



*The Hispanic Collaborative/UWMCED
Index of Hispanic Well-Being in the
Nation's Largest Metro Areas:
2020 Update*

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In 2017, at the request of the Hispanic Collaborative of Milwaukee, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development (UWMCED) prepared a composite “index of Latino well-being” for each of the nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas. The purpose of the index was to identify “high performing” metro areas for Hispanic community well-being, drawing from the latest available data on such indicators as employment rates; household income levels and trends; inequality in household income; various measures of poverty; homeownership rates; and health care status. We then synthesized the results on each of the indicators into a composite index that ranks each of the nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas on the well-being of their respective Hispanic communities. In this way, we have benchmarked how conditions for Hispanic Milwaukee compare to conditions for Hispanics in other large metros across the country. (For an explanation of how the composite index was put together and how to interpret the rankings, as well as a list of the precise indicators included in the index, see Appendix).

This report updates the metro area Index of Hispanic Well-being. Whereas the 2017 version of the index drew largely on data from 2013 and 2014, this 2020 update incorporates data mainly from 2017 and 2018. Here is a brief overview of the key findings:

- In the 2017 version of the index, Milwaukee ranked **39th** among the nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas in “Hispanic well-being.” In this 2020 update, Milwaukee’s rank declined to **44th**. (See chart below).
- This does not mean that conditions on the ground deteriorated in Hispanic Milwaukee between 2014-2018. On the contrary, as Table 2 below shows, on most indicators, conditions in Hispanic Milwaukee improved at least modestly during this period (although in many cases the gains were not outside the error margin of the data). Hispanic Milwaukee trended upward on all income indicators, and experienced welcome declines on all measures of poverty. Things *have* gotten better for Milwaukee’s Hispanic community over the past four years. However, the *rate* of improvement in Milwaukee generally trailed gains in metro areas across the country between 2014-2018 on most indicators, resulting in Hispanic Milwaukee losing ground in the overall rankings of the composite index.
- Employment, especially for young Hispanic males, was the main category in which Hispanic Milwaukee’s rank plummeted between 2014-2018, helping drag down the metro’s overall rank on the index. In the other components of the index –measures of

income, poverty, and health—Hispanic Milwaukee’s rank stayed about the same in the two indexes. For young Hispanic males (ages 20-24), Milwaukee’s rank on employment rates plummeted from 17th on the earlier index, to 43rd on the current one. The actual employment rate for young Hispanic males in Milwaukee fell from 77.5 percent in 2014 to 67.6 percent in 2018. Employment rates for prime age males and young adult females in Hispanic Milwaukee were mostly stagnant, causing Milwaukee’s rank in these categories to fall between 2014-18 as other metros experienced improvements in their Hispanic employment rates. In Milwaukee, only prime age Hispanic females (ages 25-54) exhibited modest improvements in both employment rate and category rank.

- Several metro areas saw their rankings on the composite index dramatically improve between 2014-18: Atlanta, Austin, Salt Lake City, Nashville, and Louisville all experienced double-digit jumps in their rank (See Table 1). Atlanta, Nashville, and Louisville all had similar ranks to Milwaukee on the first version of the index, so their ability to climb the ranks in the 2020 update to the index is especially impressive and instructive. Atlanta, for example, jumped from 37th to 19th, with gains across the board, but especially in Hispanic income. Nashville jumped from 40th to 28th; Louisville from 35th to 24th – both with impressive improvement in Hispanic household income and poverty-reduction. Tables 2-5 show, for Milwaukee and these other metros, how changes in performance on individual indicators contributed to their changing rank on the composite index between 2014-2018.
- On the other hand, although Milwaukee’s ranking drop was disappointing, several metros experienced much steeper drops on the index than did Milwaukee. New Orleans, Columbus, San Antonio, and St. Louis all saw their overall ranking decline by double-digits between 2014-18 (see Table 1).
- Finally, Table 6 compares Milwaukee’s performance on each variable in the current index to the performance of the 10th ranked metro on each variable. This table gives a sense of the distance between Hispanic Milwaukee’s outcomes on these variables and those of a “top ten” metro area for Hispanics. As the table shows, even though Hispanic Milwaukee witnessed improvements between 2014-18, the gap between Milwaukee and a “top ten” metro on many of these variables remains substantial.

