



Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research

**Being Latino in Red Wing:
Perspectives and Expectations During Hard Times
Report I**

September 2017

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About Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER):

HACER’s mission is to provide the Minnesota Latino community the ability to create and control information about itself in order to affect critical institutional decision-making and public policy. General support for HACER has been provided by Minnesota-based philanthropic organizations and the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.

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Being Latino in Red Wing: Perspectives and Expectations during Difficult Times

Introduction

With the idea of having a deeper and comprehensive understanding of how the Latino communities in Red Wing live under a rather tough political environment, a group of leaders were called by Hispanic Outreach (HO) to discuss the best ways in which business leaders, political representatives, police leaders, and community members and leaders could collaborate in facilitating better conditions among members of the different Latino communities who live in the city.

HO invited the Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research - HACER to participate in the organization and facilitation of meetings with the purpose of gathering information to develop a new survey: "Being Latino in Red Wing: Perspectives and expectations during difficult times."¹ This survey will complement the recent research of Wilder Research (Hispanic/Latino Needs Assessment Survey). HACER gathered a group of people who represented the leaders in Red Wing and asked them to participate in the design of the survey. The survey was intended to be useful in answering specific questions on security, health care access, safety, labor and housing as the community could perceive them within a series of elements that have to be attended. The questions also represent intervenient variables in defining how well those communities of Latinos fit in Red Wing and its mainstream population.

The Questionnaire (see Appendix A) was designed considering different areas of interest, and trying to avoid repetitions from the previous survey conducted by Wilder Research. Once the questionnaires were finished, and the households of Latino families were identified, HO organized a group of people to administer the survey door-by-door along the city in July.

In total, 108 individuals completed the survey, and all of them consider themselves as Latinos or Hispanics. The number of women outweigh the number of men in almost 1.6 times. Participant's age ranged from 18 and 56 years, with most respondents being between 32 and 38 years old. Median ages by sex were 36 years for men, and 36 for women.²

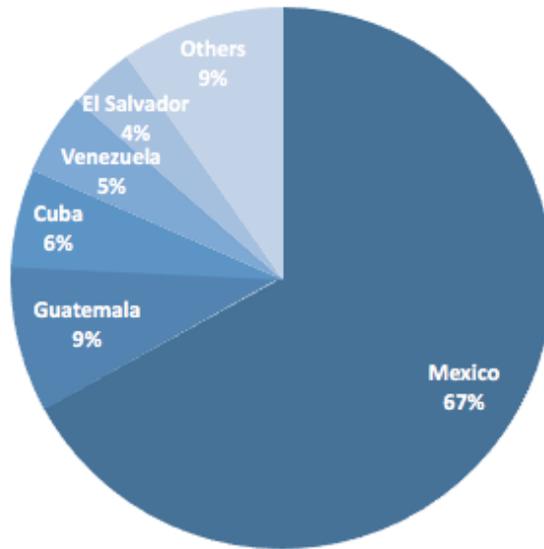
The sample represents 14.7% out of the estimate of 739 individuals of Latino origin living in Red Wing in 2015. If each respondent is considered as a member of a different household, then we will have a sample of 53% of the entire households with Latino person listed as the head of

¹ Also known in Spanish as "Ser Latino en Red Wing: Perspectivas y expectativas en tiempos difíciles"

² The American Community Survey from the Census Bureau - ACS estimates that the median age for men is 18.6 years, and 34.2 years for women among Latino residents in Minnesota.

household (206).³ Except for one individual born in the U.S., all respondents are foreign born and mainly from Mexico (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Country of Origin

