

Executive Summary to W.K. Kellogg Foundation:  
The State of the Latino Family - National Survey of Latinos

---

**Latino**  **Decisions**

November 1, 2014

## **I. Project Description**

The State of the Latino Family 2014 Survey is a component of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's (WKKF) *America Healing* effort to promote racial healing and equity. The initiative includes a series of four quantitative studies of largest racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States. The survey research is built upon the premise that distinctive group perspectives and experiences merit singular, nuanced attention.

Between September 19th and October 15, 2014, Latino Decisions interviewed one-thousand Latino adults who reside in the United States to take the pulse of Latino families on a wide range of consequential and timely topics. Survey questions fell into the following categories: demographic, social progress, education, economic conditions, health, and Latino-specific content. The size and scope of the survey allows for a broad evaluation of Latino public opinion, while also permitting extensive within-group analysis of the very diverse Latino community.

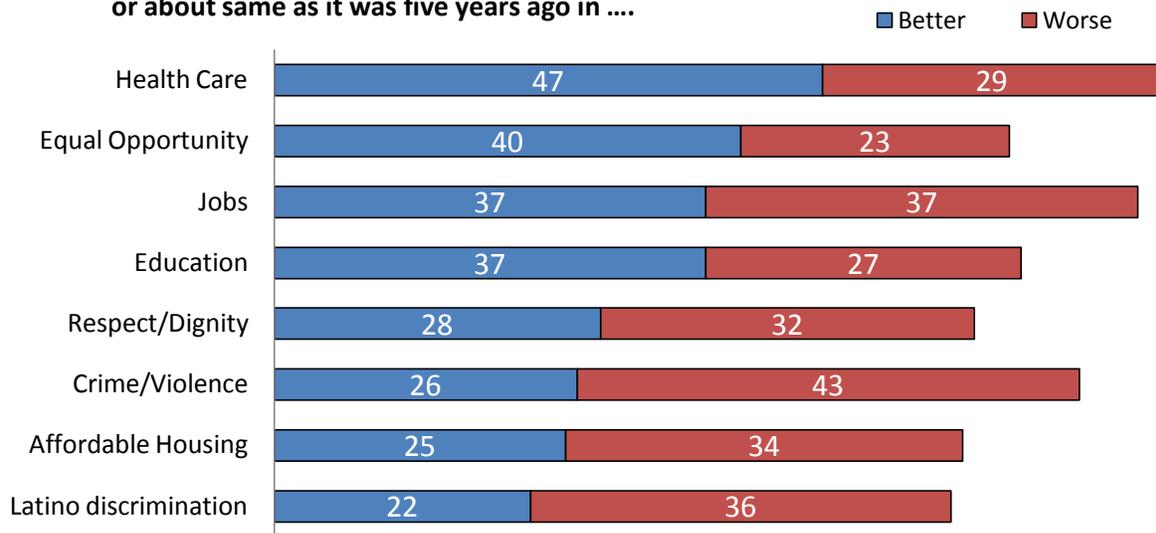
## **II. Key Findings: Optimism, Mitigating Factors, and Enduring Ethnic Ties**

Despite a keen awareness of discrimination and various inequities in American life, Latinos remain optimistic and hopeful about the future by many measures. While this overall trend holds throughout virtually all of the survey, there are important -- often counterintuitive -- differences by demographic groups that underscore the complexity of the Latino experience in the United States today. Immigrants are especially hopeful about the opportunities in their new home country, while those who have lived in the United States are most prone to express disappointment with persistent inequality and diminishing opportunities.

### **1. Social Progress: Optimism and Generational Differences**

On the whole, Latinos display guarded optimism regarding the extent to which opportunity and social conditions have improved (Figure 1). Specifically, Latinos see more progress on health care access, equal opportunity, and education. Significantly more believe things are getting worse when it comes to violence and crime, affordable housing, and discrimination against Latinos and immigrants.

