

FOR RELEASE AUGUST 11, 2014

Puerto Rican Population Declines on Island, Grows on U.S. Mainland

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

Mark Hugo Lopez, Director of Hispanic Research
Molly Rohal, Communications Associate

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

About This Report

This report explores the demographic and economic characteristics of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, both on the island of Puerto Rico and on the U.S. mainland. It also analyzes characteristics of recent migrants from the island to the mainland and compares them with those of previous waves of migrants. The data in this report come from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, Puerto Rican Community Survey, Current Population Survey, decennial censuses and annual population estimates.

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals on the staff of the Pew Research Center. Editorial guidance came from Director of Hispanic Research Mark Hugo Lopez. D’Vera Cohn, senior writer, wrote the report’s overview and demographic chapters, based mainly on analysis by Eileen Patten, research analyst, who also prepared most of its charts and tables. Danielle Cuddington, research assistant, assembled data for the Puerto Rico maps that are in this report and online. The authors thank Jeffrey S. Passel, senior demographer, for his expertise on data use. The authors also thank Edwin Melendez of Hunter College and participants at the American Society of Hispanic Economists’ session “The Puerto Rican Economy, Migration and Employment Outcomes” at the 2014 Western Economic Association conference for comments on a previous version of the report. Anna Brown, research assistant, number-checked the report and charts; Molly Rohal, communications associate, copy-edited the report. Find related reports from the Pew Research Center online at pewresearch.org/hispanic.

A Note on Terminology

The terms “Latino” and “Hispanic” are used interchangeably in this report.

“Puerto Rican,” unless otherwise specified, refers to those who self-identify as Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, either because they were born in Puerto Rico or trace their family ancestry there.

“U.S. mainland” or “mainland” or “stateside” refer to the 50 states (including Alaska and Hawaii) and the District of Columbia. “Island” refers to Puerto Rico.

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Puerto Rican Population Declines on Island, Grows on U.S. Mainland

BY *D'Vera Cohn, Eileen Patten* AND *Mark Hugo Lopez*

Overview

Puerto Ricans have left the financially troubled island for the U.S. mainland this decade in their largest numbers since the Great Migration after World War II, citing job-related reasons above all others.

U.S. Census Bureau data show that 144,000 more people left the island for the mainland than the other way around from mid-2010 to 2013, a larger gap between emigrants and migrants than during the entire decades of the 1970s, 1980s or 1990s. This escalated loss of migrants fueled the island's first sustained population decline in its history as a U.S. territory, even as the stateside Puerto Rican population grew briskly.

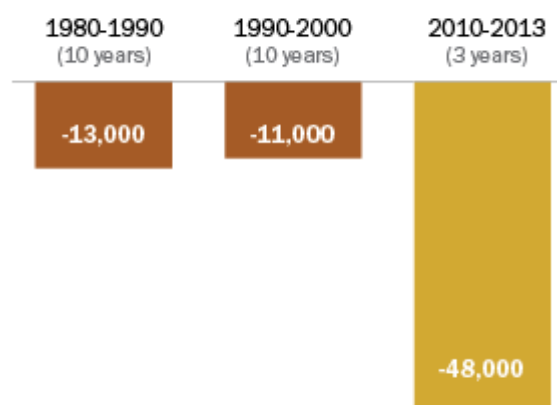
The search for economic opportunity is the most commonly given explanation for moving by island-born Puerto Ricans who relocated to the mainland from 2006 to 2013, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.¹ A plurality (42%) gave job-related reasons for moving stateside, compared with 38% who gave family-related reasons. Among all immigrants from foreign countries who migrated over the same time period, a similar share gave job-related reasons (41%), while 29% said they migrated for family reasons. Mexican-born immigrants were even more likely to cite job-related reasons (62%), while 25% cited family reasons.

¹ Analysis is based on Current Population Survey data on island-born Puerto Ricans who moved to the mainland during these years; other data from the American Community Survey indicate that 93% moved directly from the island and the remainder from other U.S. territories or foreign countries.

FIGURE 1

Puerto Rico Lost More Migrants to Mainland Since 2010 Than During 1980s or 1990s

Average island net migration per year



Note: Net migration is the number of migrants to Puerto Rico from the U.S. mainland minus the number of migrants from Puerto Rico to the U.S. mainland. Average annual numbers in chart are based on total net migration of -126,000 for 1980-1990; -111,000 for 1990-2000 and -144,000 for 2010-2013.

Source: Christenson, 2001 and U.S. Census Bureau 2013 population estimates.

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Puerto Ricans who arrived from the island since 2000 are different from earlier waves of Puerto Rican migrants. For example, recent migrants are less likely than earlier migrants were to settle in traditional Northeast communities and more likely to live in the South, especially in Florida. More recent Puerto Rican arrivals from the island are also less well off than earlier migrants, with lower household incomes and a greater likelihood of living in poverty.

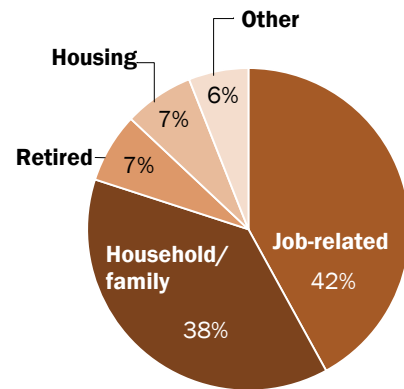
Most migrants from the island were born there. But among the recent migration wave, the departures of mainland-born Puerto Ricans have played a disproportionate role in the island's population loss. Overall, mainland-born Puerto Ricans make up 4% of Puerto Ricans on the island, yet from 2000 to 2012, fully a third of the net loss of Hispanic Puerto Ricans on the island was due to departures of mainland-born Puerto Ricans.

The departures of island-born Puerto Ricans have contributed to an uptick in the number of island-born Puerto Ricans living stateside, to 1.4 million in 2012, up from 1.3 million in 2000. The island born, however, are a smaller group than the faster-growing mainland-born Puerto Ricans, who numbered 3.4 million in 2012, up from 2 million in 2000.²

FIGURE 2

Why Do Island-Born Puerto Ricans Move to the U.S. Mainland?

% saying...



Note: Chart is based on island-born Puerto Ricans who migrated from Puerto Rico, all other U.S. territories and all other countries to the U.S. mainland. According to the American Community Survey, 93% of these migrants moved from Puerto Rico. See Data Sources appendix for detailed reasons.

Source: Current Population Survey merged sample, 2007-2013, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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² In addition to these two groups, in 2012 there were 97,000 Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin living on the U.S. mainland who were born in another country or U.S. territory.

