

Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers:

A Profile of Latina Voters in Connecticut



About the Authors

This report was primarily written by Jennifer Hinojosa, a research affiliate to the University of Connecticut's Puerto Rican Studies Initiative. Charles R. Venator-Santiago, Director of the Puerto Rican Studies Initiative made minor edits to this report. This report is a collaboration by Women At The Table - Connecticut and the University of Connecticut's Puerto Rican Studies Initiative.

About this Report

Latina women in the state of Connecticut have a low rate of participation in local elections. This report examines available socio-economic data that may provide an explanation for the low voter participation rates among Latinas. The report documents the persistent socio-economic inequalities that likely explain the low participation rates among Latinas in the state of Connecticut and in the city of Hartford.

Where Did We Get Our Information From?

Data for this report was compiled from the 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates). The previous year's data is generally accessible to the public by November of each year.

Empowering Latina Voters in Connecticut - A WATT CT Initiative

WATT CT is a beacon of hope and action for gender equity. The organization thrives on empowering women through educational seminars, professional development events, and scholarships. We focus on creating platforms for women to engage in current issues, especially in elected positions, and provide a supportive network for women regardless of age, race, creed, color, religious belief, sexual orientation, sexual identity, or national origin. Our guiding principle is simple yet profound – ensuring that there is always a Woman At The Table.

WATT CT's objective for this year is to highlight the role of Latina women in Connecticut politics. We hope to increase their participation in elected positions, and decision-making roles by leveraging our wide network and resources. Our initiatives will focus on hosting targeted seminars and development programs that cater specifically to the needs and aspirations of Latina women, fostering leadership and informed participation in governance.

The data on Latina voters is a crucial tool for understanding the specific barriers and opportunities unique to this group. In Connecticut, Latina women face distinct challenges that influence their political engagement and perspectives, and their ability to go out and vote. This data empowers WATT CT to craft targeted and effective strategies, ensuring our initiatives resonate deeply with Latina voters and effectively address their specific needs and aspirations.

Our ambition with Latina voting in Connecticut is twofold: to significantly boost their voter turnout and to encourage their active pursuit of elected offices. We aim to dismantle barriers to political participation and leadership for Latina women, thereby enriching Connecticut's political landscape with diverse, informed, and dynamic female voices.

WATT CT is dedicated to creating a future where gender equality is not just an ideal but a reality, especially in the political domain. The data provided on Latina voters in Connecticut is invaluable, guiding our efforts to champion their rights and representation in the political arena. Together, we can ensure that the voice of every woman, particularly Latina women, is influential and valued in shaping our community's future.

Thank you for your attention to this critical initiative.

Sincerely,



Maly D Rosado
President & Founder of WATT CT

The State of Latinas in Connecticut and Hartford City

Latinas in Hartford City experienced more pronounced economic and social disparities compared to females in the state and across the country. These disparities can be observed in various aspects like median wage gaps, occupation, educational attainment, poverty/income, disability, and access to health care.

Connecticut is the 9th state with the largest Latino/a population in 2022, with a population size of 658,978. In the same year, 18.2 percent of Connecticut's total population identified as Latino/a, with Latinas representing 9 percent of the state's population. In Hartford City, Latinos/as accounted for 44.8 percent of the city's overall population, or a population size of 54,050. Latinas made up 24 percent of the city's population.

Population Outlook

Connecticut's female population saw a slight increase from 1,837,552 in 2021 to 1,849,516 in 2022, representing a 1 percent change. In contrast, Hartford City's female population declined from 60,484 to 60,592, reflecting a decline of 5 percent change during the same period. Among the Latina population in the state of Connecticut, this group experienced a modest growth of 4 percent, rising from 321,817 in 2021 to 333,324 in 2022. Conversely, the number of Latinas in Hartford City declined by 9 percent, dropping from 31,351 in 2021 to 28,609 in 2022. Thus, trends at the state and citywide levels show similarities between the overall female population and the Latina population.

In 2022, Latinas accounted for 18.2 percent of Connecticut's female population, which remained consistent from 2021. In contrast, Latinas in Hartford City comprised 47 percent of the city's female population, a decline from 2021 when they constituted 52 percent of the city's female population. Despite this decline, it remains crucial to recognize the continued impact of Latina constituents in Hartford on local politics and governance, emphasizing the importance of addressing the needs and interests of the Latina community. More importantly, we must engage with Latina citizen voting age population.

Citizen Voting Age Population

Citizen Voting Age population (CVAP) consists of eligible voters who are 18 years and over and either natural citizens (either U.S. born or born abroad to U.S. parents) or naturalized citizens born outside of the U.S. who have fulfilled the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act. As mentioned earlier, the Latino/a population constitutes 18.2 percent (658,978) of the state's total population, and out of this, only 366,618 were eligible to vote (CVAP) in 2022, amounting to approximately 14 percent of the state's overall population. In Hartford City, Latinos/as represent 44.8 percent (54,040) of the city's population, and among them, only 31,815 were eligible to vote, accounting for 26 percent of the city's overall population.

Overall CVAP Population

In 2022, approximately 74 percent of the state's population were eligible to vote, while the percentage was lower at 65 percent for Hartford City. Although there were no significant changes in the CVAP at the state level between 2021 and 2022, Hartford City experienced a slight decline of 5 percent in its CVAP population, dropping from 79,138 to 78,626 (See Table 1).

CVAP by Race/Ethnicity

Table 1 presents the distribution of the Latino/a, Black or African American, and non-Hispanic White populations among the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) in both the state and city levels for 2021 and 2022. In 2022, the non-Hispanic white population had the highest proportion of eligible voters at 69 percent, followed by Latino/as at 14 percent and Blacks or African Americans at 10 percent. There was no significant change between 2021 and 2022 among CVAP by race/ethnicity (see Table 1). Conversely, the largest proportion of eligible voters were among Latino/as population with 40 percent in 2022, followed by Black or African Americans (34 percent) and non-Hispanic whites (21 percent) in the city of Hartford.