**Chart 1:
Composite Index of Hispanic Well-Being in
The Nation's Largest Metro Areas: 2020 Update**

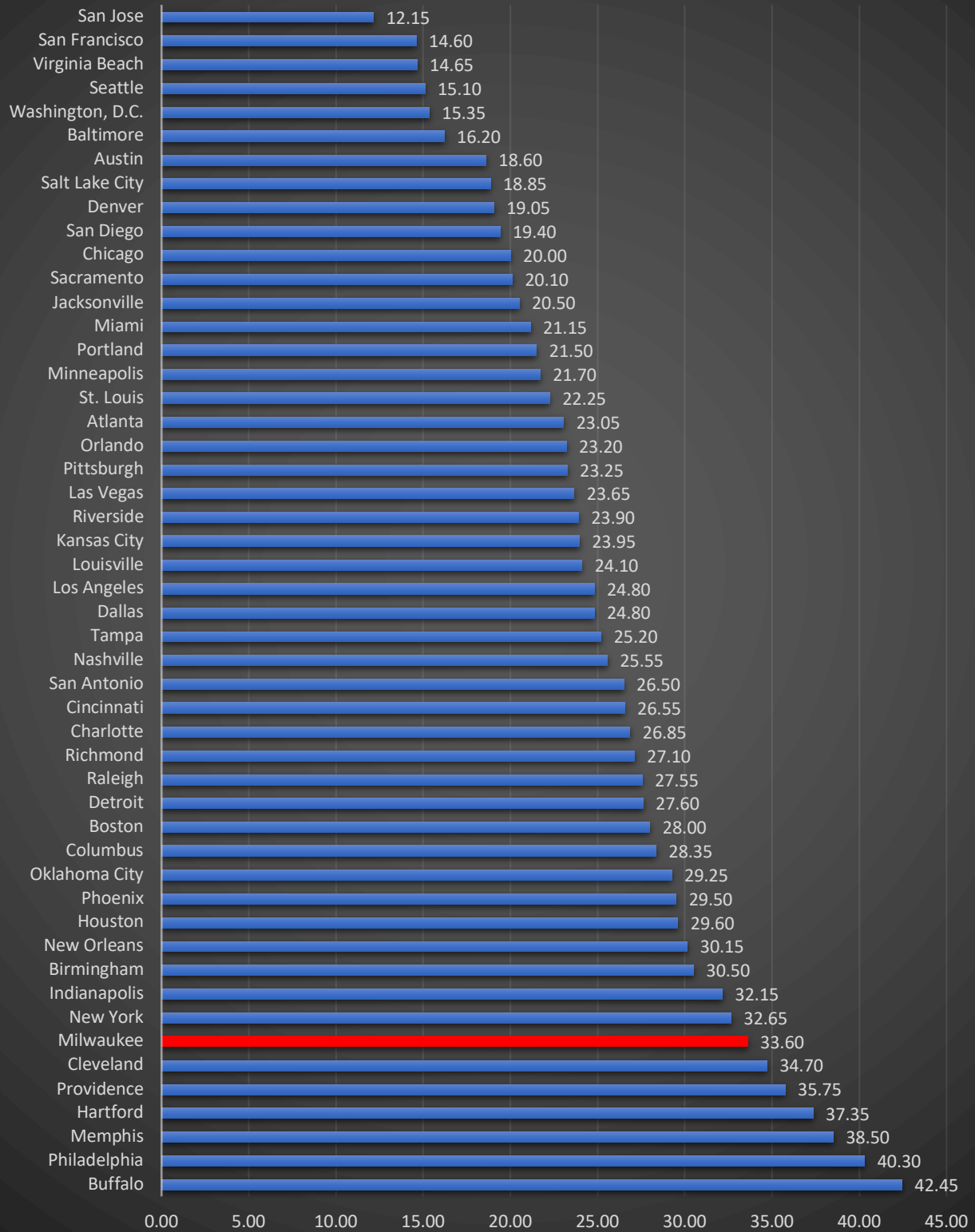


Table 1
Changes in Rank on the Composite Index of Hispanic Well-Being
2014-2018

Metropolitan Area	2014 Index Rank	2018 Index Rank	Rank Change
Atlanta	37	18	+19
Austin	24	7	+17
Salt Lake City	21	8	+13
Nashville	40	28	+12
Louisville	35	24	+11
Phoenix	45	38	+7
Seattle	10	4	+6
Denver	14	9	+5
Raleigh	38	33	+5
Dallas	29	25	+4
Kansas City	27	23	+4
Orlando	23	19	+4
Sacramento	16	12	+4
San Jose	5	1	+4
Portland	18	15	+3
San Diego	13	10	+3
San Francisco	4	2	+2
Birmingham	42	41	+1
Chicago	12	11	+1
Indianapolis	43	42	+1
Minneapolis	17	16	+1
Philadelphia	50	49	+1
Richmond	33	32	+1
Hartford	47	47	0
Memphis	48	48	0
Providence	46	46	0
Riverside	22	22	0
Boston	34	35	-1
Buffalo	49	50	-1
Charlotte	30	31	-1
Cleveland	44	45	-1
Las Vegas	20	21	-1
Los Angeles	25	26	-1
Oklahoma City	36	37	-1
Tampa	26	27	-1
Virginia Beach	2	3	-1
Cincinnati	28	30	-2
Detroit	32	34	-2
New York	41	43	-2
Washington, D.C.	3	5	-2
Baltimore	1	6	-5
Miami	9	14	-5
Milwaukee	39	44	-5
Jacksonville	7	13	-6
Houston	31	39	-8
Pittsburgh	11	20	-9
St. Louis	6	17	-11
San Antonio	15	29	-14
Columbus	19	36	-17
New Orleans	8	40	-32

Table 2¹
Hispanic Milwaukee Trends: 2014-2018