**Figure 1. Do you believe the country is getting better, worse, or about same as it was five years ago in ....**

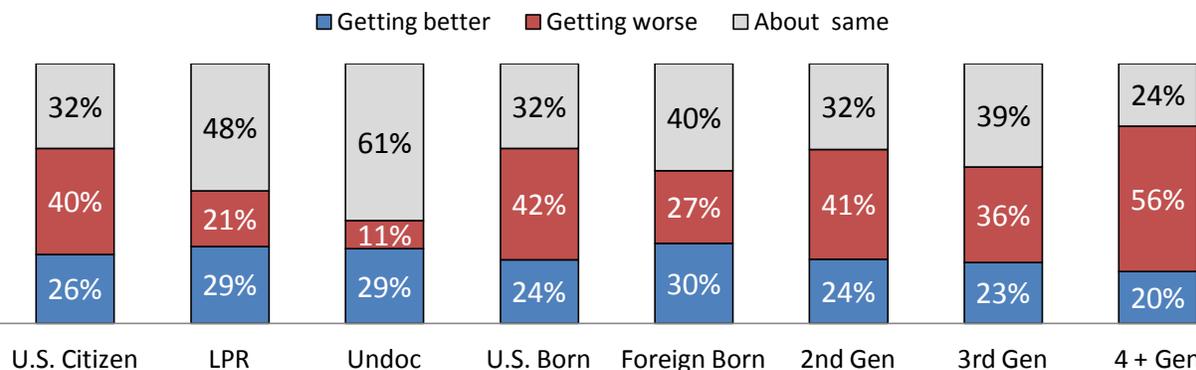


Source: WKKF State of the Latino Family (2014), N=1,000 (MOE +/- 3.1%)

Optimism runs highest (47%) on health care access improvements and lowest (22%) on discrimination against Latinos. There is significant pessimism about crime, where 43% of Latinos see it getting worse.

A more detailed evaluation of these trends shows that perspectives about progress are differentiated by generational and socioeconomic differences (particularly education and income). Illustrated in Figure 2 below, Latinos newer to the United States consistently exhibit the most optimism about economic opportunities and social progress in America. More education, income, and time in the U.S. are all associated with higher degrees of pessimism about these conditions.

**Figure 2. Do you believe the country is getting better, worse, or about same as it was five years ago in creating/providing access to well-paying jobs?**

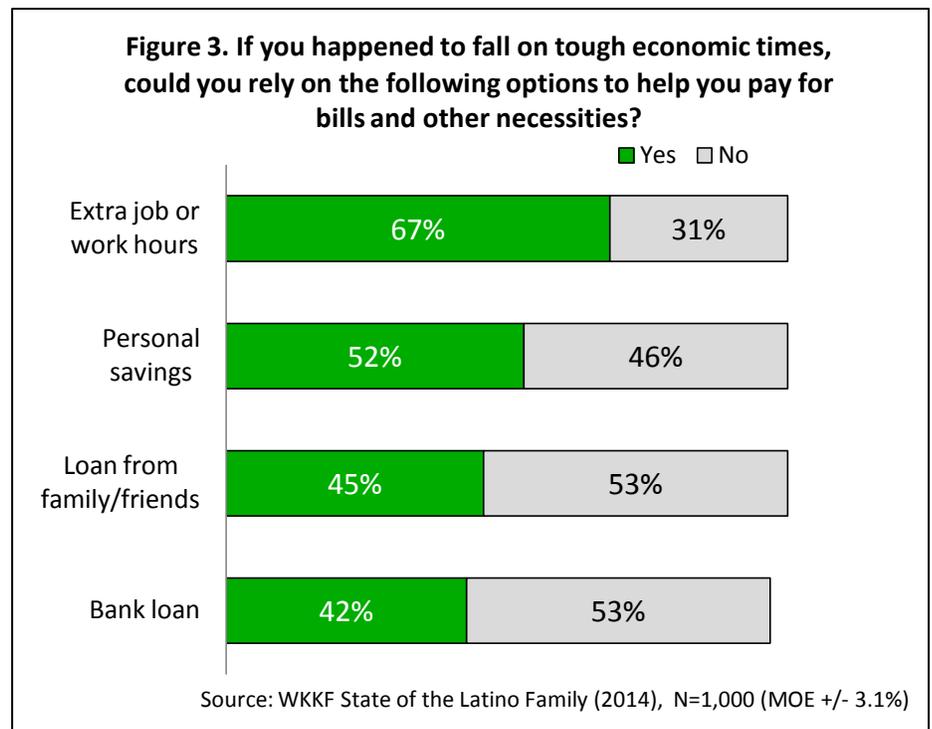


Source: WKKF State of the Latino Family (2014), N=1,000 (MOE +/- 3.1%)

## 2. Economic Fragility

Optimism about personal finances and future opportunities runs high. When asked, "How optimistic are you about the future of your finances and the opportunities that may lie ahead" 73% are optimistic, with 28% "very optimistic; only 25% are not optimistic and only 10% are "not all optimistic". Interestingly, the two groups most optimistic about their financial futures are undocumented immigrants (86%) and those at the highest income range (81% of those earning over \$75,000 annually).

