

**The First Year of Latino COVID-19 Deaths:
Why Should Anyone Care?**

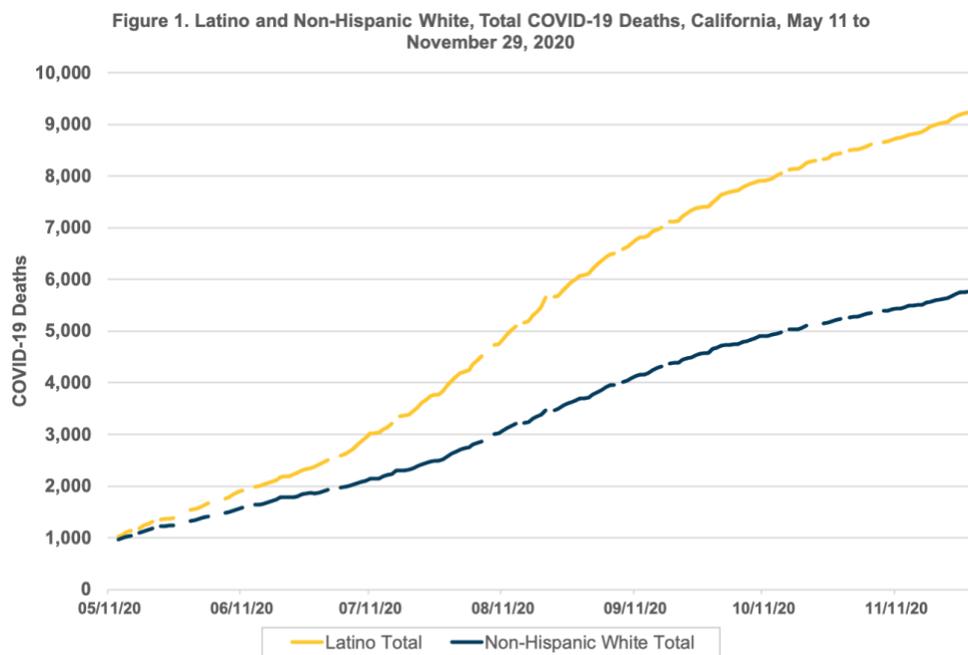
David E. Hayes-Bautista, Ph.D., Giselle D. Hernandez, Paul Hsu,
M.P.H., Ph.D.

Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture
UCLA Health

The First Year of Latino COVID-19 Deaths: Why Should Anyone Care?

During its first year, the coronavirus has ravaged Latino families and communities in California and the United States far more than it has non-Latino populations.

How much worse has it been? Figure 1 illustrates the death gap between two populations of nearly the same size in California: Latinos (15.5 million) and non-Hispanic whites (14.5 million). From May 11 to November 29, 9,233 Latinos died from COVID-19–related causes, compared to 5,781 non-Hispanic whites. This death gap is similar for Latinos across the United States.



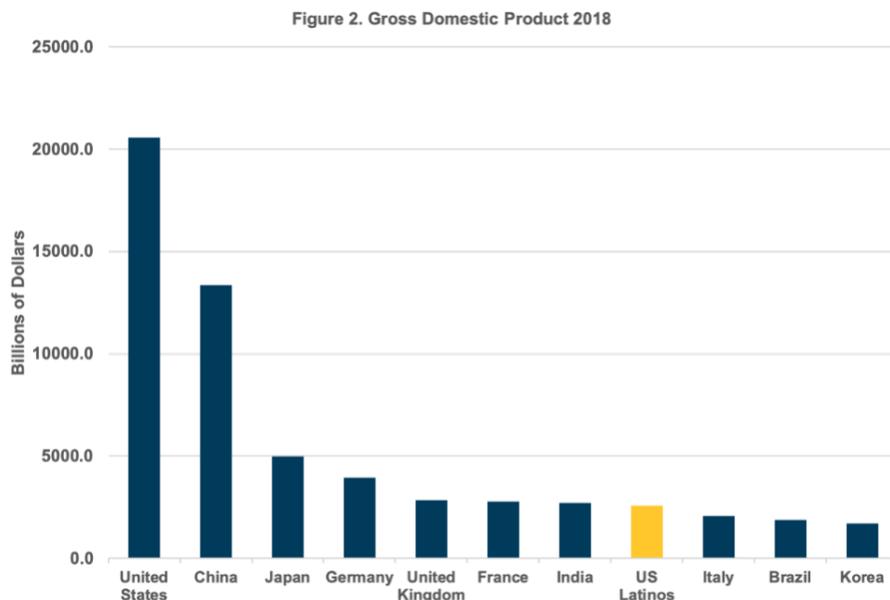
Source: California Department of Public Health, May 11, 2020 to November 29, 2020.