As the island population has dwindled and the mainland population has grown, the number of stateside Puerto Ricans reached a record 4.9 million in 2012, and since at least 2006 has exceeded the number of Puerto Ricans on the island (3.5 million in 2012). Meanwhile, the overall population in the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico, including both Hispanics and non-Hispanics, declined to 3.6 million in 2013, according to U.S. Census Bureau population estimates.³

Puerto Ricans on the U.S. Mainland

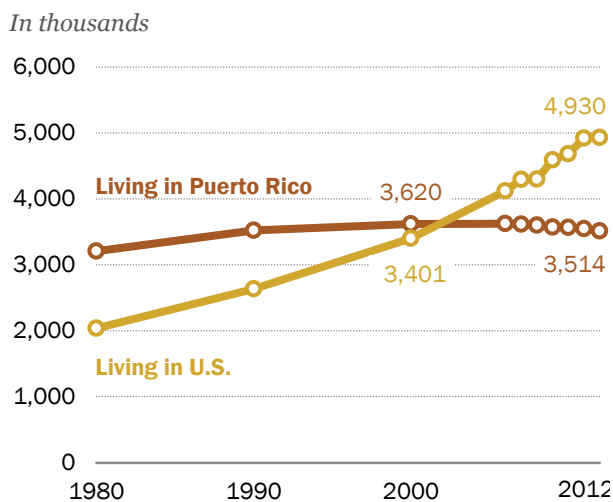
On the mainland, Puerto Ricans are the second largest Hispanic origin group ([Brown and Patten, 2014](#)), following Mexicans (34 million in 2012) and ahead of Cubans (2 million) and Salvadorans (2 million).

Compared with other U.S. Hispanics, Puerto Ricans overall are somewhat worse off on several indicators of well-being. They have lower median household incomes and a lower homeownership rate, and are more likely to be poor. However, Puerto Ricans overall (especially those born on the mainland) have higher education levels than other U.S. Hispanics.

The overall numbers for the U.S. Puerto Rican population, though, mask substantial differences in the growth and demographic profiles of those born on the mainland versus those born on the island. The growth in the stateside Puerto Rican population has been driven mainly by mainland-born Puerto Ricans, whose numbers rose 67% from 2000 to 2012, compared with 11% for island-born Puerto Ricans during that period.

FIGURE 3

Puerto Rican Population Grows on Mainland, Declines on Island



Note: "Living in Puerto Rico" is based on Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin for all years, except 1980 and 1990, when based on total population in Puerto Rico.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the American Community Survey (2006-2012), Puerto Rico Community Survey (2006-2012) and Decennial Censuses (1980, 1990, 2000), Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). 2006-2009 ACS and PRCS use Pew Research Center revised weights.

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³ The population estimates are available [here](#). The vast majority of Puerto Rican residents (99%) are Hispanic, and 96% are Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, while Hispanics of Dominican origin (2%) are the second largest Hispanic origin group living on the island.

Mainland-born Puerto Ricans are younger and have higher household incomes, and their children or elderly are less likely to be in poverty. They are more likely to have attended college than their island-born counterparts.

The stateside Puerto Rican origin population once was very highly concentrated in the Northeast, especially New York, but now is more widely dispersed. About half (52%) of Puerto Ricans lived in the Northeast in 2012, compared with three-quarters (74%) who did so in 1980. The population in other regions of the U.S. has grown more rapidly—most notably in the South, which housed less than 10% of the Puerto Rican population in 1980 and now is home to 30%.

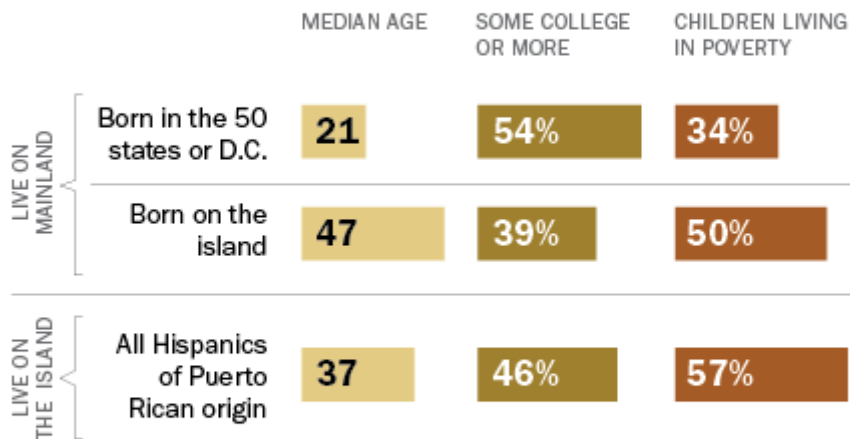
Puerto Ricans born on the mainland and island are about equally likely to live in the Northeast, but island-born Puerto Ricans are more likely to live in the South (37% did in 2012, compared with 27% of mainland-born Puerto Ricans.). Mainland-born Puerto Ricans are somewhat more likely to live in the West (10% to 4%). Similar shares of each group live in the Midwest (10% of the mainland born and 8% of the island born).

The South—particularly Florida—has been the top regional destination in recent years for Puerto Ricans moving from the island to the mainland and for Puerto Ricans relocating from other regions within the U.S. However, New York has been the single biggest state magnet for migrants: According to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, among Puerto Ricans between 2006-2012, 31% of moves from the island to the mainland and 20% of moves from one state to another state were to the Empire State.

FIGURE 4

Selected Demographics of Puerto Ricans, 2012

Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin by birthplace and residence



Note: Education data based on adults ages 25 or older. Poverty status based on the 12 months prior to the survey.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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Puerto Ricans on the Island

As U.S. citizens, people born in Puerto Rico can move to the 50 states or District of Columbia without restrictions, and there is a long Puerto Rican tradition of back-and-forth migration between the island and mainland.

However, the gap between the number of departures and arrivals has widened in recent years, according to U.S. Census Bureau data that indicate a growing net loss of migrants. That loss, as well as the island's relatively low birth rate, has produced its recent population decline.

The island's total population (including Hispanics and non-Hispanics) decreased by about 200,000 people from 2000 to 2013, with about two-thirds of Puerto Rican municipalities having lost population during those years (see [maps](#)). The Census Bureau projects the island's population loss will continue gradually through at least 2050, when about 3 million people will live there.⁴

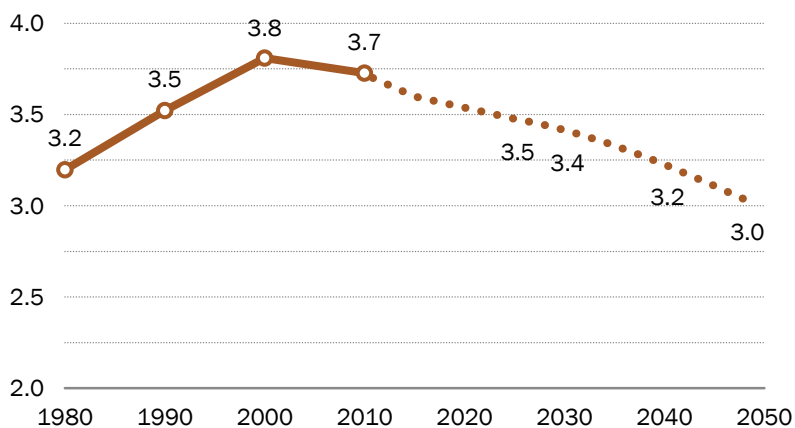
About a third of all people born on Puerto Rico—34% in 2013, according to data from the United Nations and U.S.