Table 1. Latinos, Non-Hispanic Whites, and Blacks Share of the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP), Connecticut and Hartford City, 2021 to 2022

	CONNECTICUT				HARTFORD CITY			
	2021		2022		2021		2022	
Total Population	3,605,597		3,626,205		120,593		120,682	
Total Population CVAP	2,659,979		2,668,407		79,138		78,626	
Black or African American alone	266,552	10%	262,563	10%	29,310	37%	26,969	34%
Hispanic or Latino	359,450	14%	366,618	14%	34,194	43%	31,815	40%
White alone, Not Hispanic or Latino	1,857,230	70%	1,853,376	69%	14,486	18%	16,232	21%

Source: 2021 & 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

CVAP by Race/Ethnicity & Sex

Table 2 also displays the distribution of the Latino/a, Black or African American, and non-Hispanic White populations among the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) at both the state and city levels for 2021 and 2022. In Connecticut, non-Hispanic whites constituted 36 percent of eligible voters, while Latinas (5 percent) and Black or African American females (5 percent) accounted for a combined 10 percent in 2022. There were no significant changes between 2021 and 2022. However, at the city level, the narrative differs. Latinas (22 percent) and Black or African American females (19 percent) have a higher proportion of eligible voters compared to non-Hispanic white females (10 percent). In terms of change, non-Hispanic white females showed a slight increase of eligible voters from 8 percent in 2021 to 10 percent in 2022. On the other hand, both Latinas showed a slight decline from 24 percent to 22 percent.

Table 2. Latinos, Non-Hispanic Whites, and Blacks by Sex: Share of the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP), Connecticut and Hartford City, 2021 to 2022

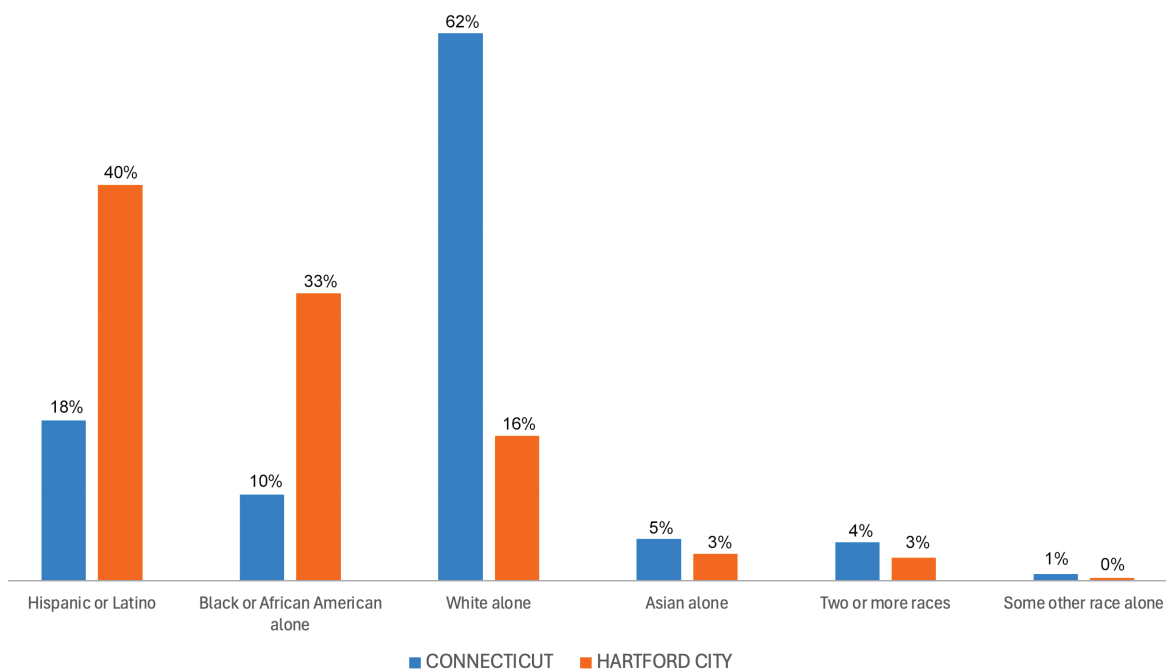
	CONNECTICUT				HARTFORD CITY			
	2021		2022		2021		2022	
Total Population	3,605,597		3,626,205		120,593		120,682	
Total Population CVAP	2,659,979		2,668,407		79,138		78,626	
Black or African American alone	266,552		262,563		29,310		26,969	
Male	124,130	5%	123,801	5%	14,673	19%	11,830	15%
Females	142,422	5%	138,762	5%	14,637	18%	15,139	19%
Hispanic or Latino	359,450		366,618		34,194		31,815	
Male	173,247	7%	173,657	7%	15,586	20%	14,579	19%
Females	186,203	7%	192,961	7%	18,608	24%	17,236	22%
White alone, Not Hispanic or Latino	1,857,230		1,853,376		14,486		16,232	
Male	905,153	34%	898,167	34%	7,795	10%	8,323	11%
Females	952,077	36%	955,209	36%	6,691	8%	7,909	10%

Source: 2021 & 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates)

Race/Ethnicity

In 2022, the city of Hartford had a diverse population composition. Latinos comprised the largest ethnic group, accounting for 44.8 percent (54,050) of the city's overall population. Additionally, 33 percent of the population identified as Black or African Americans (39,245), 16 percent as Whites (19,835), and 6 percent as Asians (3,711) or individuals of two or more races (3,200). At the state level, the population composition showed different proportions. Whites (2,246,913) accounted for 62 percent of the state's population, followed by Latinos/as (658,978) at 18.2 percent, Black or African Americans (353,973) at 10 percent, Asians (172,929) at 5 percent, and the remaining 5 percent identifying as two or more races (159,631) or some other race alone (29,761).

Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

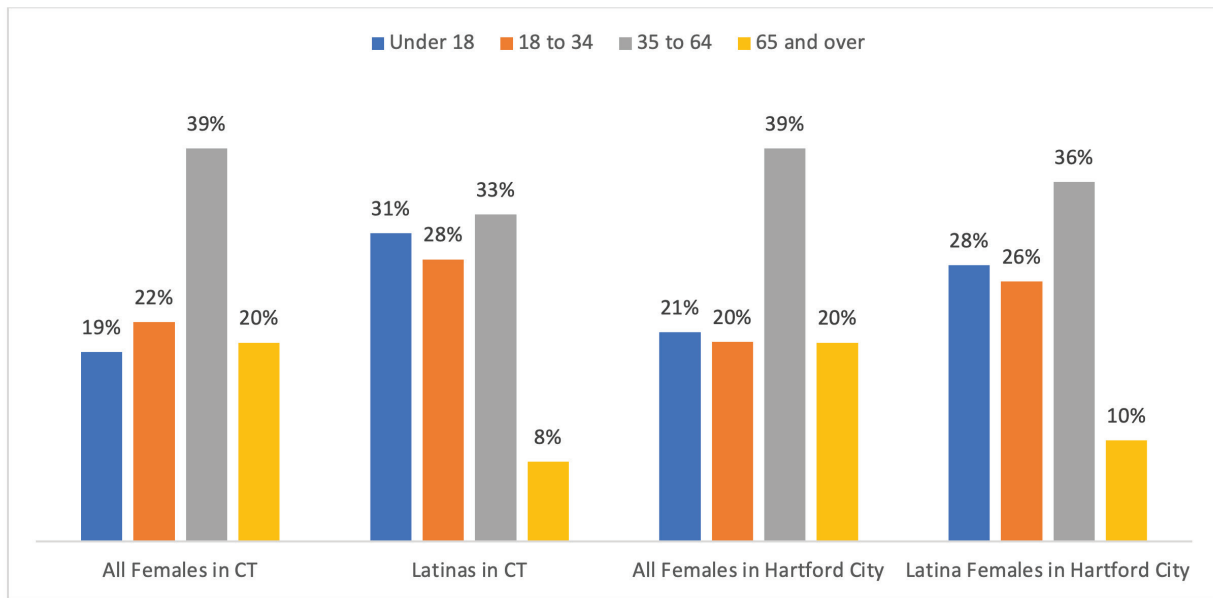
Demographics

In 2022, over a third of Hartford City's Latina population (36 percent) were between the ages of 35 to 64 years, this was slightly lower compared to the city's overall female population (39 percent).

The 18 to 34 age group, commonly known as young adults, was primarily associated with entering the workforce, pursuing higher education, getting married, or starting a family (Benetsky, Burd, and Rapino 2015).¹ In Hartford City, Latinas in this age group constitute 26 percent, which is 6 percentage points higher than the overall female population (20 percent) in the city.

¹Benetsky, Megan, Charlynn A. Burd, and Melanie A. Rapino. (2015). Young Adult Migration: 2007-2009 to 2010-12. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Reports. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/acs/acs-31.pdf>

Figure 2. Age Composition among all Females and Latina Females in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

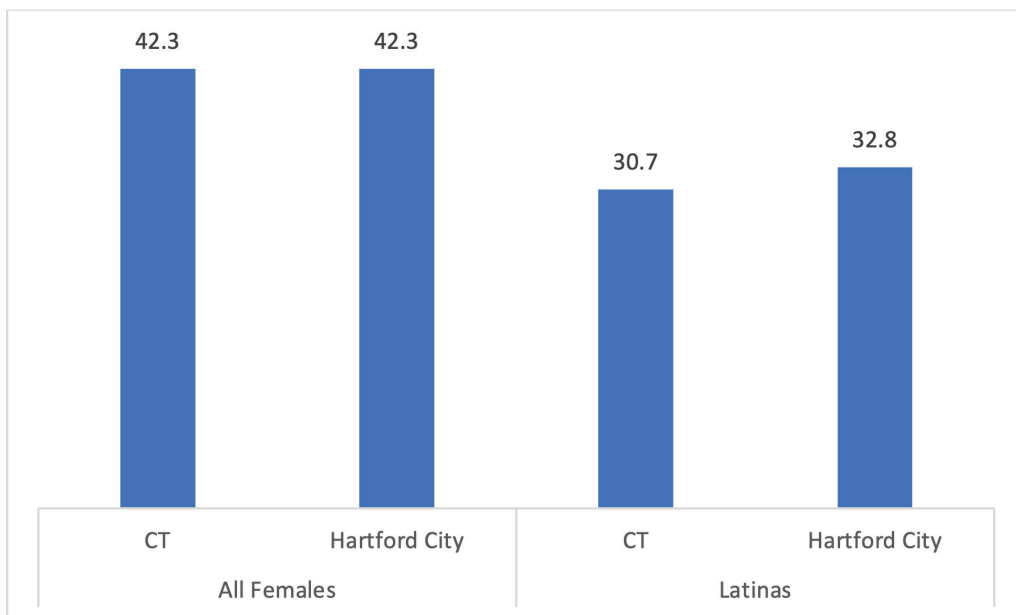


Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Median Age

In 2022, the Latina population in Hartford City was relatively younger, with a median age of 32.8 years, compared to the overall female population of Hartford City (42.3 years) and the state’s overall female population (42.3 years).