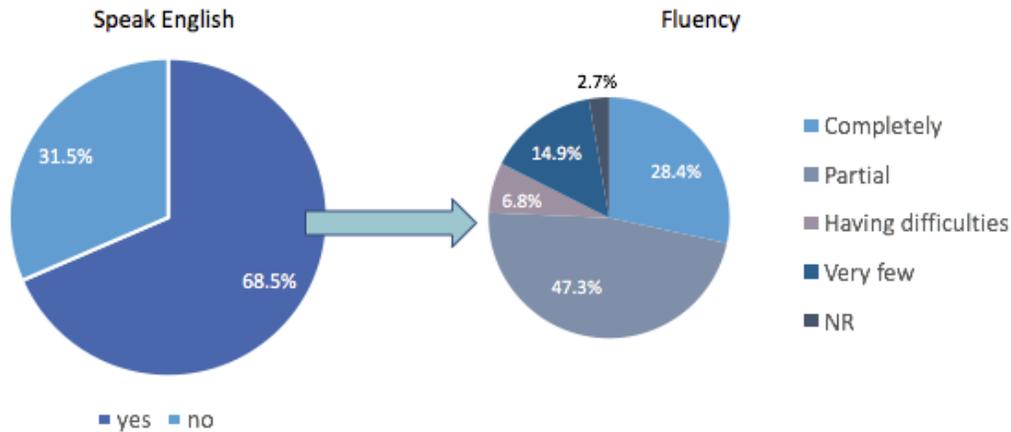


Note: Others include Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Panamá, Perú, Salvador and the U.S. Five individuals did not respond. **Source:** Survey "Being Latino in Red Wing"

Spanish is the spoken language at participants' home. In the sample, 90% of the households only speak Spanish at home, 5% only speak English, and 5% speak both languages. This was expected given that most of the participants are from a Spanish-speaking country. Despite of speak Spanish at home, 68.5% of participants do speak English (see Figure 2). Nevertheless, 69% of them stated that they are not completely fluent.

³ The actual number of households estimated from the survey is accurate as no information was repeated among respondents when asked to define their household, including members of the household and their ages, respectively. ACS, estimates 2011-2015.

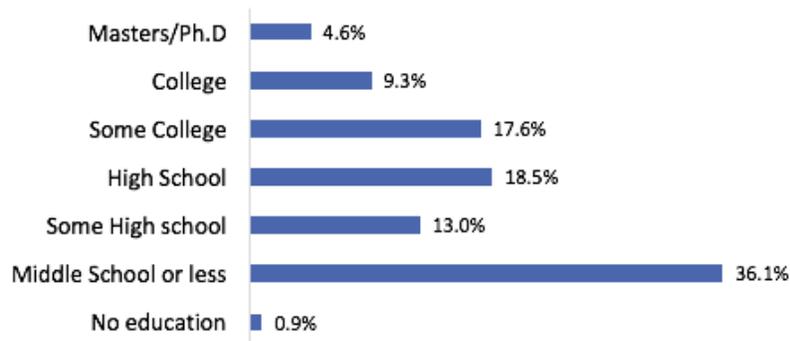
Figure 2. English speakers and their fluency



Source: Survey "Being Latino in Red Wing"

Regarding their level of education, half of the participants have attained at least high school. 18.5% of participants have high school diploma, almost 10% completed college and only 5% have a Masters or PhD degree. Only 1% indicated not having any schooling experience (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Education Level



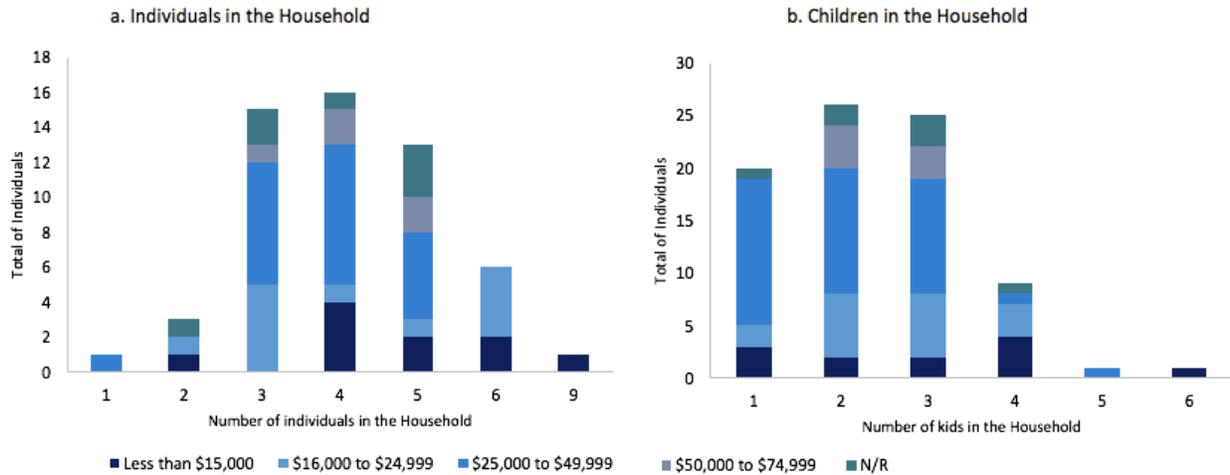
Note: Middle School or less includes Middle school, some middle school and elementary.