Yet why should anyone care that more Latinos died due to COVID-19–related causes than non-Hispanic whites did?

The U.S. Latino Gross Domestic Product

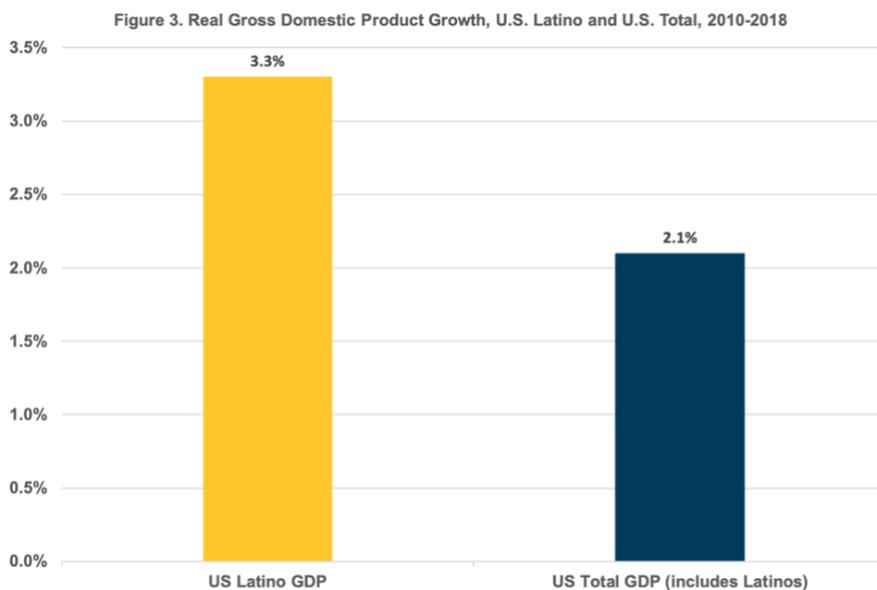
Anyone interested in restoring the United States' Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate to healthy levels should care deeply about the threat that the coronavirus poses to the fastest-growing segment of the nation's GDP: the U.S. Latino Gross Domestic Product.

By 2018, the 60 million Latinos living in the U.S. had created the world’s eighth-largest GDP: \$2.6 trillion. This is larger than the GDPs of Italy, Brazil, South Korea, or Russia. The U.S. Latino GDP ranks in the top ten GDPs in the world. See Figure 2.



Source: Hamilton, Fienup, Hayes-Bautista & Hsu. 2020 US Latino GDP Report: Quantifying the New American Economy. Center for Economic Research and Forecasting, California Lutheran University.

Moreover, the U.S. Latino GDP, the eighth-largest in the world, has been growing robustly for nearly a decade. From 2010 to 2018, the U.S. Latino GDP had an annual growth rate of 3.3%, while the non-Latino share of the U.S. GDP had a weaker growth rate: 2.1% See Figure 3.