 2014 Composite Index Rank: **39**
 2018 Composite Index Rank: **44**

Indicator	2014 Value	2018 Value	2014 Rank	2018 Rank
Employment Rate, Young Adult Males (ages 20-24)	77.5	67.6	17	43
Employment Rate, Prime Age Males (ages 25-54)	86.3	84.9	24	38
Employment Rate, Young Adult Females (ages 20-24)	71.0	71.9	7	11
Employment Rate, Prime Age Females (ages 25-54)	67.8	71.2	12	9
Disconnected Youth (% not in school/not working)	15.7	14.2	26	36
Real HH Income (cost of living adjusted)	\$40,126	\$43,551	41	43
% change real HH income, (1999-2014); (2014-18)	-24.7%	+8.6	43	35
Hispanic HH Income as % of White Non-Hispanic	57.1	58.9	39	41
Poverty Rate	28.7	24.3	35	37
Hispanic-WNH Poverty Rate Ratio	3.8 to 1	3.4 to 1	44	37
Children's Poverty Rate	33.9	30.4	33	34
% living in extreme poverty	11.2	9.5	34	38
% living in concentrated poverty neighborhoods	27.5	21.9	49	48
Homeownership Rate	38.2	39.5	38	40
% receiving SNAP	33.2	30.6	45	45
% Children without health insurance	5.8	5.6	12	18
% Adults 19-64 without health insurance	29.6	26.3	19	23
Rate of births to teenage mothers	12.9	8.9	36	38
Infant mortality rate	6.4	5.6	33	29
Mortality Rate from Heart Disease	34.9	35.3	24	22

Table 3
Hispanic Atlanta Trends: 2014-2018
 2014 Composite Index Rank: **37**
 2018 Composite Index Rank: **18**