Source: Survey "Being Latino in Red Wing"

Of the total sample, 98 individuals reported annual income, and of those 42% live below the poverty line (\$25,000 or less). An additional 46.9% of individuals reported to have incomes between \$25,000 to \$49,999. Households in this sample have on average four individuals (see Figure 4, panel a). Households with lower earnings tend to have a higher size (between 4 to 6 individuals), while households with higher earnings tend to be smaller (2 members).

Out of the total sample, 82 participants have children. Most of them have two (31.7%) or three (30.4%) kids and live with an annual income between \$25,000 to \$49,999 (see Figure 4, panel b). It is worth to mention that households with four children represent 11% of the sample, and most of them reported an income below \$15,000.

Figure 4. Household Composition

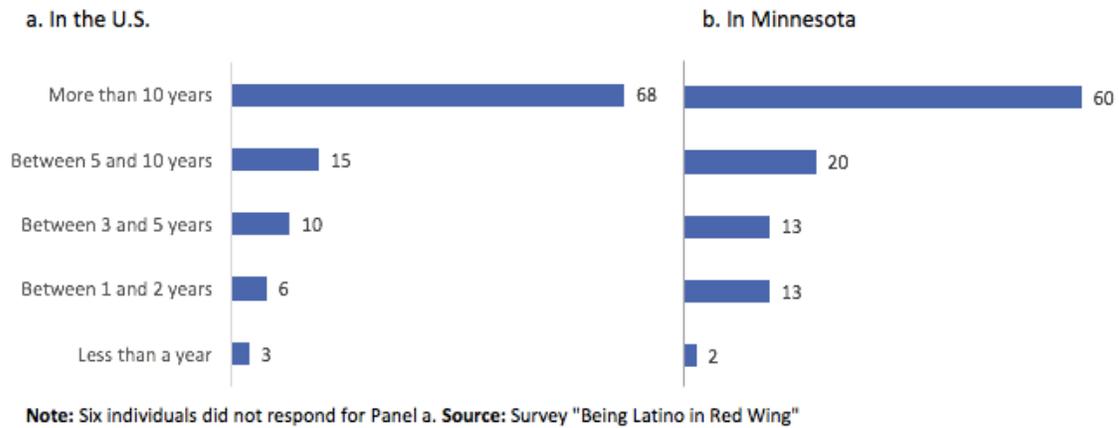


Note: 53 individuals did not respond the question regarding number of individuals in the household. 26 individuals do not have children.
Source: Survey "Being Latino in Red Wing"

Respondents reported in total 194 children. These kids have on average 13 years old, but the sample age ranges between three months and 36 years (parents did not report the age for 62 children). Of those whose gender is reported (138 individuals), 47.8% are females and 52.2% are males. Out of 138 individuals, 91 were born in the U.S., of them 38 are from Red Wing, and other 22 from Minnesota (without specifying the city). The rest were born out of the U.S., mainly in Mexico (32 children) and other countries in Latin America such as Guatemala, Venezuela, Ecuador, El Salvador and Cuba. In total, 162 children live currently in Red Wing. Unfortunately, for 112 individuals the education level was not reported. For those who did, half are in primary and middle school, 15.8% in high school, 3.7% in college and 6.1% at the university.

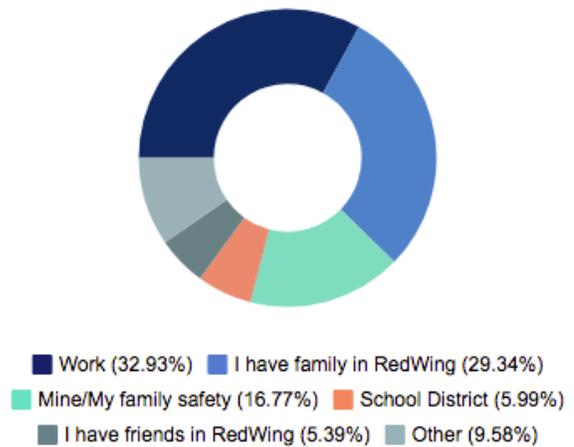
Most of the participants have been living in the U.S. for more than five years. In particular, 66.7% of them stated to live in the U.S. for more than 10 years (see Figure 5 Panel a). When asking them about their time living in Minnesota, 55.6% of participants have been in the state for more than 10 years (see Figure 5 Panel b), most of them have been living for 16 to 18 years. Close to 5.0% percent of participants have been living in Minnesota for 20 years or more.