Figure 3. Median Age Among Females in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

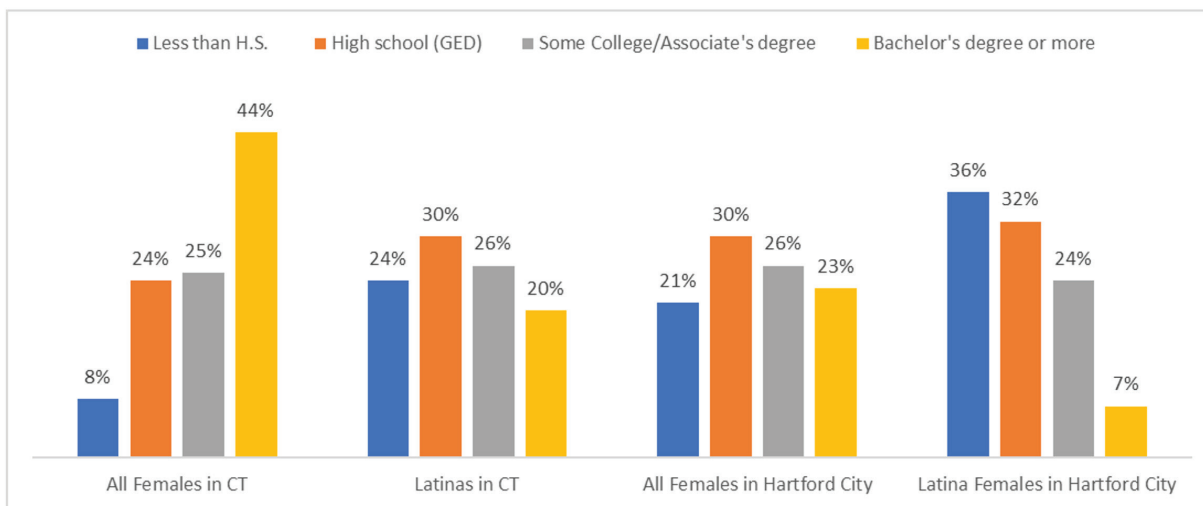


Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Educational Attainment

There is a significant disparity in educational achievement between all females and Latinas in Connecticut and Hartford City. However, educational attainment disparities are even more pronounced in Hartford City. In 2022, at least 36 percent of the Latina population in Hartford City had less than a high school education, followed by 32 percent with a high school education/GED, 24 percent with some college or an associate degree, and the remaining 7 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison, among all females in the state, the trend is reversed, with 44 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher, followed by 25 percent with some college or an associate degree, 24 percent with a high school diploma or GED, and the remaining 8 percent having less than a high school education.

Figure 4. Educational Attainment among All Females and Latinas in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

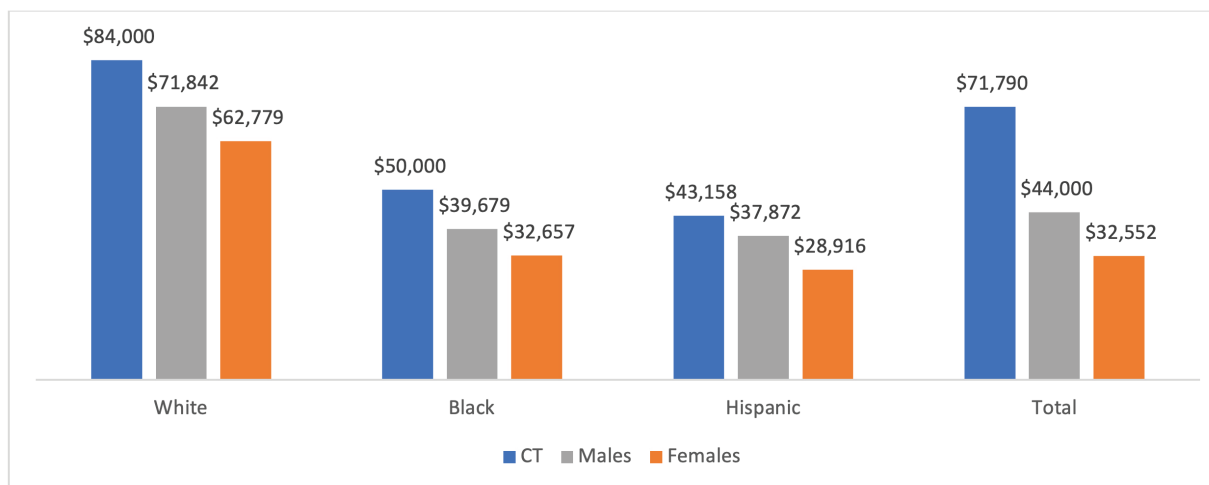


Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Median Household Income

Latinas in Hartford City have the lowest median household income compared to all racial and ethnic groups and their male counterparts. In 2022, their median household income was \$39,000, lower than Black females (\$46,500) and the overall female population (\$45,900). On the other hand, white females have the highest median household income in Hartford City, earning \$50,000, surpassing black and Latina females. Among all groups, white males have the highest median household income, with an income of \$70,000.

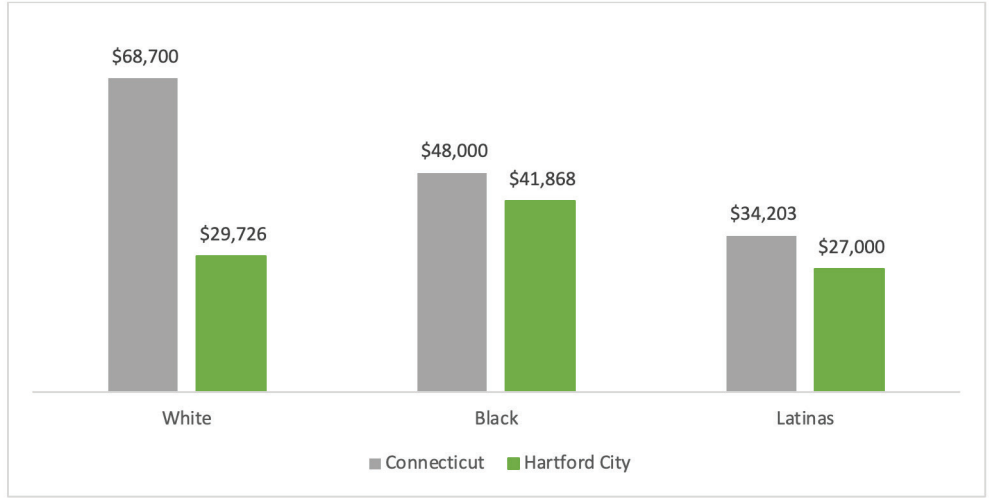
Figure 5. Median Household Income by Sex in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Median household income among female-headed households with children was \$24,400 higher in the state of Connecticut (\$63,000) compared to Hartford City (\$38,600). However, in the city of Hartford, Latina female-headed households had a lower median income (\$24,000) compared to white female-headed households (\$38,600). On the other hand, Black female-headed households had a higher median household income of \$40,000 compared to both Whites and Latinas in Hartford City.