Indicator	2014 Value	2018 Value	2014 Rank	2018 Rank
Employment Rate, Young Adult Males (ages 20-24)	76.8	79.5	20	15
Employment Rate, Prime Age Males (ages 25-54)	92.3	92.8	3	5
Employment Rate, Young Adult Females (ages 20-24)	60.5	68.2	35	24
Employment Rate, Prime Age Females (ages 25-54)	60.3	63.6	38	39
Disconnected Youth (% not in school/not working)	16.2	12.8	32	19
Real HH Income (cost of living adjusted)	\$43,739	\$51,907	28	16
% change real HH income, (1999-2014); (2014-18)	-37.5%	+20.4%	49	2
Hispanic HH Income as % of White Non-Hispanic	56.4	64.1	40	32
Poverty Rate	29.5	22.5	41	33
Hispanic-WNH Poverty Rate Ratio	3.3 to 1	2.9 to 1	37	37
Children's Poverty Rate	40.5	31.6	42	36
% living in extreme poverty	10.7	7.8	31	19
% living in concentrated poverty neighborhoods	5.0	2.2	19	14
Homeownership Rate	43.5	46.4	27	23
% receiving SNAP	20.8	15.5	29	19
% Children without health insurance	16.1	16.4	45	48
% Adults 19-64 without health insurance	52.9	48.3	47	47
Rate of births to teenage mothers	9.8	6.1	13	16
Infant mortality rate	4.4	4.2	7	7
Mortality Rate from Heart Disease	15.6	20.2	9	10

¹ On Tables 2-5, all values are from 2014 and 2018 except: Disconnected Youth (2012 and 2017); Concentrated Poverty (2014 and 2017); Teen births and infant mortality (2013 and 2017); and Heart disease mortality (2010 and 2017).

Table 4
Hispanic Nashville
 2014 Composite Index Rank: **40**
 2018 Composite Index Rank: **28**

Indicator	2014 Value	2018 Value	2014 Rank	2018 Rank
Employment Rate, Young Adult Males (ages 20-24)	82.3	85.9	5	3
Employment Rate, Prime Age Males (ages 25-54)	89.9	93.7	6	2
Employment Rate, Young Adult Females (ages 20-24)	63.9	70.5	29	17
Employment Rate, Prime Age Females (ages 25-54)	60.9	65.2	35	35
Disconnected Youth (% not in school/not working)	16.9	13.6	35	30
Real HH Income (cost of living adjusted)	\$41,619	\$49,503	36	29
% change real HH income, (1999-2014); (2014-18)	-24.5%	+20.4%	42	3
Hispanic HH Income as % of White Non-Hispanic	64.2	69.2	25	18
Poverty Rate	31.0	25.6	45	41
Hispanic-WNH Poverty Rate Ratio	3.0 to 1	2.8 to 1	30	36
Children's Poverty Rate	48.6	33.8	50	41
% living in extreme poverty	11.6	7.9	40	21
% living in concentrated poverty neighborhoods	4.5	0.8	17	5
Homeownership Rate	34.7	41.5	44	36
% receiving SNAP	29.0	20.3	42	37
% Children without health insurance	20.0	16.2	48	47
% Adults 19-64 without health insurance	57.5	48.8	48	48
Rate of births to teenage mothers	10.0	9.4	17	40
Infant mortality rate	4.9	4.8	15	16
Mortality Rate from Heart Disease	14.2	16.5	6	6

Table 5
Hispanic Louisville
 2014 Composite Index Rank: **35**
 2018 Composite Index Rank: **24**

