

Hispanics of Mexican Origin in the United States, 2008

A total of 30.7 million Hispanics of Mexican origin resided in the United States in 2008, according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Mexicans in this statistical profile are people who self-identified as Hispanics of Mexican origin; this means either they themselves are Mexican immigrants or they trace their family ancestry to Mexico. Mexicans are the largest population of Hispanic origin living in the United States, accounting for nearly two-thirds (65.7%) of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2008.¹

This statistical profile compares the demographic, income and economic characteristics of the Mexican population with the characteristics of all Hispanics and the U.S. population overall. It is based on Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 American Community Survey. Key facts include:

- **Immigration status.** Nearly four-in-ten Mexicans (37.0%) in the United States are foreign born, compared with 38.1% of Hispanics and 12.5% of the U.S. population overall. Most immigrants from Mexico (63.4%) arrived in the U.S. in 1990 or later. Two-in-ten of Mexican immigrants (22.0%) are U.S. citizens.
- **Language.** A majority of Mexicans (61.6%) speak English proficiently.² Some 38.4% of Mexicans ages 5 and older report speaking English less than very well, compared with 37.3% of all Hispanics.
- **Age.** Mexicans are younger than the U.S. population and Hispanics overall. The median age of Mexicans is 25; the median ages of the U.S. population and all Hispanics are 36 and 27, respectively.
- **Marital status.** Less than half of Mexicans (48.2%) and Hispanics overall (46.5%) are married.

¹ Percentages are computed before numbers are rounded.

² Mexicans ages 5 and older who report speaking only English at home or speaking English very well.

- **Fertility.** Thirty-eight percent of Mexican women ages 15 to 44 who gave birth in the 12 months prior to the survey were unmarried. That was similar to the rate for all Hispanic women—38.8%—but greater than the rate for U.S. women—34.5%.
- **Regional dispersion.** Nearly four-in-ten Mexicans (36.7%) live in California, and one-in-four (25.2%) live in Texas.
- **Educational attainment.** Mexicans have lower levels of education than the Hispanic population overall. Nine percent of Mexicans ages 25 and older—compared with 12.9% of all U.S. Hispanics—have obtained at least a bachelor’s degree.
- **Income.** The median annual personal earnings for Mexicans ages 16 and older were \$20,368 in 2008; the median earnings for all U.S. Hispanics were \$21,488.
- **Poverty status.** The share of Mexicans who live in poverty, 22.3%, is higher than the rate for the general U.S. population (12.7%) and similar to the share for all Hispanics (20.7%).
- **Health Insurance.** One-third of Mexicans (34.8%) do not have health insurance compared with 31.7% of all Hispanics and 15.4% of the general U.S. population. Additionally, 20.4% of Mexicans younger than 18 are uninsured.
- **Homeownership.** The rate of Mexican homeownership (50.5%) is similar to the rate for all Hispanics (49.1%) but lower than the 66.6% rate for the U.S. population as a whole.

About the Data

This statistical profile of Hispanics of Mexican origin is based on the Census Bureau's 2008 [American Community Survey](#) (ACS). The ACS is the largest household survey in the United States, with a sample of about 3 million addresses. The data used for this statistical profile come from 2008 ACS Integrated Public Use Microdata Series ([IPUMS](#)), representing a 1% sample of the U.S. population.

Like any survey, estimates from the ACS are subject to sampling error and (potentially) measurement error. Information on the ACS sampling strategy and associated error is available at www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf. An example of measurement error is that citizenship rates for the foreign born are estimated to be overstated in the Decennial Census and other official surveys, such as the ACS (see Jeffrey Passel. “[Growing Share of Immigrants Choosing Naturalization](#),” Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C. (March 28, 2008)). Finally, estimates from the ACS may differ from the Decennial Census or other Census Bureau surveys due to differences in methodology and data collection procedures (see, for example, <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/Report10.pdf> and http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/ASA_nelson.pdf).

Table 1
Population Characteristics, 2008
(thousands, unless otherwise noted)