Figure 5. Time living in the U.S. and in Minnesota



Of all respondents, 96 have moved to Red Wing. Of them, 33.3% moved to the city less than five years ago and 31.3% moved between 14 and 17 years ago. It is important to note, that most of those who moved recently came another part in the U.S., while most of those who have been living in Red Wing for a long period of time came from other countries, specially from Latin America. Around 65% of those who moved into the city less than five years ago came from other U.S. city or state highlighting Florida and Arizona. The remaining 35% came from Guatemala (17.4%), Mexico (13.0%) and Venezuela (4.3%). Of those who have been in Red Wing for 14 and 17 years, 43.3% came from Mexico, close to 20% came from other parts of the U.S. and the remaining from countries such as Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru.

When asking the people about the reasons of living in RedWing work was the most important followed by having family in RedWing. 66 individuals chose only one option, 26 chose two options, and 10 chose three options or more. 20.4% stated to being in RedWing only because of the family and 15.7% because of their job. In addition, 16.7% of participants picked both options, work and family, as their reasons. Some participants also stated other reasons for being in the city such as “like RedWing” and because it “is a small place, very pretty and very calm.” Overall, participants feel well received, 91% of them reported to feel very well received (53%) or well received (38%). Most of those who do not feel received (9% of the sample) stated having felt discriminated against as well as a racist environment. Other aspects mentioned by participants include cultural reasons, the weather, few employment opportunities and few shops.



70% of participants reported feeling welcome in RedWing. Those who feel that some changes will improve the way they feel about being welcomed in the city reported the necessity of having a place to share information about the Latino community in RedWing, and to make all the information available in Spanish. In addition, it is important to include bilingual staff in community organizations to better serve community members. For others, it is also important to create activities to integrate the Latino community, issue drive licenses, and have more education, employment conditions and housing. In addition, some participants stated that the change should come from each person. Every person in the community should be more involved and participate in activities and “be able to provide something”. Participants stated that those changes should be responsibility of the government, the governor and the major, but they also highlighted the responsibility of all the community members.

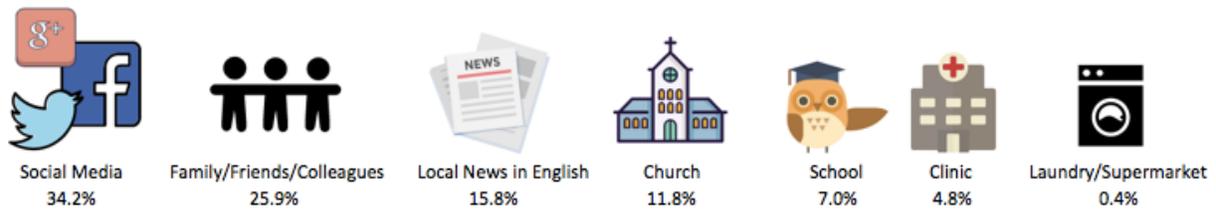
Despite recent events at the international, national and local level, safety perceptions in RedWing have not changed for 56.4% of participants. Nevertheless, 18.5% reported having changed their safety perceptions due to the new administration and recent changes in laws. Participants reported to feel unsafe in public spaces, to be afraid, to perceive more violence, to perceive more aggressive behaviors towards Latinos. 25% of participants did not respond to the question. It is important to notice that being afraid is general feeling among all participants with incomes below \$50,000 regardless of the level of education. Being afraid includes “living with fear”, “fear of deportations and separation of families”, and “We don’t want to go to the events because we don’t know if immigration officials are going to show up and arrest us”.

Half of the participants stated their opinions on how to improve safety among Latino communities living in RedWing, among them we found that there is a huge need for driver licenses or licenses for Hispanics as well as better ways of communication with the community and the police. Some participants stated to have more information about what you can and cannot do and have information available in Spanish. Some others stated the possibility to make government offices more accessible for legal processes or immigration legalization. Other opinions to improve safety include install cameras on streets and parks, and have more buses. Finally, it is important to highlight that some participants recognized that safety improvement is not only a matter for the authorities, but also a matter for the members of the community, they mentioned that community members should be more active and involved in knowing what is happening in the City and the necessity to educate them all to reduce discrimination.