Indicator	2014 Value	2018 Value	2014 Rank	2018 Rank
Employment Rate, Young Adult Males (ages 20-24)	77.3	84.8	18	5
Employment Rate, Prime Age Males (ages 25-54)	83.8	91.0	33	9
Employment Rate, Young Adult Females (ages 20-24)	66.1	41.5*	25	49
Employment Rate, Prime Age Females (ages 25-54)	61.5	64.7	34	36
Disconnected Youth (% not in school/not working)	12.6	8.6	8	2
Real HH Income (cost of living adjusted)	\$42,379	\$51,525	34	22
% change real HH income, (1999-2014); (2014-18)	-21.1%	+20.1%	37	4
Hispanic HH Income as % of White Non-Hispanic	67.0	75.7	15	7
Poverty Rate	29.4	22.2	40	31
Hispanic-WNH Poverty Rate Ratio	2.7 to 1	2.3 to 1	20	18
Children's Poverty Rate	41.7	30.0	45	32
% living in extreme poverty	10.6	9.1	30	34
% living in concentrated poverty neighborhoods	22.2	2.6	47	20
Homeownership Rate	40.3	39.7	35	39
% receiving SNAP	26.8	19.9	39	35
% Children without health insurance	6.7	9.3	16	28
% Adults 19-64 without health insurance	40.1	31.2	36	34
Rate of births to teenage mothers	10.0	7.7	16	26
Infant mortality rate	6.0	6.0	30	33
Mortality Rate from Heart Disease	28.5	32.4	13	18

*small sample, very high error margin

Table 6
Hispanic Milwaukee Compares to the “Top Ten Threshold” on
Component Indicators in the Composite Index

Indicator	2018 Value	2018 Rank
Employment Rate, Young Adult Males (ages 20-24)		
Milwaukee	67.6	43
Kansas City	81.7	10
Employment Rate, Prime Age Males (ages 25-54)		
Milwaukee	84.9	38
Portland	90.6	10
Employment Rate, Young Adult Females (ages 20-24)		
Milwaukee	71.9	11
Orlando	71.9	10
Employment Rate, Prime Age Females (ages 25-54)		
Milwaukee	71.2	9
Kansas City	71.0	10
Disconnected Youth (% not in school/not working)		
Milwaukee	15.7	26
Columbus	13.8	10
Real HH Income (cost of living adjusted)		
Milwaukee	\$43,551	43
Austin	\$55,246	10
% change real HH income, 2014-2018		
Milwaukee	+8.6%	35
Columbus	+15.7%	10
Hispanic HH Income as % of White Non-Hispanic		
Milwaukee	58.9	41
Sacramento	74.2	10
Poverty Rate		
Milwaukee	24.3	37
Miami	16.9	10
Hispanic-WNH Poverty Rate Ratio		
Milwaukee	3.4 to 1	44
Los Angeles	2.1 to 1	10
Children’s Poverty Rate		
Milwaukee	30.4	34
San Diego	22.8	10
Percentage living in extreme poverty		
Milwaukee	9.5	38
Los Angeles	7.0	10
Percentage living in concentrated poverty neighborhoods		
Milwaukee	21.9	48
Charlotte	1.8	10

Table 6 (continued)
Hispanic Milwaukee Compared to the “Top Ten Threshold” on
Component Indicators in the Composite Index

Indicator	2018 Value	2018 Rank
Homeownership Rate		
Milwaukee	39.5	40
Salt Lake City	51.2	10
Percentage Receiving SNAP (Food Stamps)		
Milwaukee	30.6	45
Birmingham	14.2	10
Percentage of Children without Health Insurance		
Milwaukee	5.6	18
Chicago	4.3	10
Percentage of Adults without Health Insurance		
Milwaukee	26.3	23
Riverside, CA	18.9	10
Rate of births to teenage mothers		
Milwaukee	8.9	38
Seattle	5.5	10
Infant Mortality Rate		
Milwaukee	5.6	29
Virginia Beach	4.4	10
Mortality Rate from Heart Disease		
Milwaukee	35.3	22
Atlanta	20.2	10

Appendix

How the Composite Index Was Put Together

There are numerous ways that researchers can synthesize multiple indicators into a composite index – an index that, with a single number, conveys the overall status of the phenomenon under investigation. Typically, when researchers assemble “best places to live” indexes, they gather data on a number of variables bearing on quality of life in a city or region, and then choose a technique to standardize those variables into a single index. There are always methodological issues involved: Should variables be weighted? Should statistical techniques be used to account for different “intervals” and “ratios” among the variables? In the last analysis, though, the key issue for a useful index is whether it contains the right component indicators and a sufficient number of them to yield a meaningful final “index number.”