Figure 6. Median Income among Female Headed Households with presence of children in the household in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

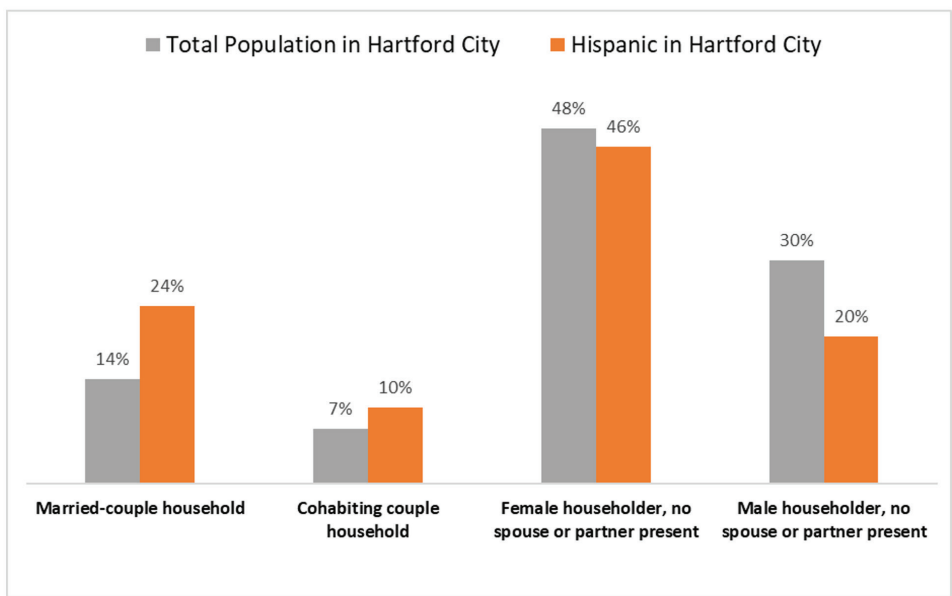


Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Household Type

In 2022, Latinas were more likely to live in married-couple or cohabiting households than the total population counts in the city of Hartford. However, Latina women were more likely to live in households without a spouse or partner. Latina women (46 percent) were more than twice as likely as Latino males (20 percent) to live without a spouse or partner.

Figure 7. Household Type of Hartford City’s Overall and Latino Population, 2022



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Labor Market

Latina women were paid less than men, and the pay gap worsened relative to their counterparts in the state and in Hartford City. Pay equity was a persistent problem between Latinas in Hartford City and all women in the state. The labor force participation rate for Latina women (61 percent) in Hartford City was lower compared to all females in the city (65 percent), all Latina women in the state (64 percent), but the same as that of all women in the state (61 percent).

Latina women in Hartford City were unemployed at a rate of 11 percent, which was about 3 times higher than the unemployment rate among all women in the state (4 percent) and at least two times higher than the unemployment rate among all Latina women in the state (6 percent).

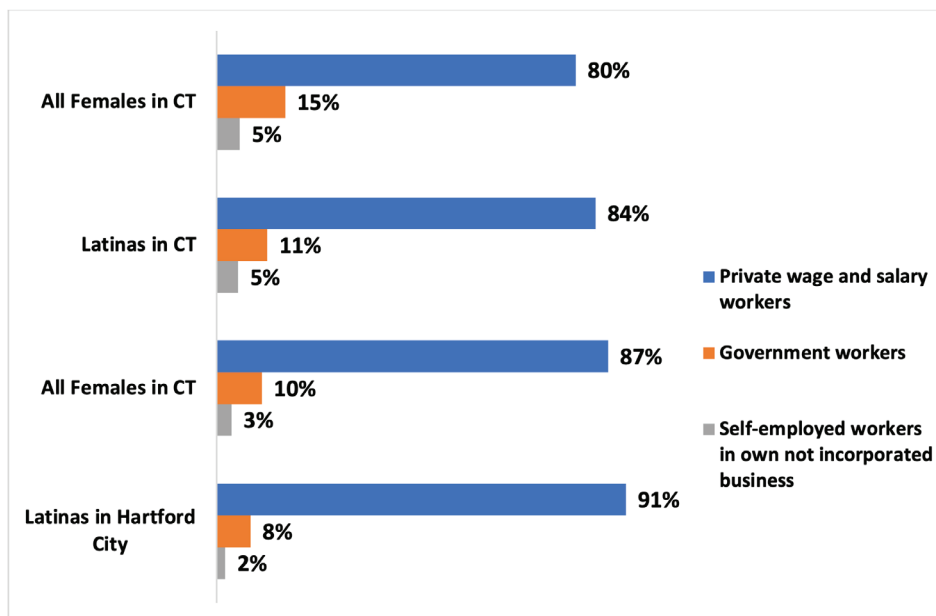
Table 3. Employment Status among Women in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	All Females in CT	Latinas in CT	All Females in Hartford City	Latinas in Hartford City
Females 16 years and over	1,536,317	244,534	49,805	21,212
In labor force	61%	64%	65%	61%
Civilian labor force	61%	64%	65%	60%
Employed	59%	60%	59%	53%
Unemployed	3%	4%	6%	7%
Unemployment Rate	4%	6%	10%	11%

Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

In Hartford City, the majority of Latina females (91 percent) were employed as private wage and salary workers, followed by 8 percent who work in the government sector, and the remaining 2 percent who are self-employed. In comparison to all females in the state (15 percent), Latina females in Hartford City have the lowest rate of employment in the government sector, with only 8 percent. This is lower than the rate among all Latina females in the state (11 percent) and slightly lower than the rate among all females in Hartford City (10 percent).

Figure 8. Employment type among Women in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Occupational segregation, also known as the clustering of women in selected occupations-has contributed to lower median earnings among Latina women in Hartford City. This is seen among Latina women in Hartford City.