Communication and Transport

Social media is the most common way for the participants to keep up with news and information about local problems. Social media is followed by receiving information from family members, friends and colleagues from work (see Figure 6). Only one person mentioned the preference for personal research on online databases and organizations websites.

Figure 6. Ways to Keep up with Local Problems



Out of total participants, 106 individuals have heard about services to Hispanics (Servicios a los Hispanos). Of them, 77 individuals have used the services they offer to the community such as document translation, internships, tutoring, and orientation to rent a house and advice among others. If there had been a welcome center when the people arrive to RedWing 84 out of 108 individuals would have visited it.

Regarding transportation, 93% of participants use their car to go to school or work but only 80% have their own car. Very few participants use public transportations, and most of them use it because they do not have a car, or because they do not drive or do not have a driver's license or because the car is not working well. Most of the participants reported that the public transportation and communication in RedWing could be improved to better serve the Latino community by having more information available in Spanish and by having bilingual personnel. Some others also stated the importance of increasing the number of buses and routes to reduce the time of waiting a bus and the time spent in it.

Housing and Living Conditions

Of 105 respondents, 60% rent the house they live in. 83% reported that with the income that they earn, they can pay the rent or the mortgage of the house. 93 out of 103 did not experience any problem when buying or renting the house. Those who experienced problems mentioned not having a Social Security Number (SSN) - which increases the price of the property -, having not enough money and the difficulties to get a loan from the bank. Of all respondents, 19 individuals share their house with another family – one more family or relatives such as parents or siblings - to reduce costs.

Most of the participants feel safe in the neighborhood (104 out of 108), those who do not feel the same highlighted the consumption of drugs and the vandalism as the reasons for not feeling safe. Similarly, 105 individuals feel safe at their home, those who do not feel safe attributed it to the drug consumption, and the fear of thinking about immigration officers knocking at the door.

Almost 90% of participants do not know any housing support program in RedWing. Those who know about them mentioned Excel Energy to pay electricity, House Inspection Program, Maple Hills, and Service for Hispanics.

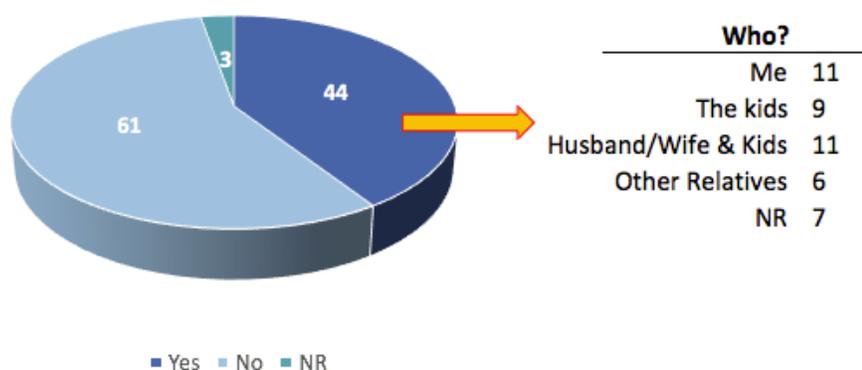
Lastly, when talking about the problems related to housing, participants of the Latino community highlighted the lack of SSN and credit scores as well as the immigration status.

Some others expressed their concerns about the small sizes and the high prices of the properties as well as the lack of credit. Some others mentioned the language barriers when buying or renting a house.

Education

Almost 80% of participants believe that there are enough opportunities to learn English. Nevertheless, only 44 participants stated that they or/and a member of the family are going to school or taking English lessons (see Figure 7). Despite having enough opportunities participants mentioned they cannot take advantage of them because of the lack of time,⁴ or because the methods used are not effective.

Figure 7. Going to School or Taking English Lessons



Note: Other relatives include grandchild, siblings and nephew. **Source:** Survey "Being Latino in Red Wing"

20 out of 62 respondents have participated in a program to learn English as a second language (ESL), most of them think that the program is useful and it has helped participants to understand the language, and to hold a conversation in English. Two individuals stated that sometimes schedules are hard, and the need to advance faster. Another individual reported that teachers do not start with the basics because there are some people with some English knowledge.

