-fourth (Kenosha and Racine) to almost one-half (Trempealeau).

Country of origin: The majority of Latinos in every county identify ethnically as Mexican. Approximately four out of five Latinos in six of the nine counties identify as Mexican. The percentage who report Puerto Rican heritage varies from as little as 2% (Trempealeau) to as high as 26% (Milwaukee). Other Central and South American countries and some Caribbean nations account for the balance.

Citizenship: Three patterns emerge with regards to citizenship status among Latinos. In the southeastern urban counties of Milwaukee, Kenosha and Racine 1990's immigration meant the percentage of non-citizen Latinos rose from 10% in 1990 to 20-25% by 2000 while the percentage of native born Latinos dipped from about 83% in 1990 to 70-75% in 2000. These percentage ranges held constant to the 2010-2014 period. In the urban counties of Dane and Brown robust immigration during the 1990s produced a sharp rise in the percentage of non-citizen Latinos and consequent decline in the percentage of native

born Latinos. However, over the past 15 years the percentage of native citizens rebounded with a resulting decline in non-citizens. In the more rural counties of Fond du Lac, Door, Kewaunee and Trempealeau, there has been a rising pattern of the percentages of non-citizen Latinos during the past 15 years with a consequent reduction in the shares of native born Latinos. In all cases, the percentage of naturalized citizens has remained fairly constant.

Language: In most counties represented, the majority of Latinos have indicated they speak Spanish at home: only in Racine County are there fairly equal percentages of "only English" and Spanish speakers, but for those who report speaking Spanish at home a large percentage indicate they also speak English very well or well.

Labor force: Latinos participate in the labor force at rates relatively similar to the non-Latino population. In six of the nine study counties, the largest employment sector for Latinos is manufacturing. In rural Door County, the largest percentage are employed in the service industry. In rural Kewaunee County, one-half of Latinos are employed in agriculture.

Education: Over the past 25 years, the educational attainment of Latinos in WI has been reflective of the pattern of recent arrivals. When there have been influxes of foreign-born Latinos, the proportion of the population with less than a high school education has increased. As Latino communities become more established, overall education levels have risen.

K12: In many of the nine study counties, the Latino population is helping to sustain overall public school enrollment totals as non-Latino enrollment declines.

Income: The median income for Latino households is consistently lower than that for all households in the nine counties. The Latino median is anywhere from 40% (Kewaunee) to 84% (Fond du Lac) of the county median.

Poverty: The poverty rates for Latino families in all nine study counties are higher than corresponding figures for all families. Latino family poverty rates in the nine counties range from 22% to 30%, compared to 7% to 18% for all families.



Endnotes

¹ Latino Demographic and Economic trends report was prepared by the Applied Population Lab, UW-Madison/Extension in collaboration with the Latino Wisconsin research group, UW-Cooperative Extension.

² The counties are organized by their status of being primarily urban (Brown, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Dane) and primarily rural (Fond du Lac, Door, Kewaunee, Trempealeau).

³ Data for this analysis are drawn from the Census Bureau's decennial censuses, annual estimates; the American Community Survey, which aggregates survey responses across multiple years to produce estimates of the population's characteristics; and, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.