Census Bureau—now live on the mainland.⁵ That share has increased since 1990, when it was 30%. By another estimate, the proportion of people ages 16 and older born in Puerto Rico who live on the U.S. mainland rose to 34% in 2011 compared with 30.1% in 2006 (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2014).

FIGURE 5

Puerto Rico's Population Projected to Decline Through 2050

In millions



Note: Solid line represents decennial census population counts; dotted line represents population projections. Data labels are for 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2025, 2030, 2040 and 2050.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau population projections for Puerto Rico (<http://1.usa.gov/WGdgpP>) and Decennial Censuses (1980, 1990, 2000, 2010), Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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⁴ The Census Bureau's population projections for Puerto Rico can be found at <http://1.usa.gov/WGdgpP>.

⁵ According to United Nations data, all but 1.6% of Puerto Ricans not living on the island live in the 50 U.S. states or District of Columbia.

Historic and Recent Population Patterns

Puerto Rico's recent population downturn reverses a general pattern of growth on the island since at least the 1700s, as documented by Spanish and U.S. Census Bureau data. The United States won control of Puerto Rico from Spain in 1898; the first U.S. census taken there, in 1910, counted more than 1.1 million residents. By 1990, the population had more than tripled, to 3.5 million, and peaked at 4 million in 2009. But by 2013, the island's population had diminished to 3.6 million.⁶

The years since 2000 have seen the largest wave of migration from Puerto Rico since the "Great Migration" in the 1950s and 1960s (Rodríguez Ayuso, Santana and Santiago, 2013; see text box). According to Census Bureau researchers, the island had a net loss to the mainland of 192,000 migrants younger than 65 for the years from the 2000 census to the 2010 census (Bhaskar et al, 2013). From July 2010 to July 2013, about 144,000 more people of all ages left the island for the mainland than the other way around, according to Census Bureau population estimates. (Most but not all were Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin.)

The Island's Economic Crisis

The onset of an economic crisis in 2006 that weakened the already-listless Puerto Rican economy likely played a role in the island's accelerated population decline. More recent migrants to the mainland have been found to be less educated than those who remain on the island and more likely to

Measuring Migration from Puerto Rico to the Mainland

One challenge in comparing current migration from Puerto Rico with that of the great migration wave of the 1950s and 1960s is a shortage of reliable data. In previous decades, estimates were made mainly using figures for airline passenger traffic between the island and mainland. However, U.S. Census Bureau researchers have concluded that this method produced estimates that were too high (Christenson, 2001).

Using passenger-traffic data, the Census Bureau had estimated that from 1980 to 1990, 288,163 more people left Puerto Rico for the mainland than arrived from there. Using a new method based on data from the Census Bureau and Immigration and Naturalization Service (now Department of Homeland Security), the bureau in 2001 lowered that estimate to 126,465. The bureau also estimated that from 1990 to 2000, the island lost 111,336 more people to the mainland than it gained. For 2000 to 2010, the bureau estimated Puerto Rico had a net loss of 192,000 people younger than 65 (Bhaskar et al, 2013). More recent Census Bureau estimates put the net loss for all age groups at 144,000 for 2010 to 2013.

Migration from the island was relatively low during the 1970s; even using the passenger-traffic method, it was less than 27,000 (Duany, 2003). Therefore, recent migration from the island is the highest since at least the 1960s.

⁶ According to [annual Census Bureau population estimates](#), the island's population grew by small amounts from 2000 to 2004, and in 2005 began to decline each year.

hold less skilled jobs (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2014).

According to a 2012 report on the Puerto Rican economy by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, “Puerto Rico’s economic progress has stalled: the Island has been operating below its potential for some time and the competitiveness of the economy continues to deteriorate.” The report cited persistently high unemployment and a low labor force participation rate, as well as heavy reliance on transfer payments such as food stamps ([Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2012](#)).

The island’s recent economic crisis was fueled both by the overall U.S. recession and factors unique to the island. These included an end to longstanding Puerto Rican government corporate tax breaks in 2006, which led to business shutdowns and public- and private-sector layoffs. More recently, the three major ratings agencies downgraded Puerto Rico’s debt to junk status this year, citing its long history of economic weakness ([New York Times, 2014](#)). The island’s debt burden began to grow after government expenses began outstripping revenues in the late 1990s ([Federal Reserve, 2012](#)).

Still, the 2012 Federal Reserve Bank of New York report also pointed to strengths in the island’s economy, such as improving levels of schooling and a bilingual workforce. The island also benefits from ties to the U.S. and the easy access of island residents to the mainland.

This report mainly analyzes the demographic and economic characteristics of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin living in the 50 U.S. states and District of Columbia, including comparisons of those born on the mainland and island, as well as characteristics of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin living in Puerto Rico. It compares these various groups with each other and with other U.S. Hispanics. In addition, the report examines characteristics of recent migrants from Puerto Rico to the mainland and compares them with earlier migrants. Demographic analysis is based mainly on

About The Term “Puerto Rican”

When the term “Puerto Ricans” is used in this report, it usually means people who self-identify as Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin; most statistics and analysis included here are about this group. Sometimes, “Puerto Ricans” is used to refer to the total population of the island of Puerto Rico, in which case that is clearly stated. However, the two groups are quite similar. As of 2012, Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin made up 96% of the population of the island of Puerto Rico.

Some Census Bureau statistics about the island used in this report are only available for the total population, and not specifically for Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin. They include the 2013 population (not yet released for Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin at the time this report was published), as well as net migration statistics (departures from the island minus arrivals). In addition, counts for Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin on the island are not available before 2000 because the Hispanic-origin question was not asked on the island census until then.

tabulations from the Census Bureau's 2012 American Community Survey and the 2012 Puerto Rico Community Survey.

Chapter 1: Puerto Ricans on the U.S. Mainland

The population of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin on the U.S. mainland has more than doubled since 1980, rising to 4.9 million in 2012 from 2 million. The 2012 total alone was 45% higher than 2000's 3.4 million. Still, the Puerto Rican origin population has grown less rapidly than U.S. Hispanics overall, whose numbers more than tripled from 1980 to 2012 and grew by half from 2000 to 2012.