Most of participants consider that the school system is adequate for themselves and their families (91.5% out of 82 participants). The system satisfies the needs of parents and kids by improving their English skills and the intellectual development of kids. Those who are not satisfied reported classes being very late and the time being not enough as well as having one teacher for a big group and not enough teachers to provide adequate lessons considering participants' different English level.

Out of 55 respondents with kids in school, 54 individuals think that school share news and communicate well with them. In two cases, they mentioned that the communication is in Spanish or through an interpreter.

⁴ Because of work or because classes are very hard to match with the work schedule.

Among the most urgent problems that need to be solved in the schools, participants mentioned the following:

- Racism / discrimination
- Bullying
- Teenagers drug use
- Not having bilingual staff / more communication in Spanish
- Discipline / follow the rules
- More police or security guards
- Transportation

Spanish Services

35% of participants need an interpreter. In most of the cases the interpreter is needed at medical facilities – hospitals, clinics, doctor’s appointment. In few cases, the interpreter is needed for government offices, at court and at the workplace.

When using interpretation or translation services, the major problem Latinos face is the lack of interpreters or bilingual personnel at the facilities they used. Sometimes, they have to wait for a long time to find someone that can help them or can understand what they are saying. In addition, some interpreter/translators are not good enough and do not provide the real message. In order to solve these problems, participants mentioned to improve training for interpreters and hire more of them, as well as increasing bilingual staff working at the different agencies. In addition, some participants recognized that they also need to learn English.

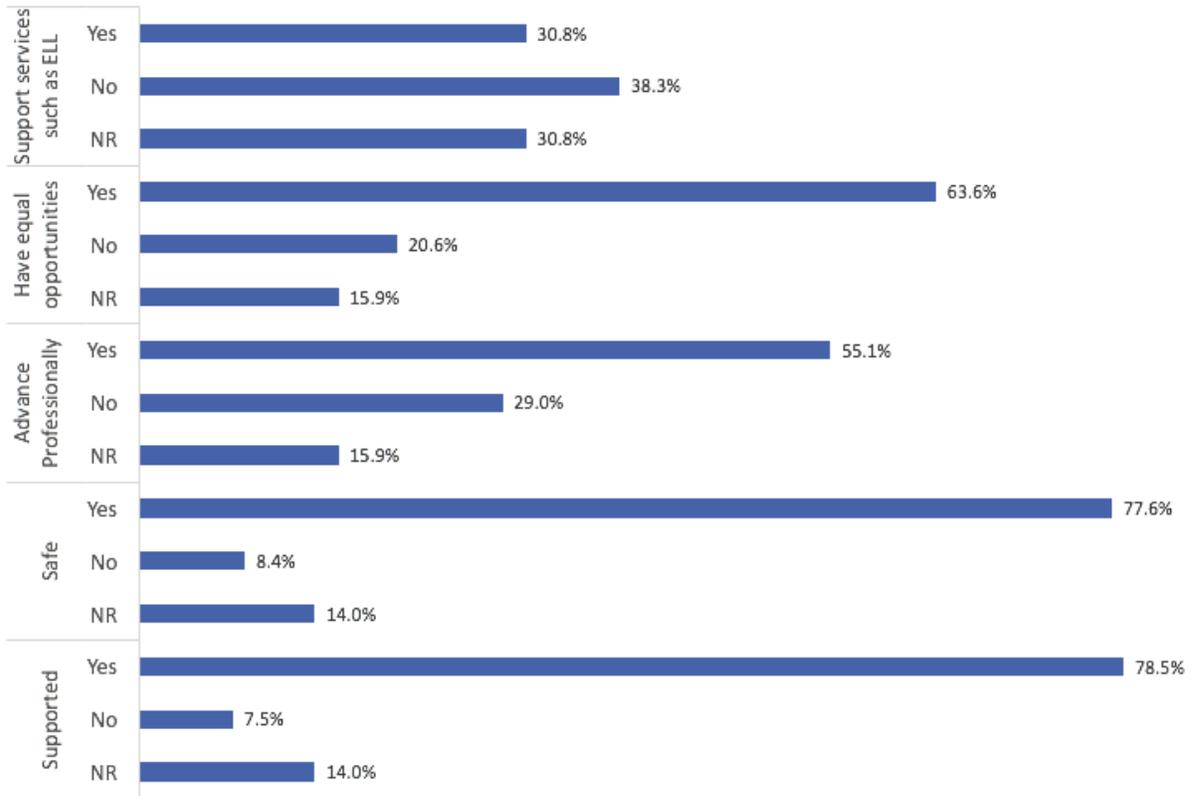
Work environment

87.9% of participants have a job and 76.6% think that their native language is not an impediment for professional growth. Those who think it is an impediment mentioned that not knowing English had prevented them from getting better positions (such as becoming managers), and better salaries.