What we have done in this report is construct an index of Hispanic well-being, for the nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas, consisting of 20 indicators (see below). Although the list of indicators we’ve assembled is hardly exhaustive –there are literally hundreds more that could have been chosen—we believe these are the right indicators to convey a solid sense of Hispanic community well-being in the metro areas we have analyzed. In addition, given time constraints and other factors, we have not engaged in variable weighting or rigorous statistical techniques to standardize different kinds of indicators. Rather, we’ve opted for a simple index that takes the ranks among the 50 metro areas, for each indicator, and then aggregates and averages them to produce a final “index number” for each metro. On each indicator, the better the “performance” (e.g. high income, low poverty, or low nonemployment), the higher the rank. To give a highly stylized example, if a metro area had the best performance on every single one of the indicators, the ultimate index number for that metro would be “1;” conversely, a uniformly worst performance for a metro would yield an index number of “50.” Obviously, no metros fall into those extremes, but as Chart 1 above shows, there are clear gradations among the metro areas in their final, aggregate index numbers. In the end, we believe this simple indexing approach yields meaningful findings regarding a hierarchy of metropolitan areas on Hispanic community well-being.

The Composite Index of Hispanic Well-Being in Large Metro Areas: 2020 Update

Here are the indicators used to calculate the index:

1. Trends in Hispanic real household income. (Percentage change in Hispanic household income since 2014, adjusted for inflation, from U.S. Census data). 2014-2018
2. Hispanic household income, adjusted for differences in metro area cost-of-living. The cost-of-living adjustment was calculated using the U.S. Department of Commerce's "Regional Price Parities" data-base. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018
3. Hispanic-WNH Income Inequality: Hispanic household income as a percentage of white non-Hispanic (WNH) income. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
4. Poverty rate (Percentage of Hispanics with income below the poverty level). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
5. Hispanic-WNH poverty rate ratio. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
6. Extreme poverty rate (Percentage of Hispanics with household income below 50% of the official poverty rate). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
7. Concentrated poverty rate (Percentage of Hispanics living in neighborhoods in which 40% or more of all residents are poor). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2017.
8. Children's poverty rate (Percentage of Hispanics under 18 years old living in households with income below the poverty line). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
9. Food stamps (Percentage of Hispanics receiving support from SNAP). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
10. Homeownership (Percentage of Hispanics who own their home). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
11. Employment Rate, Young Adult Males (Percentage of Hispanic males, ages 20-24, who are employed. This is also called by economists the Employment-Population ratio). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
12. Employment Rate, Prime Working-Age Males (Percentage of Hispanic males, ages 25-54, who are employed). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
13. Employment Rate, Young Adult Females (Percentage of Hispanic females, ages 20-24, who are employed). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
14. Employment Rate, Prime Working-Age Females (Percentage of Hispanic females, ages 25-54, who are employed). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.

15. Disconnected Youth (Percentage of Hispanics between the ages of 16-24, not employed and not in school). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2017.
16. Children's Health Insurance (Percentage of Hispanics age 18 and under, without health insurance coverage). U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2018.
17. Adult Health Insurance (Percentage of Hispanics, ages 19-64, without health insurance).
18. Hispanic mortality rates (per 100,000 population) from Heart Disease. Central counties of the metropolitan areas. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2010-2017.
19. Hispanic infant mortality rates (per 1,000 live births). Central counties of the metropolitan areas. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2010-2017.
20. Hispanic teen birthrates. (Percentage of all Hispanic births to teenage mothers). Central counties of metropolitan areas. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2016-18.