The realities of economic fragility though are evident when probed further about viable options when hard times hit (Figure 3). Two-thirds indicate that they would turn to themselves, taking on more work or an additional job to compensate for income gaps to meet basic needs. While half say they have personal savings to deal with such circumstances, 53% also report they could not rely on a loan from a bank, nor a personal loan from family or friends.



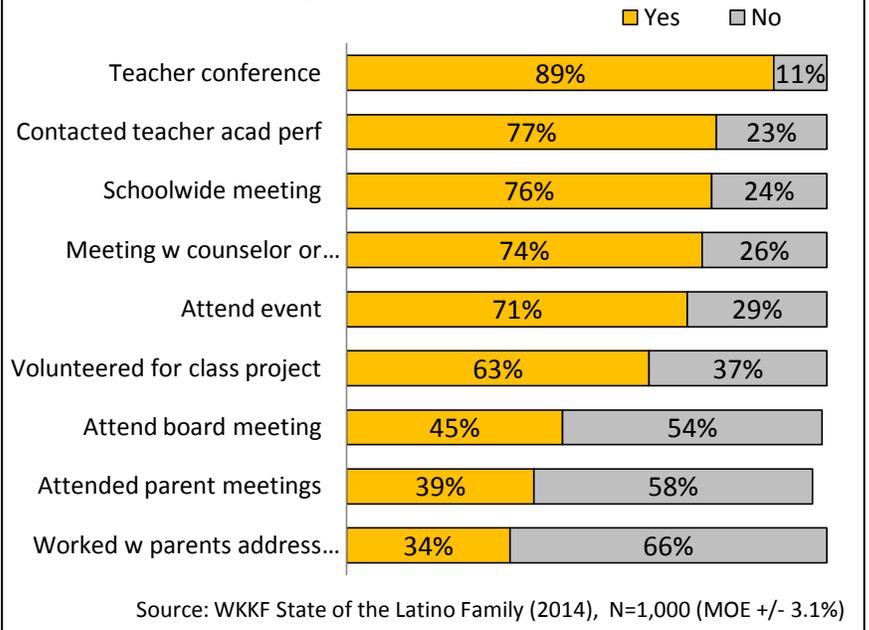
Latinas are particularly vulnerable to economic troubles, more than half indicate they could not draw from personal savings (54%), secure a bank loan (53%) or borrow from family or friends (56%) to make up for income losses. Among men, 73% could take on another job or more work hours, but significantly fewer Latinas (61%) can do the same.

## 3. Education: Engagement and Barriers

Most Latino respondents (66%) and parents with children in particular (77%), believe that the schools in their communities are providing a quality education. The vast majority of parents whose children are in grades kindergarten through second grade are making this evaluation based on not only their child's experience, but also their personal engagement with the schools (Figure 4).

Well over 60% of Latino parents are attending parent-teacher conferences, attending school functions, volunteering at the schools, and working with administrators and teachers. Less than half are attending board meetings or working with parents on problem solving -- both of which are more time-intensive types of participation. Language and citizenship differences are significant barriers where Spanish dominant and non-citizen parents are less engaged than their English dominant and U.S. citizen counterparts.

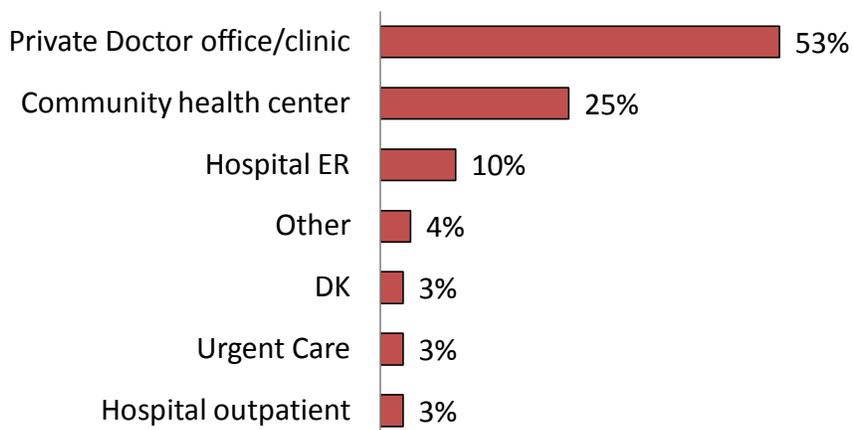
**Figure 4. Have you ever participated in any of the following? (Parents K-2nd)**