The majority of participants feel supported and safe in their workplace (see Figure 8). Some feel that they have equal opportunities and half of participants think that they can advance professionally. It is important to note that in neither case the percentage reaches 80%. Few participants reported to have support services such as interpreters and material available in Spanish.

Regarding the problems that Latino workers face in RedWing, participants highlighted the matter of not having documents such as ID or driver’s licenses, SSN and work permits; and language barriers.

Figure 8. Feelings at Work



Note: 107 individuals answer the questions about work environment. **Source:** Survey "Being Latino in Red Wing"

Health

The Latino community faces many problems in matters of health. One of the main problems is not having access to medical insurance due to high prices and for not having SSN to apply for it. This translates in accessing health services at a higher cost or not accessing them at all.

Law Enforcement

83.2% of participants believe that the Police Department of RedWing is doing everything to improve communication with the community. Nevertheless, 15% do not feel the same. In order to improve communication there should be information available in Spanish and more bilingual staff. They also mentioned that police officers should be more cordial, honest, and respectful as well as less racist.

Appendix A. Questionnaire

Thank you for volunteering to take this survey sponsored by Live Healthy Red Wing and Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County. The survey will be used by these groups, and other group of people, to identify what is the perspective that the diverse Latino Communities have with regards of different issues, such as security, education, housing, and other. We look forward to contributing in working together with you, other Latino leaders and local representatives in order to solve the most urgent matters affecting our communities in Red Wing. Your participation is really important, and your answers will be computed with several other responses, with entire respect to your personal information, which won't be included in any report.

The following demographic information will not allow for you to be identified. These answers are optional. You can choose not to answer any of the questions.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

1. How would you define yourself?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Transgender
 - Other _____
 2. What is your age? _____
 3. Do you consider yourself Latino or Hispanic?
 - Yes
 - No
 4. What would you consider defines your race? (the person conducting the interview will explain)
 - White
 - Black or African American
 - Native American
 - Asian/Pacific Islander
 - Multiracial/Biracial
 - Other _____
 5. Where were you born? _____
 6. If born in another country, how long have you been living in the US?
 - Less than a year
 - 1-2 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - More than 10 years
- How long have you been living in Minnesota? _____
 - If you moved to Red Wing, when? _____ Where from? _____
 - How long have you been living in Red Wing? _____
 - Have you ever lived in a different country other than U.S. or your country of origin? If yes, where?

7. What language do you usually speak at home? _____
8. Do you speak English?
- Yes
 - No
 - If yes, how fluent are you?
 - Completely
 - Partially
 - Have difficulties
 - Very low fluency
9. What is your highest level of education?
- Did not attend school
 - Some elementary
 - Elementary completed
 - Some junior high
 - Junior high completed
 - Some high school or less
 - High school diploma or equivalent
 - Some college
 - College graduate
 - Masters or Doctorate
10. Including yourself, how many people live in your household? _____
11. Which one of the following represents your total household income before tax (considering all income in the household?)
- Less than \$15,000
 - \$16,000- \$24,999
 - \$25,000- \$49,999
 - \$50,000- \$74,999
 - \$75,000 or more
12. Do you have children?
- Yes
 - No
 - If yes, how many?
13. If you have children, could you list where they were born, gender, age, if they go to school and their grade?
- If the answer is yes, where are the children living? Are they here in Red Wing with you?
14. How would you define your culture? (Mexicano, Colombiano...)