**Performance on Index Indicators for Hispanics
in the M-7 Counties of the Milwaukee Region**

Note: Employment data for Hispanics is not available for any of the M-7 counties except Milwaukee County.

Median Household Income: 2018

County	Hispanic Household Income
Kenosha	\$50,000
Milwaukee	\$38,911
Ozaukee	\$74,595
Racine	\$47,167
Walworth	\$50,536
Washington	\$49,779
Waukesha	\$62,125

Hispanic Household Income as % of White Non-Hispanic: 2018

County	Hispanic HH Income as % of WNH
Kenosha	77.3
Milwaukee	63.8
Ozaukee	90.0
Racine	68.8
Walworth	81.0
Washington	66.6
Waukesha	73.5

Hispanic Poverty Rates: 2018
(% Hispanics living below official poverty line)

County	Hispanic Poverty Rate
Kenosha	21.6
Milwaukee	26.5
Ozaukee	11.5
Racine	18.2
Walworth	17.5
Washington	11.2
Waukesha	11.9

Percentage of Hispanics Living in Extreme Poverty: 2018
 (% living in households with less than 50% of poverty-level income)

County	Extreme Poverty Rate
Kenosha	8.2
Milwaukee	10.4
Ozaukee	N/A
Racine	7.4
Walworth	N/A
Washington	4.9
Waukesha	4.0

Hispanic-WNH Disparities in Poverty Rate: 2018
 (ratio of Hispanic poverty rate to WNH rate)

County	Hispanic-WNH Poverty Rate Ratio
Kenosha	2.1 to 1
Milwaukee	2.6 to 1
Ozaukee	2.1 to 1
Racine	2.3 to 1
Walworth	1.7 to 1
Washington	2.5 to 1
Waukesha	2.8 to 1

Hispanic Homeownership Rates: 2018
 (% Hispanics living in owner-occupied housing)

County	Hispanic Homeownership Rate
Kenosha	45.8
Milwaukee	37.5
Ozaukee	44.3
Racine	41.5
Walworth	49.5
Washington	48.2
Waukesha	53.2

Hispanics Receiving SNAP Assistance: 2018
 (% of Hispanics receiving food stamps)

County	% of Hispanics with SNAP assistance
Kenosha	21.3
Milwaukee	32.9
Ozaukee	13.3
Racine	32.8
Walworth	28.9
Washington	14.5
Waukesha	17.2

Hispanic Children With No Health Insurance
 (% of Hispanics 18 and under without health insurance coverage)

County	% Hispanic Children Uninsured
Kenosha	7.1
Milwaukee	5.9
Ozaukee	0.0
Racine	5.7
Walworth	11.7
Washington	4.7
Waukesha	4.3

Hispanic Adults With No Health Insurance
 (% of Hispanics, ages 19-64, without health insurance coverage)

County	% Hispanic Adults Uninsured
Kenosha	25.0
Milwaukee	28.2
Ozaukee	19.1
Racine	20.3
Walworth	37.8
Washington	18.0
Waukesha	14.7

Hispanic Infant Mortality Rates: 2010-2017
(death rate per 1,000)

County	Hispanic Infant Mortality Rate
Kenosha	N/A
Milwaukee	5.63
Ozaukee	N/A
Racine	N/A
Walworth	N/A
Washington	N/A
Waukesha	6.33*

*Estimated rate deemed “unreliable” by the CDC

Hispanic Mortality Rates from Heart Disease: 2010-2017
(death rate per 1,000)

County	Hispanic Coronary Mortality Rate
Kenosha	20.9
Milwaukee	35.3
Ozaukee	N/A
Racine	43.5
Walworth	N/A
Washington	N/A
Waukesha	25.3

Hispanic Teenage Birthrates: 2016-2018
(teen mother % of Hispanic births)

County	Hispanic Teenage Birth Rate
Kenosha	7.3
Milwaukee	8.9
Ozaukee	N/A
Racine	10.2
Walworth	6.4
Washington	N/A
Waukesha	5.4