#### 4. Health

Most respondents view the state of their health in a positive light, 63% say they are in good, very good, or excellent health. Only 24% describe their health as "fair", and 12% as "poor". Eighty percent have health care providers who speak Spanish or provide translators, and 94% say their provider is in a convenient location. While most indicate

**Figure 5. If you are ill/sick where do you usually seek health care?**

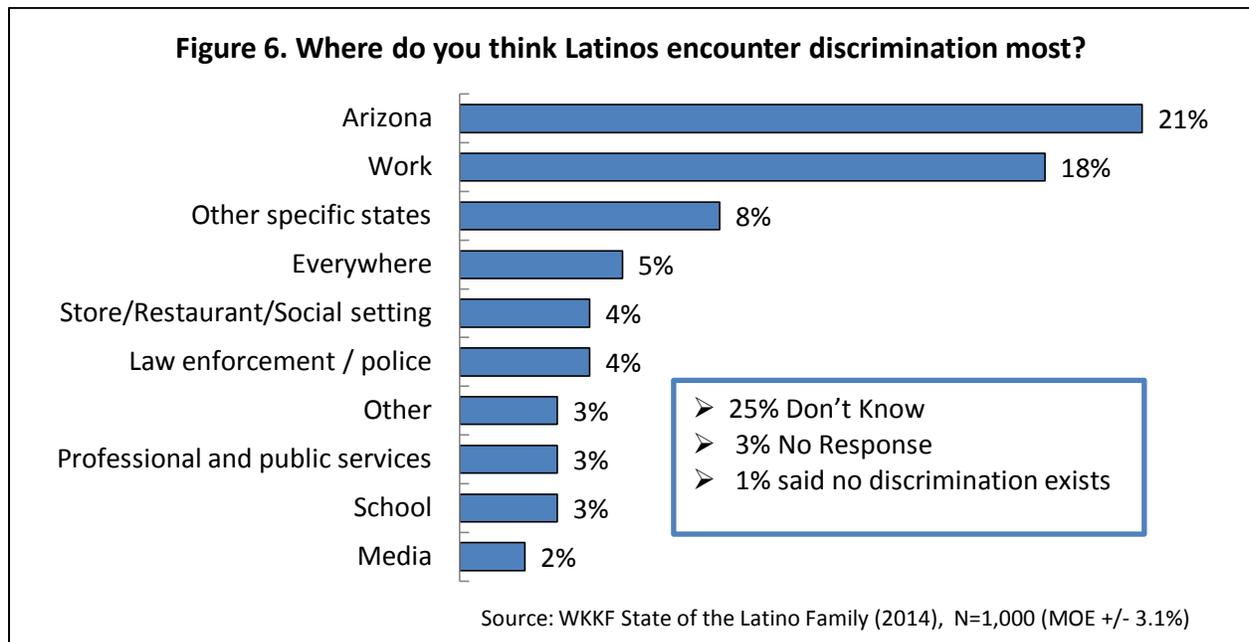


Source: WKKF State of the Latino Family (2014), N=1,000 (MOE +/- 3.1%)

they have health insurance coverage (75%), it is striking that over 40% usually seek medical care outside of a doctor's office (Figure 5). Specifically: 53% see providers in a doctor's office or private clinic, 25% at community health centers, and 16% go to hospitals or urgent care centers most often for health care.

## 5. Latino Experience in the United States

Across demographic groups, there is a clear sense that Latinos are targets of discrimination and unfair treatment in society. The vast majority (68%) are concerned that law enforcement will use excessive force against Latinos. When asked where Latinos encounter discrimination most, only 1% of respondents said that there is none; a striking 21% answered "Arizona" (Figure 6).



## Conclusions

There is a strong sense, across the board, that Latinos will have better opportunities if barriers to education and the workplace are broken down and Latinos are encouraged and welcome to participate in all aspects of American life. The study reveals that barriers to these opportunities often vary depending upon socioeconomic resources, gender, or time in the United States. Latinos understand that discrimination and inequalities specifically targeting them as a group persist, yet are hopeful about what the future holds.

## III. Methodology

Between September 19th and October 15, 2014 Latino Decisions interviewed one thousand Latino adults living in the United States. All surveys were completed via live person-to-person telephone calls (i.e. no robocalls) including both mobile numbers and landlines. Phone numbers were randomly selected from a Latino probability sample. Interviewers were fully bilingual, and conducted surveys in English or Spanish, according to the respondent's choice.