Puerto Rican origin population growth has been powered mainly by an increase in those born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, rather than by the increasing influx of migrants from the island. Mainland-born Puerto Ricans made up 69% of stateside Puerto Ricans in 2012, and their share has grown in recent years. This group has more than tripled in size since 1980 (1 million to 3.4 million), and grew 21% from 2007 to 2012.

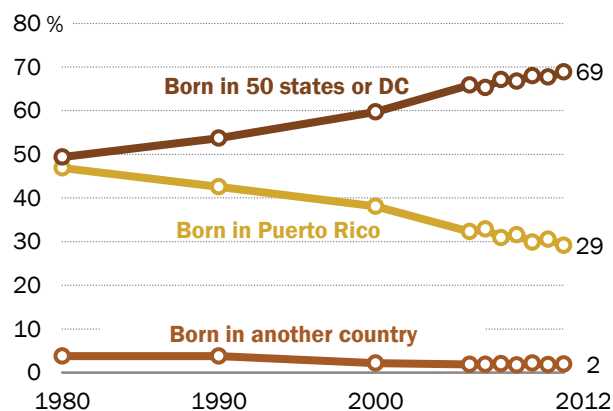
On the other hand, the number of island-born Puerto Ricans on the mainland, 1.4 million in 2012, grew by only 51% from 1980 to 2012, and by 2% from 2007 to 2012. In 2012, island-born Puerto Ricans made up 29% of all stateside Puerto Ricans, down from about half in 1980.

There are notable differences in the characteristics of mainland-born and island-born Puerto Ricans living stateside. (See [Appendix A](#) tables for more details.) For example, the share of young, middle-aged and older people among all Puerto Ricans on the mainland and among other U.S. Hispanics is about the same. But there are notably fewer children and more elderly among island-born Puerto Ricans than among their mainland-born counterparts and other Hispanics.

In terms of language skills, Puerto Ricans (83%) are more likely than other U.S. mainland Hispanics (66%) to be proficient in English, meaning that they speak it very well or only speak English at home. The overall number is driven by high English proficiency among those born in the 50 states or District of Columbia (95%), compared with lower proficiency among the island born (60%).

FIGURE 6

Among Puerto Ricans in States and D.C., Births on Mainland Drive Growth



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the American Community Survey (2006-2012) and decennial censuses (1980, 1990, 2000), Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). 2006-2009 ACS use Pew Research Center revised weights.

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Education and Economics

Puerto Ricans overall have more education than other U.S. Hispanics, and those born on the mainland have higher education levels than those born on the island.

Among Puerto Ricans living in the 50 U.S. states and District of Columbia, a higher share of adults ages 25 and older has attended or graduated from college (48%) than is true for other U.S. Hispanics. A lower share has no more than a high school education (52% to 64% in 2012).

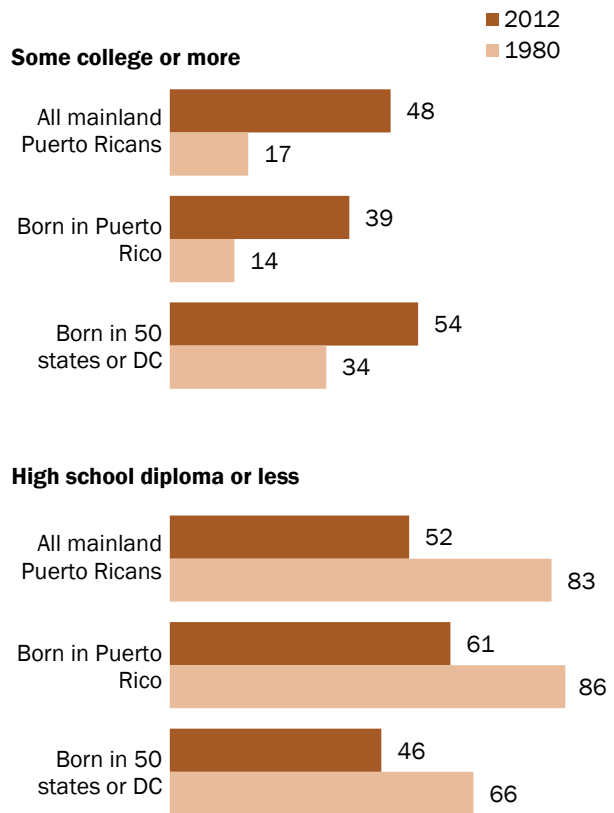
As with other characteristics explored in this report, there are differences in education levels between mainland-born and island-born Puerto Ricans who live stateside. Mainland-born Puerto Ricans are more likely to have at least some college experience (54% versus 39%) and less likely to have a high school diploma or less (46% versus 61%). Overall, 18% of mainland-born Puerto Ricans have a bachelor's degree compared with 15% of island-born Puerto Ricans.

Economically, mainland Puerto Ricans overall are less well off than other Hispanics, with median household incomes in 2012 of \$41,400, compared with \$46,000 for other Latinos. Mainland-born Puerto Ricans actually have higher median household incomes than other Hispanics (\$47,840 in 2012). By contrast, the median household incomes among island-born Puerto Ricans are lower, at \$34,500 in 2012. Puerto Ricans overall have a lower homeownership rate (38%) than other Hispanics (47%), but there is little difference for Puerto Ricans by birthplace. The poverty rate of Puerto Ricans (27% in 2012) is slightly higher than for other U.S. Hispanics (25%). Overall poverty rates are similar for mainland-born and island-born Puerto Ricans.

FIGURE 7

Education Levels of the Mainland Puerto Rican Origin Population, 1980 and 2012

% of adults ages 25 and older



Note: The Census Bureau revised its educational attainment classifications in 1990, so 1980 and 2012 data may not be strictly comparable.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the 2012 American Community Survey and 1980 decennial census, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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Geographic Distribution

Half of the nation's Puerto Rican origin population lives in the Northeast (52% in 2012), 30% live in the South and the remainder is split between the Midwest and West.⁷

By state, New York is the most popular among Puerto Ricans born on the U.S. mainland (23% live there), while Florida is the most popular among island-born Puerto Ricans (25% live there).

Although the Northeast retains the largest share of Puerto Ricans—both U.S. and island born—its primacy has weakened as other regions, particularly the South, have risen as settlement destinations.