COMMUNITY SAFETY/RED WING COMMUNITY/IMMIGRATION ISSUES:

15. Why are you choosing Red Wing as your home?
- Your own/family safety
 - School district
 - Work
 - Family here in Red Wing
 - Friends living here

- Other _____
- 16. How welcome do you feel in Red Wing?
 - Very welcome
 - Welcome
 - Somewhat welcome
 - Unwelcome
- What specific environments make you feel uncomfortable or unwelcome? For example, restaurants, stores, or other businesses, government offices, etc.
- 17. Have the recent changes in national, local or international events altered or changed your perception of your own security in Red Wing? If yes, how?
- 18. Do you know of any organization in Red Wing that works with immigrant and diverse communities? How did you learn about this organization?
 - In your opinion, how involved are institutions such as government offices, churches, the YMCA or other non-profits in your safety?
- 19. What is needed in order to improve the safety among Latinos living in Red Wing?
- 20. What changes would make you feel more welcome in Red Wing? Who should be responsible for this change?

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION:
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- 21. How do you usually learn about local issues and information?
 - Local newspaper in English
 - Social Media
 - Co-workers/friends/family
 - Laundry mat/grocery store
 - Church
 - Clinic
 - School
 - Out of all these options, which one do you prefer?
 - Have you ever heard of Hispanic Outreach? If so, have you used any of their services?
 - If there had been a welcome center upon your arrival to Red Wing, would you have visited it?
- 22. How do you move from home to your place of work/study?
 - Car
 - Carpool
 - Bike
 - Bus
 - Walk
 - Other _____
 - If driving, do you own a car?
 - Yes
 - No
 - If public transportation, why do you prefer it?
- 23. How could transportation and communication be improved in order to better serve Latino communities in Red Wing?

HOUSING/LIVING ENVIRONMENT:

24. Do you own or rent your house?
- Own
 - Rent
25. Is the rent/mortgage affordable for you?
- Yes
 - No
- Please explain:
26. Did you have any problems when you rented/bought your house?
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, how did you solve them?
27. Does your family share your house with other families?
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, how many?
28. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?
- Yes
 - No
- If you don't feel safe, why do you live there? What kind of threats do you face?
29. Do you feel safe in your home?
- Yes
 - No
- If you don't feel safe, what kind of threats do you face?
30. Are you familiar with any housing support programs in Red Wing? Housing Inspection Program, etc.
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, which ones?
31. What are the most urgent issues for Latinos in Red Wing related to housing? Who should help solve these problems? (Example: access to housing, affordability, safety, etc.)

SCHOOL/EDUCATION:

32. Do you or any member in the household attend public school? Is anybody taking English learning classes? If yes, who?
- Yes
 - No
- Who?
- Do you think there are many options for you to learn English if you need it?
33. Do you feel the school system is appropriate for you or for your children?
- Yes
 - No

- If yes, in what ways does it meet your needs?
- 34. Does your family participate in an English as a Second Language (ELL) program? If yes, does it work well for you? How?
- 35. If you have children in school, do your children share news from the school with you? Does the school communicate well with you?
- 36. What school benefits do you use?
 - Transportation
 - Free/reduced meals
 - After school activities
 - Childcare
 - Other _____
- If you don't use any, what prevents you from doing it?
- 37. From your perspective, what would be the most important issues that need to be addressed in the school you or your children attend?

TRANSLATION/SPANISH SERVICES/COMMUNICATION:

- 38. In your daily life, do you require an interpreter?
 - Yes
 - No
- If yes, where do you need it? _____
- 39. In your opinion, what is the main problem(s) Latinos face in Red Wing when it comes to translation/interpretation services? How can that problem(s) be solved?

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

- 40. Are you currently employed?
 - Yes
 - No
- If yes, where do you work?
- 41. Do you think your mother language is a barrier to your advancement?
 - Yes
 - No
- If yes, explain:
- 42. In your work environment:
 - Do you feel supported?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Do you feel safe?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Do you feel you have room for advancement?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Do you feel you have equal opportunities?

- Yes
 - No
 - Do you have support services such as ELL?
 - Yes
 - No
 - ❖ If yes, what kind of services? (for example: interpreters, materials in Spanish, etc.)
43. In your opinion, what are the most important issues for Latino workers in Red Wing?
How can these be solved?

HEALTH:

44. What would be the most urgent issues related to health among Latinos in Red Wing to be solved?

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

45. From your own perspective, is the Red Wing Police Department doing everything they can in order to communicate effectively with members of the community?
- Yes
 - No
- If you answered *no*, what else would you like the Red Wing Police Department to do in order to improve the community?