In 2022, around one-third (31 percent) of Latina women in Hartford City are employed in service occupations. This is higher than the 17 percent of all women in the state, but similar to the percentage of all females in Hartford City and all Latina women (31 percent) in the state (32 percent). The second largest employment sector among Latina women in Hartford City is sales and office occupations, with approximately 30 percent. This is slightly higher than the percentage of all females in Hartford City (27 percent) and Latina women in the state (28 percent), and higher than the percentage of all females in the state (25 percent).

However, Latinas in both Hartford City (20 percent) and in the state (28 percent) have lower rates of employment in management, business, science, and arts occupations compared to all females in the state (53 percent). On the other hand, Latinas in Hartford City (17 percent) are more likely to be employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations compared to all females in Hartford City (12 percent), all Latinas in the state (11 percent), and significantly higher compared to all females in the state (5 percent).

Table 4. Occupation Among Women in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

	All Females in CT	Latinas in CT	All Females in Hartford City	Latinas in Hartford City
Management, business, science, and arts occupations:	53%	28%	30%	20%
Service occupations:	17%	32%	31%	31%
Sales and office occupations:	25%	28%	27%	30%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations:	1%	1%	0%	2%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	5%	11%	12%	17%

Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

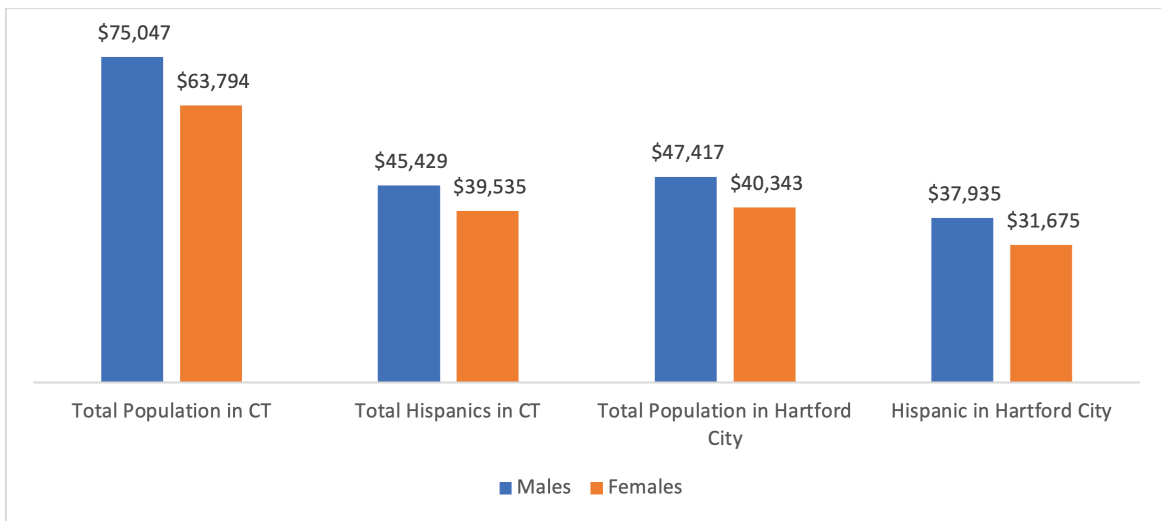
The employment distribution (top 5) of Latinas in Hartford City across various occupation is as follows:

1. 17 percent in the office and administrative occupations
2. 13 percent in the sales and related occupation
3. 11 percent in the building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations
4. 9 percent in the education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations
5. 9 percent in the food preparation and serving related occupations

On the other hand, the employment distribution (top 5) of all females in the state of Connecticut across various occupation is as follows:

1. 19 percent in the management, business, and financial occupations
2. 19 percent in the education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations
3. 15 percent in the office and administrative support occupations
4. 11 percent in the healthcare practitioners and technical occupations
5. 10 percent in sales and related occupations

Figure 9. Median Earnings by Sex Among Full-Time Year-Round, 2022



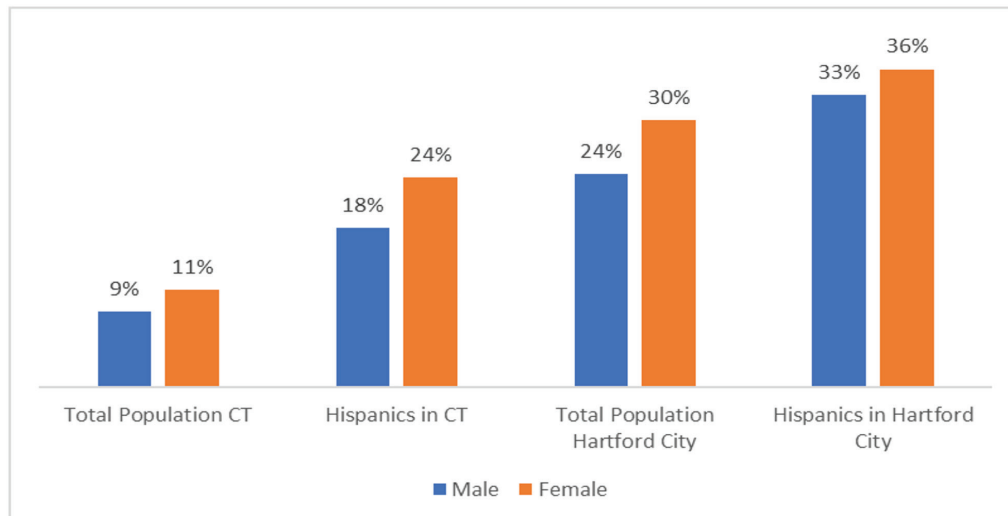
Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Moreover, the disparity in earnings between male and female full-time year-round employees is even more pronounced in both the state and Hartford City. Figure 10 illustrates that males in Connecticut and Hartford City have higher median earnings than females, especially among Latina women in Hartford City. Specifically, the median earnings for Latinas in Hartford City were \$31,675, which is at least \$20,000 lower than the median earnings of all females nationwide (\$51,275) and even \$32,000 lower than the median earnings of all females in the state of Connecticut (\$63,794).