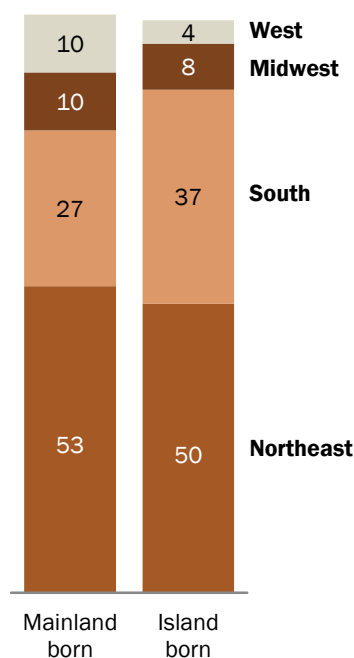
The Northeast houses a markedly smaller share of mainland Puerto Ricans than it once did. In 1980, about three-quarters (74%) of Puerto Ricans lived in the Northeast, and as recently as 2000, six-in-ten (61%) did. The U.S.-born Puerto Rican population continued to grow in the Northeast through 2012, but more slowly than in other regions. This led to a decline in the share of U.S.-born Puerto Ricans living in the Northeast, from 61% in 2000 to 53% in 2012. Meanwhile, the number of island-born Puerto Ricans living in the Northeast actually declined from 2000 to 2012, after growing slowly during the 1980s and 1990s. Today 725,000 island-born Puerto Ricans live in the Northeast, down from 790,000 in 2000.

Meanwhile, the Puerto Rican population has increased more sharply in the South than in any other region, whether growth is measured since 1980, 1990 or 2000. From 1980 to 2012, the South's population of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin rose by 694%, and between 2000 and 2012 it nearly doubled (96%). Growth has been more rapid in the South than in other regions for both mainland- and island-born Puerto Ricans.

FIGURE 8

Half of Stateside Puerto Ricans Live in Northeast

% who live in...



Note: See footnote on page 14 for regional definitions.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the 2012 American Community Survey, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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⁷ The U.S. Census Bureau defines the U.S. regions as 1) Northeast: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; 2) Midwest: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin; 3) South: Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia; 4) West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

Puerto Ricans dominate the Hispanic population in some Northeast states. As a share of all Hispanics, Puerto Ricans are the majority origin group in Connecticut (54.8%) and Pennsylvania (54.1%). Puerto Ricans are the largest origin group (though not a majority) among all Hispanics in Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York.⁸ They are the second largest origin group in Florida, after Cubans.

The local impact of these trends can be seen in a Pew Research analysis of data for the nation's roughly 360 counties with at [least a thousand Puerto Rican residents in 2010](#).

Only five counties out of those with at least a thousand Puerto Rican residents—all in the greater New York metropolitan area—experienced declines in their Puerto Rican populations from 2000 to 2010. Four—Bronx, Kings, New York and Queens counties—are in New York state, and the fifth was Hudson County, N.J. Of the five counties with sharpest growth in their Puerto Rican populations during this period, three are in the South—Union County, N.C.; Paulding County, Ga.; and Forsyth County, Ga. The others were Pinal County, Ariz., and Kendall County, Ill.

Puerto Rican Migration and Dispersion

The South was the top regional destination for recent moves by Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin from the island to the mainland, according to a Pew Research analysis of American Community Survey estimates for 2006 to 2012. Among all 334,000 moves during that period, 48% were to the South, including 31% to Florida, the state that attracted the largest share. New York, the next most popular state, accounted for 10% of recent moves off the island by Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin.⁹

Among all Puerto Ricans who relocated from one region to another from 2006 to 2012, the South again was the top regional destination. The South was the first-choice region for the majority of moves by Puerto Ricans leaving the Northeast (81%), Midwest (56%) and West (60%).

⁸ Maine, North Dakota and Vermont had sample sizes too small to provide reliable estimates.

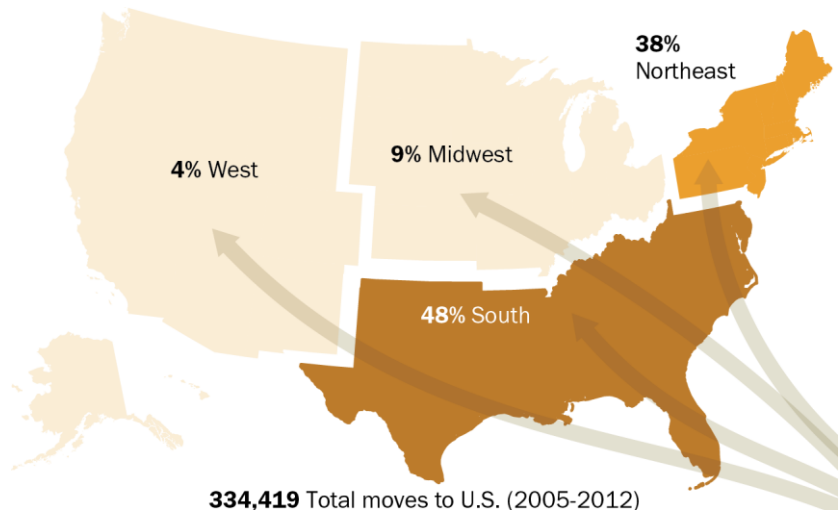
⁹ This section discusses moves, rather than people who moved; the six combined years of data likely include multiple moves by some people.

New York and Florida were the most likely destinations that Puerto Ricans moved to from other states. About one-in-five moves (20%) were to New York and one-in-seven (14%) to Florida. About three-in-ten (31%) moves to Florida were from New York, and about the same share (29%) was in the other direction. Texas, which some research (Garcia-Ellin, 2014) has pinpointed as a new destination state for Puerto Ricans, especially the mainland born, attracted movers from many states and accounted for 6% of moves during the 2006 to 2012 period. The highest share (21%) came from Florida, while 9% came from both New York and California.

FIGURE 9

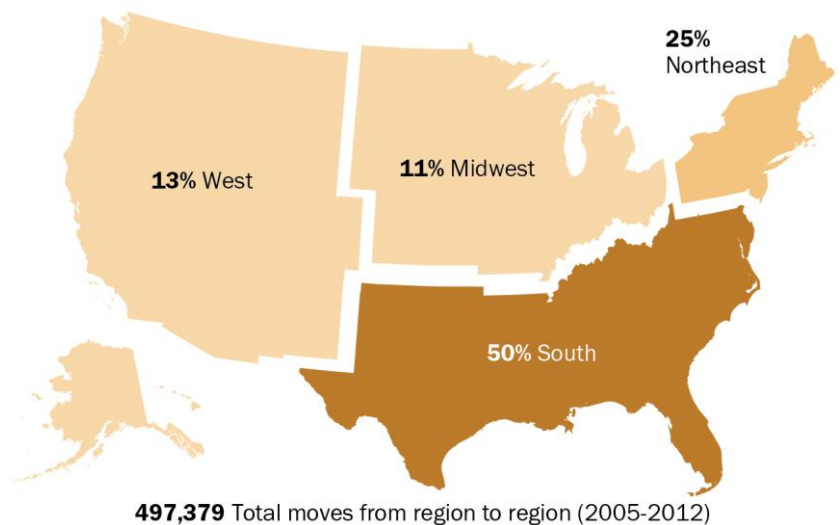
Among Puerto Ricans, Half of all Recent Moves From the Island to the Mainland Were to the South ...