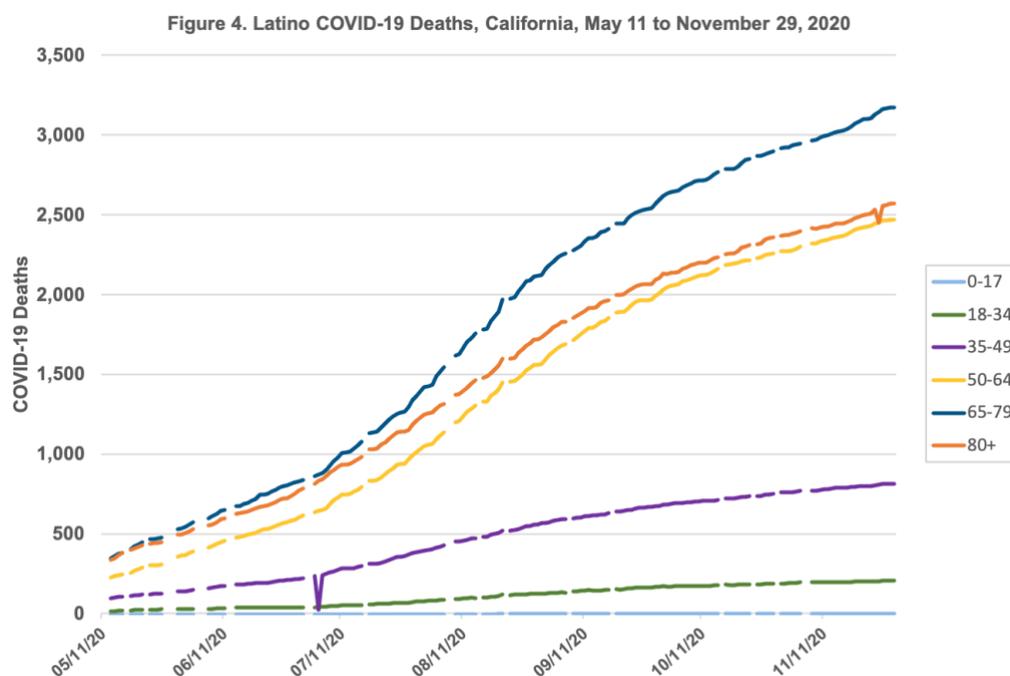


Source: Hamilton, Fienup, Hayes-Bautista & Hsu. 2020 US Latino GDP Report: Quantifying the New American Economy. Center for Economic Research and Forecasting, California Lutheran University.

COVID-19 Attacks the U.S. Latino GDP

Hard work, strong families, self-sufficiency, business friendliness, healthy behaviors, patriotism: these were the values cherished by Latino adults during the 1990s and early 2000s as they laid the foundations of what became the world's eighth-largest economy by 2018.

But now the coronavirus is attacking the very generations who built that economy. As seen in Figure 4, Latino adults in their prime working years have suffered far more deaths than younger Latinos.



Source: California Department of Public Health, May 11, 2020 to November 29, 2020.

Why Everyone Should Care about Latino COVID-19–Associated Deaths

When the U.S. economy is growing rapidly, nearly everyone benefits. But when the economic growth rate is anemic—or even worse, negative—nearly everyone suffers. The U.S. Latino GDP is essential to strong overall U.S. GDP growth.

Therefore, when COVID-19 is disproportionately killing Latino workers in their most productive years, everyone should care about COVID-19's effects on the Latino population.

This is not a “Latino issue.” It is everyone’s issue.

* * *

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.... Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee. —John Donne

References

Data on COVID-19 deaths, stratified by race/ethnicity and by age group, were furnished by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) between May 11 and November 29, 2020.

Dan Hamilton, Matthew Fienup, David E. Hayes-Bautista, Paul Hsu, 2020 US Latino GDP Report: Quantifying the New American Economy. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Center for Economic Research and Forecasting, California Lutheran University, 2020).

ABOUT CESLAC

Since 1992, UCLA Health's Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture (CESLAC) has provided cutting-edge, fact-based research, education, and public information about Latinos, their health, their history, and their roles in California's society and economy.

For more information, or to arrange a telephone interview with the Center's Director, David E. Hayes-Bautista, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Medicine, please contact Adriana Valdez, at (310) 794-0663 or cesla@ucla.edu.