	U.S. Population	All Hispanics	Hispanics of Mexican Origin
Total	304,060	46,822	30,746
Gender			
Male	149,863	24,214	16,169
Female	154,196	22,608	14,578
Nativity			
Native Born	266,044	28,985	19,375
Foreign Born	38,016	17,837	11,372
Age			
Median (in years)	36	27	25
Age Groups			
Younger than 5	20,879	5,216	3,736
5-17	53,012	10,787	7,622
18-29	51,086	9,344	6,349
30-39	40,407	7,769	5,144
40-49	44,673	6,087	3,695
50-64	55,207	4,989	2,848
65 and older	38,797	2,631	1,353
Marital Status (ages 15 and older)			
Married	120,805	15,422	10,124
Never married	75,960	12,713	8,101
Divorced/separated/widowed	46,228	5,030	2,779
Fertility (women ages 15 to 44)			
Total number of women	62,005	10,543	6,889
Women who had a birth in the past 12 months	4,354	936	668
Unmarried women ¹ who had a birth in the past 12 months	1,503	363	254
School Enrollment (ages 5 to 18)			
K-12	52,068	10,497	7,399
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)			
Less than high school diploma	30,050	10,011	7,160
High school diploma or equivalent	57,016	6,637	4,042
Some college	57,595	5,601	3,193
Bachelor's degree or more	55,356	3,302	1,436
Median Annual Personal Earnings (in dollars)			
All (ages 16 and older with earnings)	\$29,533	\$21,488	\$20,368
Full-time, year-round workers	\$40,736	\$28,820	\$27,191
Persons in Poverty²			
Younger than 18	13,131	4,390	3,323
18-64	21,919	4,792	3,296
65 and older	3,648	491	240
Health Insurance			
Uninsured, all ages	46,729	14,852	10,689
Uninsured, younger than 18	7,354	2,985	2,322
Persons in Households by Type of Household³			
In family households	247,692	41,549	27,797
In married-couple households	181,848	27,094	18,642
In non-family households	48,121	4,379	2,430
Citizenship			
Citizen	282,374	34,097	21,873
Non-citizen	21,686	12,726	8,873
Language (ages 5 and older)			
Speaks only English at home	227,375	9,855	6,425
Does not speak only English at home	55,806	31,752	20,586
Speaks English very well	31,376	16,223	10,204
Speaks English less than very well	24,430	15,529	10,382
Year of Entry (foreign-born only)			
Before 1990	15,879	6,883	4,163
1990 to 1999	10,913	5,424	3,644
2000 or later	11,225	5,530	3,565
Regional Dispersion			
Northeast	54,925	6,405	824
Midwest	66,561	4,252	3,249
Illinois	12,902	1,962	1,558
South	111,719	16,441	10,386
Texas	24,327	8,816	7,749
West	70,855	19,724	16,288
California	36,757	13,435	11,275
Arizona	6,500	1,965	1,784
Colorado	4,939	993	764

¹Unmarried women includes those who were never married, divorced or widowed. ²For detailed information on how poverty status is determined, see <http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/variableDescription.do?mnemonic=POVERTY>. Due to the way in which the IPUMS assigns poverty values, these data will differ from those that might be provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. ³The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters.

Note: Numbers may not sum to the total due to rounding.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 ACS (1% IPUMS sample). More information on the source data and sampling error is available at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/designs.shtml> and <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.

Table 2
Household Characteristics, 2008

	U.S. Population	All Hispanics	Hispanics of Mexican Origin
Total (in thousands)	113,101	12,612	7,646
Homeownership (household heads)			
In owner-occupied homes (in thousands)	75,342	6,188	3,860
In renter-occupied homes (in thousands)	37,760	6,424	3,785
Homeownership rate (%)	66.6	49.1	50.5
Household Annual Income (in dollars)			
Median	\$51,938	\$41,754	\$40,736
Household Size			
Average number of persons	2.6	3.5	3.7

Note: The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters. Households are classified by the ethnicity of the household head. Numbers may not sum to the total due to rounding.
Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 ACS (1% IPUMS sample). More information on the source data and sampling error is available at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/design.shtml> and <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.

Table 3
Employment Characteristics, by Industry and Occupation, 2008
(thousands, unless otherwise noted)

	U.S. Population	All Hispanics	Hispanics of Mexican Origin
Employment Status (civilians ages 16 and older)			
Employed	146,246	20,683	13,147
Unemployed	9,984	1,678	1,049
Not in labor force	81,350	9,885	6,200
Unemployment rate (%)	6.4	7.5	7.4
Industries¹			
Construction, agriculture and mining	13,429	3,229	2,442
Manufacturing	16,385	2,389	1,654
Trade and transportation	27,777	3,913	2,376
Information, finance and other services	88,654	11,151	6,675
Occupations¹			
Management, professional and related occupations	54,413	4,233	2,267
Services	21,669	4,614	2,989
Sales and office support	37,260	4,579	2,730
Construction, extraction and farming	9,637	2,858	2,191
Maintenance, production, transportation and material moving	23,268	4,399	2,971

¹Currently employed civilians ages 16 and older.
Note: Numbers may not sum to the total due to rounding.
Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 ACS (1% IPUMS sample). More information on the source data and sampling error is available at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/design.shtml> and <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.