% of moves from Puerto Rico to the U.S. mainland, 2005-2012



... And Half of all Recent Moves by Puerto Ricans Across U.S. Regions Were to the South

% of moves across regional borders within the U.S., 2005-2012



Note: Based on Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin. Shares are of moves, rather than people who moved; the seven combined years of data likely include multiple moves by some people.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of American Community Survey merged sample, 2006-2012, Integrated public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). 2006-2009 ACS use Pew Research Center revised weights.

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Chapter 2: Island Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin

The population of Puerto Rico, which had been growing since at least the 1700s, has drifted downward in recent years. The decrease from 3.8 million in 2000 to 3.6 million in 2013 represents the first sustained decline since U.S. census-taking began in the early 20th century. The Census Bureau projects that the island's population will be about 3 million in 2050 following decades of slow decline.¹⁰

The island's economic crisis may be driving thousands of Puerto Ricans to seek opportunities on the mainland, or to return there. In addition, the potential for population growth on the island is weakened by persistently low fertility rates (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2015).

The vast majority of the island's population—96% in 2012—consists of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, most of whom were born on the island. Most Puerto Ricans who left the island in recent years also were born there. However, the smaller mainland-born population declined more steeply from 2000 to 2012 (20%) than the population of island-born Puerto Ricans (2%).¹¹

Most Puerto Ricans on the island—89%—say they speak Spanish at home. But 20% of island Puerto Ricans say they are highly proficient in English—that is, they either speak only English at home or speak English very well. That compares with 83% of mainland Puerto Ricans who say they are proficient in English.

Table 1

Nine-in-Ten Puerto Rican Residents are Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin Born on the Island

2012 population by birthplace and Hispanic origin

	Number	Share (%)
Island-born Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin	3,349,000	91.3
Mainland-born Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin	154,000	4.2
Other Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin	11,000	0.3
Other Hispanics	119,000	3.2
Non-Hispanics	34,000	0.9

Notes: Percentages calculated from unrounded numbers.

Source: Pew Research analysis of data from the 2012 Puerto Rican Community Survey, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

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¹⁰ The Census Bureau's population projections for Puerto Rico can be found at <http://1.usa.gov/WGdgpP>.

¹¹ As noted previously, total population figures are available for the island through 2013, but characteristics of residents are only available through 2012.

Economics and Education

Median household income and annual personal earnings of Puerto Ricans on the island are markedly lower than for Puerto Ricans on the mainland. In 2012, for example, earnings of mainland Puerto Ricans (\$28,750) were more than 80% higher than for Puerto Ricans on the island (\$16,000).¹² Median household income on the island was slightly lower in 2012 than in 2000.

Puerto Rican island residents also are more likely to be living in poverty (45%) than mainland Puerto Ricans (27%). However, Puerto Ricans on the island are more likely to be homeowners than those on the mainland—70% of households are owner-occupied, compared with 38% for stateside Puerto Ricans.

The lower economic standing of Puerto Ricans on the island, compared with those on the mainland, reflects both the longstanding weakness of the island's economy and a fiscal crisis that erupted in 2006.

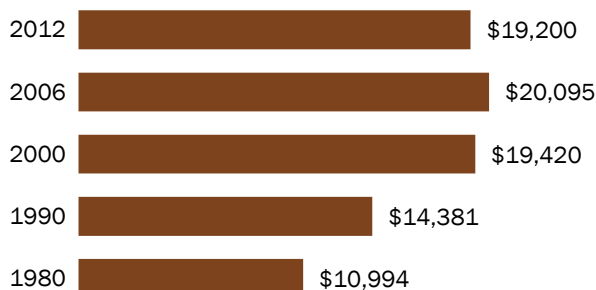
Puerto Ricans on the island are both more and less educated than all Puerto Ricans on the mainland. A higher share has at least a bachelor's degree (24% vs. 17%). And a somewhat higher share did not complete high school (27% vs. 23%). However, island-born Puerto Ricans living stateside are less educated than are Puerto Ricans who live on the island. For example, while 24% of Puerto Ricans on the island have at least a bachelor's degree, 15% of island-born Puerto Ricans living stateside have one.

A 2012 Federal Reserve Bank of New York report on Puerto Rico ([Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2012](#)) said the island economy has been stagnant since the 1970s, with a stubbornly high

FIGURE 10

Rise in Puerto Rican Median Household Income Stalls Since 2000

Based on Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin living on the island (unless otherwise noted)



Note: In 2012 dollars. 2012, 2006 and 2000 figures based on Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin. 1990 and 1980 figures based on total population of Puerto Rico.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the 2006 and 2012 Puerto Rican Community Survey and 1980, 1990, 2000 Decennial Census, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). 2006 PRCS uses Pew Research Center revised weights.

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¹² Personal earnings and household income figures for people living on the U.S. mainland are inflated by 15% in order to account for the higher cost of living on the island of Puerto Rico.

unemployment rate that has been roughly double that on the U.S. mainland for decades. The island's June unemployment rate, 13.1%, compares with 6.1% for the U.S. mainland.¹³

The Federal Reserve report also cited Puerto Rico's labor force participation rate as among the world's lowest. In 2011, only 41% of the population was in the workforce, which the report said was 20 points lower than the labor force participation rate among all U.S. residents on the mainland.

The report also noted that transfer payments, especially food stamps and disability payments, account for a large share of personal income on the island—roughly 40%, more than double the share on the U.S. mainland among all U.S. residents. The availability of these benefits, as well as a large underground economy, may discourage people from joining the workforce, the report said.

Other researchers have cited the island's perennially high poverty rate (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2015).

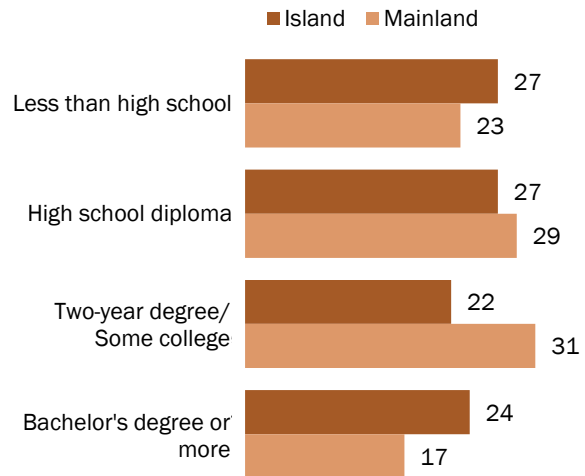
The island-specific problems included the end in 2006 to longstanding Puerto Rican government corporate tax breaks, which resulted in the loss of thousands of manufacturing jobs. Responding to a budget deficit, island officials imposed a sales tax on island residents for the first time in 2006, which had a disproportionate impact on low-to-middle-income residents. The economic problems led to layoffs of government workers, especially the less educated. Government employment on the island fell by a reported 14.3% between 2006 and 2011. (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2014 and 2015).

