



Highlights of [GAO-06-832](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

Hispanic representation in the federal workforce has historically been lower than in the Civilian Labor Force (CLF). Understanding factors affecting representation is important to developing and maintaining a high-quality and inclusive workforce. In this report, GAO identifies and analyzes factors affecting Hispanic representation in the federal workforce, examines oversight roles of EEOC and OPM, and provides illustrations of selected federal agencies' efforts with respect to Hispanic representation. GAO constructed a multivariate logistic regression model, with advice from experts, to determine how factors affected the likelihood of Hispanics and non-Hispanics being in the federal versus nonfederal workforce. GAO's analyses are not intended to and do not show the existence or absence of discrimination in the federal workforce.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that EEOC and OPM take citizenship into account when comparing federal workforce representation to the CLF to provide a more complete picture of, and reasons for, differences in representation. In comments on a draft of this report, EEOC said citizenship data are important but EEOC did not address GAO's recommendations. OPM provided minor technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate, but did not otherwise comment on the report or recommendations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-832.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact George H. Stalcup at (202) 512-9490 or stalcupg@gao.gov.

THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

Additional Insights Could Enhance Agency Efforts Related to Hispanic Representation

What GAO Found

U.S. citizenship and educational attainment had the greatest effect, of the measurable factors we identified, on Hispanic representation in the federal workforce. Our statistical model showed that when accounting for citizenship, required for most federal employment, Hispanics were nearly as likely as non-Hispanics to be employed in the federal workforce, relative to the nonfederal workforce (the portion of the CLF excluding federal employees). In addition, the federal workforce has a greater proportion of occupations that require higher levels of education than the CLF. When we compared citizens with similar levels of education, Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanics to be employed in the federal workforce relative to the nonfederal workforce. Other factors in our model, including age, gender, race, veteran's status, English proficiency, and geography (state where employed), had a more limited or almost no effect on the likelihood of Hispanics being in the federal workforce.

In addition to reporting and comparing representation levels overall and in subsets of the federal workforce to the CLF, EEOC and OPM require that agencies analyze their own workforces. However, the CLF benchmarks of representation that EEOC, OPM, and the agencies use do not differentiate between citizens and noncitizens, and therefore do not identify how citizenship affects the pool of persons qualified to work for the federal government. Where these analyses identify differences in representation, EEOC, for example, requires agencies to determine if there are barriers to participation and develop strategies to address them. OPM provides resources and guidance to assist agencies in implementing human capital strategies. Through these efforts, OPM has promoted the use of student employment programs as a source of qualified candidates. Analyzing agency use of these programs, including the extent to which agencies convert participants to permanent employment, could provide OPM with valuable information to assist agencies in maximizing the use of these programs in their strategic workforce planning.

The agencies we reviewed use a variety of approaches to address Hispanic representation, including recruiting at colleges and universities with large Hispanic populations, publicizing employment opportunities in Hispanic media, reaching out to Hispanic communities and Hispanic-serving organizations, and using student employment, internship, career development, and training programs. For example, the U.S. Air Force partners with vocational-technical schools to develop aircraft maintenance technicians, and staff at selected National Aeronautics and Space Administration facilities mentor and tutor students to encourage careers in science, technology, engineering, and math.