Poverty

In 2022, nearly 36 percent of Latina females in Hartford City lived below the poverty line, which is approximately three times higher than the poverty rate among the overall female population in the state, which stands at 11 percent. Additionally, Latina females in the city (36 percent) also have a higher poverty rate compared to the overall female population (30 percent) and Latina females in the state (24 percent).

Figure 10. Poverty by Sex in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022

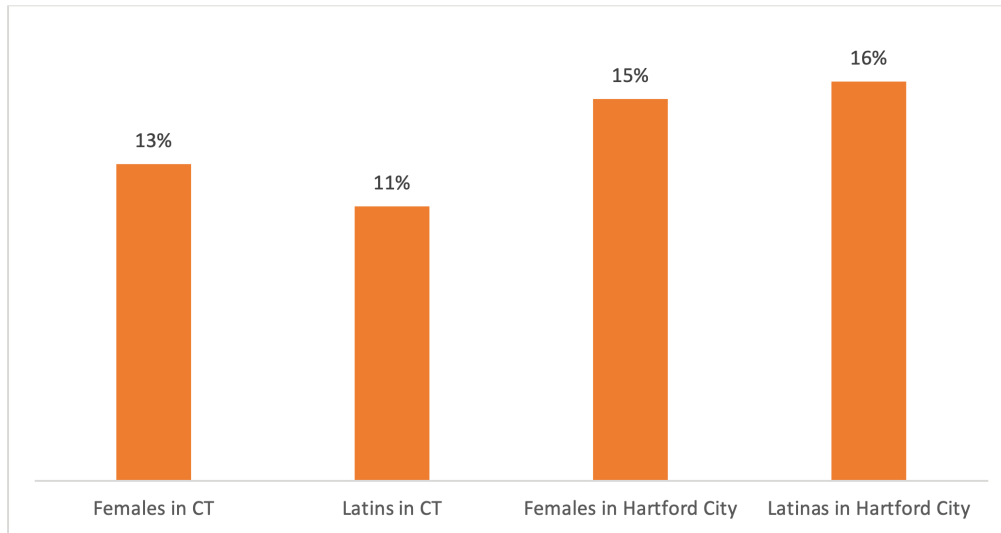


Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Disability

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act, the U.S. Census Bureau defines disability as an individual’s physical or mental impairment that significantly restricts one or more major life activities. Among the Latina female population in Hartford City, their rates of disability are slightly higher compared to Latinas in the state (11 percent), all females in the state (13 percent), females across the nation (14 percent), and females in Hartford City (15 percent).

Figure 11. Disability among Females in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022



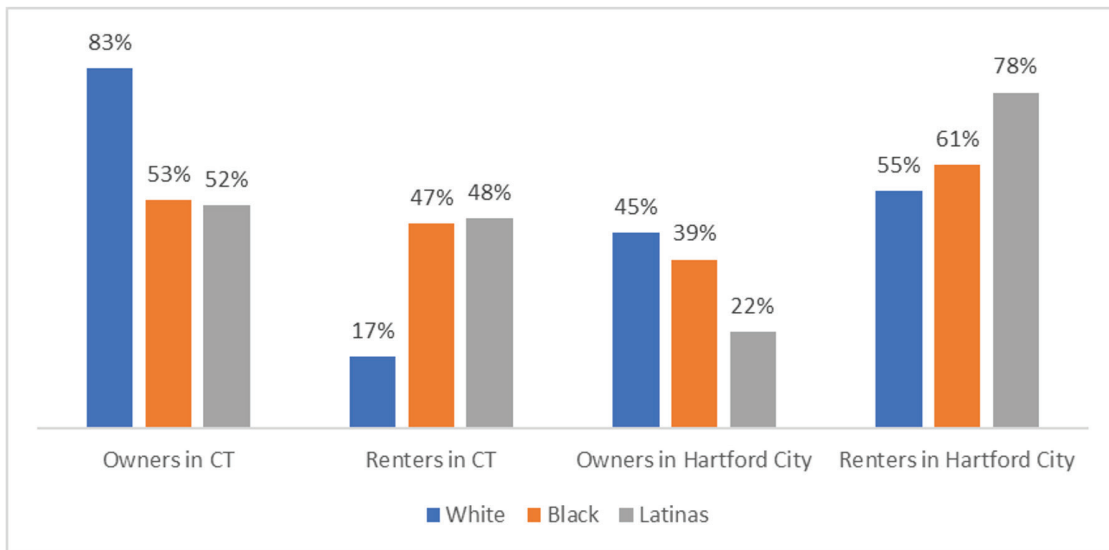
Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Housing

Housing Tenure

In Hartford City, the majority of Latinas, comprising approximately 78 percent, resided in rented occupied homes. In comparison, among Black or African American females, about 61 percent lived in rented homes, while among all females in the city, the percentage was lower at 55 percent. Homeownership rates were higher among all females in the city, with 45 percent being homeowners, followed by 39 percent among Black or African American females. On the other hand, Latinas had the lowest homeownership rate in Hartford City, with only 22 percent owning homes. At the state level, a staggering 83 percent of all females in the state were homeowners, while both Black or African American females and Latinas had comparable rates of homeownership at 53 percent and 52 percent, respectively.