The island's economy is a factor in its population loss, but the island's growth also has been held back by a declining rate of natural increase, which is the number of births minus the number of deaths.

FIGURE 11

Education Levels Differ Between Puerto Ricans on the Island and U.S. Mainland

% of adults ages 25 and older, 2012



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the 2012 American Community Survey and 2012 Puerto Rican Community Survey, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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¹³ The latest Bureau of Labor Statistics data for Puerto Rico can be found [here](#); data for the nation can be found [here](#).

In 2013, the island's preliminary birth rate was 10.8 per thousand people, compared with [12.5 for the mainland U.S.](#) The island's birth rate was 13.4 in 2004, and it decreased in each year but one since then, according to statistics included in a 2013 report to the governor by the [Puerto Rico Planning Board](#). The number of births on the island, 39,000 in 2013 preliminary data, has declined by a quarter since 2004.

Meanwhile, according to the same report, there were 30,000 deaths in Puerto Rico in 2013, about the same number as in 2004, when the island's population was 6% higher. In 2004, there were 21,000 more births than deaths, but in 2013, that had declined to 9,000 more births than deaths.

Chapter 3: Recent and Previous Puerto Rican Migrants

From 2005 to 2011, an average of about 48,000 Puerto Ricans a year moved from the island of Puerto Rico to the U.S. mainland, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of data from the American Community Survey. The annual totals ranged from 44,000 to 52,000.

Looking only at island-born migrants of Puerto Rican origin, 40,000 people on average left the island for the mainland each year. The annual totals ranged from 37,000 to 44,000 people.

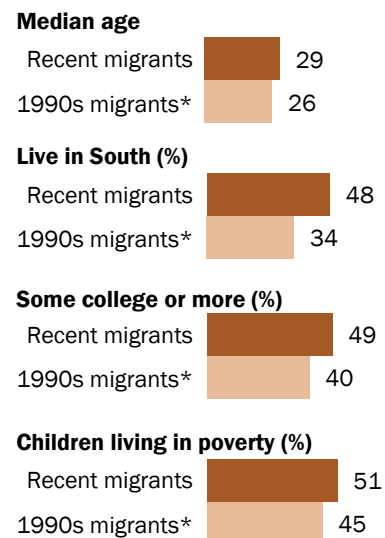
A Pew Research comparison of recent island-born migrants who left Puerto Rico for the mainland with those who relocated in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s finds the newer migrants have lower household incomes and homeownership levels, and higher poverty rates. There also are other marked differences in where the two groups live and in their education levels.

Although more recent Puerto Rican migrants to the mainland are better educated than earlier waves, more recent migrants in the prime working ages (30-64 in 2011) are less educated than people who remain on the island, according to other research (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2014). A Pew Research analysis of census data indicates that Puerto Ricans on the island are more likely than island-born Puerto Ricans living stateside to have at least a bachelor's degree (24% versus 15% in 2012). A lower share did not finish high school (27% to 32%).

Recent migrants, especially men, compared with earlier migrants, also are more likely to hold blue-collar jobs in low-skilled industries such as construction, maintenance and agriculture, and less likely to hold professional jobs (Birson, 2014). On the island, the earnings payoff for those holding college degrees rose more from 2006 to 2011 than for those on the mainland, which means that less-skilled workers had more incentive than high-skilled ones to migrate (Mora, Davila and Rodriguez, 2014).

FIGURE 12

Comparing Recent and Previous Waves of Migrants From Puerto Rico to the Mainland



Note: Migrants counted in 2012 arrived from 2000 to 2012. *"1990s migrants" were counted in 2000 and arrived from 1988 to 2000.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2012 American Community Survey and 2000 Census, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)

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This new migration pattern differs from the “brain drain” pattern that some research points to in earlier generations of migrants and could indicate that migration now is part of a cycle that further weakens the Puerto Rican economy, rather than being an outlet for people seeking refuge from unemployment (Birson, 2014).

This section uses U.S. Census Bureau data to compare characteristics of Puerto Rican island-born migrants in 2012 who arrived in the years from 2000 to 2012 with comparable migrants in 2000 who arrived in the years from 1988 to 2000.¹⁴

Characteristics and Geographic Distribution

More recent migrants are somewhat older, with a higher median age. As table 2 in [Appendix A](#) shows, they are less likely to be ages 18-29 (23% vs. 28%) and more likely to be 40 or older (27% vs. 22%).

In a reflection of the greater dispersion of the Puerto Rican population on the mainland outside the Northeast, a higher share of more recent island-born migrants (48%) than earlier ones (34%) settle in the South, according to data within 12 years of their arrival. The newer island-born migrants also are somewhat more likely to settle in Florida (31% vs. 25%).

Meanwhile, the Northeast, the traditional destination of past waves of Puerto Rican migrants, has been less of a magnet for newer island-born migrants: 41% of recent migrants live there now, compared with 54% of those who arrived in the late 1980s and 1990s and were counted in 2000. A smaller share of recent migrants, compared with earlier ones, settled in New York (9% vs. 17%).

Both waves of island-born migrants have similar earnings within 12 years of arrival, but household incomes are higher for the earlier migrants (\$32,740 in 2012 dollars, compared with \$25,000 for more recent migrants). The homeownership rate also is lower for more recent migrants (22% to 26%), perhaps reflecting a decline in the overall U.S. homeownership rate compared with the late 1990s.

However, a higher share in each age group is in poverty among recent arrivals compared with earlier ones. Among children, 51% of recent migrants and 45% of 1990s migrants lived in poverty.

¹⁴ For recent migrants, characteristics come from the 2012 American Community Survey. For earlier migrants, characteristics come from the 2000 U.S. Census. These findings are based on those migrants still in the U.S. in 2012 or 2000; some migrants who arrived from 2006-2012 or from 1988-2000 may have left or died in the interim.