Figure 12. Housing Tenure among Females by Race/Ethnicity in Connecticut and Hartford City, 2022



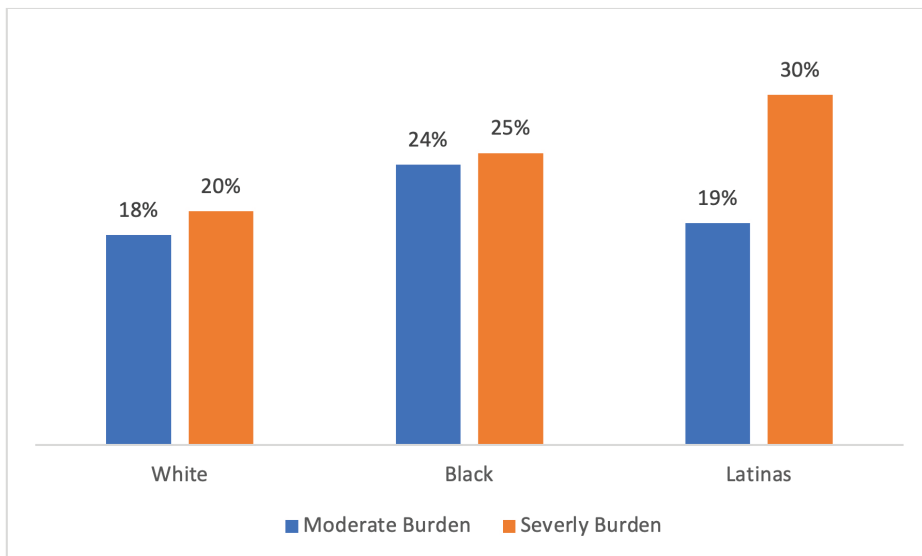
Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Rent Burden

Rent burden refers to renters paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income on rent, while severe rent burden refers to renters who use 50 percent or more of their monthly income on rent. In Hartford City, housing costs pose a financial burden for Latina and Black females.

In Hartford City, severe rent burden affected at least 30 percent of Latina females, which is higher than the rates for white females (20 percent) and black females (25 percent). Conversely, moderate rent burden (over 30 percent but less than 50 percent of monthly income on rent) affected 24 percent of black females in Hartford City, which was higher compared to Latina females (19 percent) and white females (18 percent).

Figure 13. Rent Burden Among Females by Race/Ethnicity in Hartford City, 2022



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Access to Internet & Computing Devices at Home

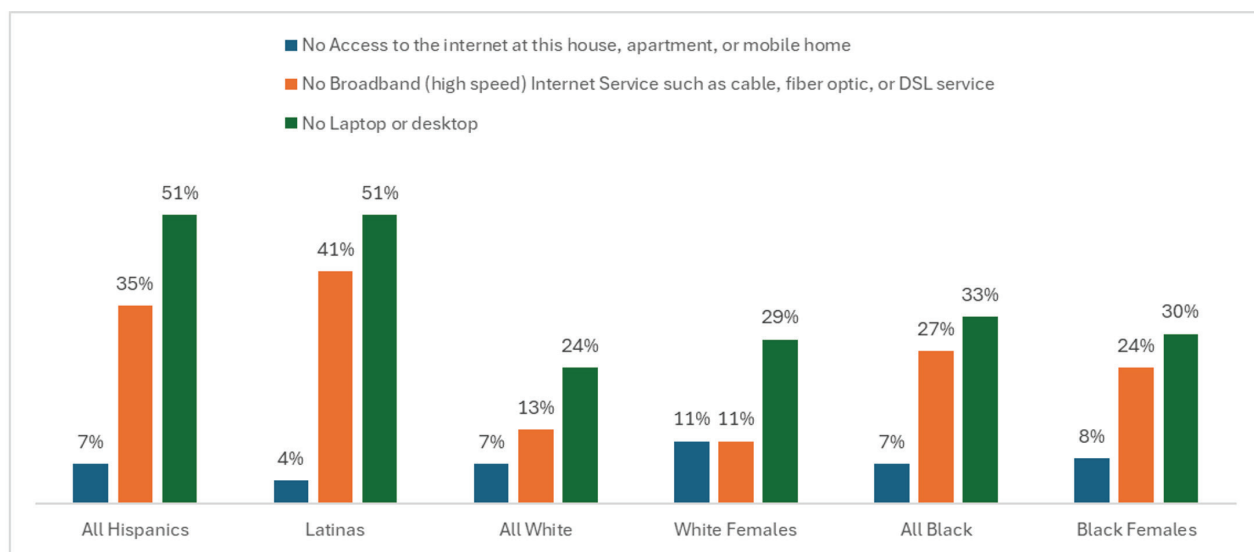
Hartford City’s female population showed disparities in internet access and technology ownership across race/ethnicity. Hispanics, especially women, showed the highest disparities relative to Hartford City’s overall population and female population in 2022.

Among those without technology devices, such as laptops or desktops in their homes, more than half of all Hispanics (51 percent) and Hispanic females (51 percent) had higher rates compared to all females (38 percent), black females (30 percent), and white females (29 percent).

Similarly, among those without high-speed internet services such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL devices were highest among Hispanic females (41 percent) relative to all females (28 percent), black females (24 percent), and white females (11 percent).

Lastly, white females in Hartford City had higher rates among those without any internet access in their homes at 11 percent followed by all females (7 percent), black females (7 percent), and Hispanic females (4 percent).

Figure 14. Access to internet and computing devices (laptop/desktop) among Females in Hartford City, 2022



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (1-year estimates).

Moving Forward

As we reflect on the invaluable insights provided by the Latina Voter Trends report and the collective efforts of Women At The Table (WATT), we are inspired to chart a bold course into 2024. WATT remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing gender equity and inclusivity, with a focused drive towards amplifying the voices of Latina women in Connecticut. Our vision for the coming years is clear—to not only increase women’s voter participation but to specifically empower Latina women, recognizing their substantial influence in Connecticut’s electoral landscape. WATT will continue to spearhead initiatives that encourage women to actively participate in the economy, engage in local and state politics, and advance both professionally and academically. As we move forward, we envision a Connecticut where every woman, especially Latina women, not only has a seat at the table but actively shapes the narratives that define our communities and our future.

The Puerto Rican Studies Initiative for Community Engagement and Public Policy (PRSI) is a research initiative that can help document and support the Puerto Ricans' vital economic, intellectual, and cultural contributions to Connecticut and provide research-based support for the development of public policies addressing the needs of Puerto Ricans in the State of Connecticut.

This initiative is part of a collaboration between El Instituto (CLAS, UConn Storrs), the Puerto Rican and Latin@ Studies Project (School of Social Work, UConn Hartford), and the Hispanic Health Council.

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