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Appendix A: Additional Tables

APPENDIX TABLE 1

Characteristics of Puerto Ricans¹ in Puerto Rico and on the U.S. Mainland, 2012

% of the total population in each column (unless otherwise noted)

	Puerto Ricans on the Island²	-Puerto Ricans on the U.S. Mainland³⁻⁻	Born in Puerto Rico	Born in 50 States or D.C.	Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics on the Mainland³
		All ⁴			
Gender					
Male	48	49	48	50	51
Female	52	51	52	50	49
Age					
Younger than 5	6	9	1	13	10
5-17	18	23	8	29	24
18-29	17	20	12	23	20
30-39	13	14	16	13	16
40-49	13	13	17	11	13
50-64	18	14	25	9	12
65 and older	16	7	20	1	6
Median age (in years)	37	28	47	21	27
Marital Status (for adults 18 and older)					
Married	40	37	45	32	47
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	25	20	28	15	16
Never married	35	42	27	53	36
Educational Attainment (for adults 25 and older)					
Less than high school diploma	27	23	32	15	37
High school diploma or equivalent	27	29	28	30	26
Some college/2-year degree	22	31	24	36	23
Bachelor's degree or more	24	17	15	18	14
Median Annual Personal Earnings⁵ (for those ages 16 and older w/ earnings)					
All workers	\$16,000	\$28,750	\$29,900	\$27,600	\$23,920
Full-time, year-round workers	\$22,000	\$41,055	\$40,250	\$41,400	\$34,500
Median Annual Household Income⁵	\$19,200	\$41,400	\$34,500	\$47,840	\$46,000
Homeownership Rate (for household heads)	70	38	38	37	47
Average Household Size (number of people)	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.0	3.6
Persons in Households by Type of Household⁶					
In non-family households	12	14	20	11	9
In family households	88	86	80	89	91
In married couple households	49	45	48	44	58
In other family households	39	41	32	45	33

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APPENDIX TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

Characteristics of Puerto Ricans¹ in Puerto Rico and on the U.S. Mainland, 2012*% of the total population in each column (unless otherwise noted)*

	Puerto Ricans on the Island²	-Puerto Ricans on the U.S. Mainland³⁻	Born in Puerto Rico	Born in 50 States or D.C.	Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics on the Mainland³
		All⁴			
Living in Poverty, by Age Group⁷					
All ages	45	27	28	27	25
Younger than 18	57	35	50	34	34
18-64	42	23	26	22	21
65 and older	40	23	24	16	19
Language (for those ages 5 and older)					
Speaks only English at home	5	38	8	52	24
Does not speak only English at home...	95	62	92	48	76
...and speaks English very well	15	45	52	42	41
...and speaks English less than very well	80	17	40	5	34
Year Began Living in the 50 States or D.C. (for those born outside the 50 states or D.C.)					
Before 1990	--	--	54	--	35
1990-1999	--	--	16	--	28
2000-2005	--	--	13	--	23
2006 and later	--	--	17	--	14
Region and Top Five States of Residence in U.S.⁸					
Northeast	--	52	50	53	10
New York	--	22	18	23	5
New Jersey	--	9	8	10	2
Pennsylvania	--	9	9	9	1
Connecticut	--	6	7	5	<0.5
South	--	30	37	27	37
Florida	--	18	25	15	8
Midwest	--	10	8	10	9
West	--	9	4	10	44

Note: Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Analysis is based on the following number of observations: Puerto Ricans on the island 31,503; All Puerto Ricans on the mainland 39,949; Mainland Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico 12,051; Mainland Puerto Ricans born in the 50 states or D.C. 27,025; Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics on the mainland 395,976.

¹ Puerto Ricans are Hispanics who self-identified as Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin (either born in Puerto Rico or they trace their family ancestry to Puerto Rico). ² Based on the 2012 Puerto Rico Community Survey (people who were living on the island of Puerto Rico in 2012). ³ Based on the 2012 American Community Survey (people who were living in the 50 states or District of Columbia in 2012). ⁴ All Puerto Ricans on the mainland includes those born in the U.S. or Puerto Rico, as well as those born in other countries. ⁵ Personal earnings and household income figures for persons living on the U.S. mainland are inflated by 15% in order to account for the higher cost of living on the island of Puerto Rico. In 2012, the Office of Personnel Management (<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-systems/nonforeign-areas/#url=COLA-Rates>) listed a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) of 14% in 2012 and the Department of Defense's Travel Management Office (<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/colaCalc.cfm>) listed a COLA of 16% in 2012. ⁶ The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters. ⁷ For detailed information on how poverty status is determined, see <http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/variables/POVERTY>. Due to the way in which the IPUMS assigns poverty values, these data will differ from those that might be provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. ⁸ Top five states are ranked based on all Puerto Ricans.

Source: Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project tabulations of the 2012 PRCS and 2012 ACS (1% IPUMS samples)

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APPENDIX TABLE 2

Characteristics of Recent Migrants¹ From Puerto Rico to the U.S. Mainland, 1988-2000 and 2000-2012 Cohorts*% of the total population in each column (unless otherwise noted)*

	—Island-born Puerto Ricans Living in the 50 States or D.C.—	
	Recent migrants in 2012 (First arrived in 2000-2012)	Recent migrants in 2000 (First arrived in 1988-2000)
Gender		
Male	51	49
Female	49	51
Age		
Younger than 5	4	5
5-17	26	27
18-29	23	28
30-39	21	19
40-49	13	11
50-64	9	7
65 and older	5	3
Median age (in years)	29	26
Marital Status (for adults 18 and older)		
Married	43	47
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	20	19
Never married	37	34
Educational Attainment (for adults 25 and older)		
Less than high school diploma	23	36
High school diploma or equivalent	28	23
Some college/2-year degree	26	23
Bachelor's degree or more	23	17
Median Annual Personal Earnings in 2012 dollars (for those ages 16 and older w/ earnings)		
All workers	\$21,000	\$22,000
Full-time, year-round workers	\$30,000	\$30,667
Median Annual Household Income	\$25,000	\$32,740
Homeownership Rate (for household heads)	22	26
Persons in Households by Type of Household²		
In non-family households	12	10
In family households	88	90
In married couple households	47	52
In other family households	41	38

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APPENDIX TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

Characteristics of Recent Migrants¹ From Puerto Rico to the U.S. Mainland, 1988-2000 and 2000-2012 Cohorts

% of the total population in each column (unless otherwise noted)

	Island-born Puerto Ricans Living in the 50 States or D.C.	
	Recent migrants in 2012 (First arrived in 2000-2012)	Recent migrants in 2000 (First arrived in 1988-2000)
Living in Poverty, by Age Group³		
All ages	37	34
Younger than 18	51	45
18-64	32	29
65 and older	30	18
Language (for those ages 5 and older)		
Speaks only English at home	5	7
Does not speak only English at home...	95	93
...and speaks English very well	48	44
...and speaks English less than very well	47	49
Region and Top Five States of Residence in U.S.⁴		
South	48	34
<i>Florida</i>	31	25
Northeast	41	54
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	10	9
<i>Massachusetts</i>	9	10
<i>New York</i>	9	17
<i>Connecticut</i>	7	8
Midwest	7	8
West	4	3

Note: Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Analysis is based on the following number of observation: Recent Puerto Rican migrants in 2012 (came in 2000 or later) 3,167; recent Puerto Rican migrants in 2000 (came in 1988-2000) 19,078.

¹ Recent Puerto Rican migrants are Hispanics living in the 50 states or District of Columbia who first arrived in the U.S. in the year of or up to 12 years prior to the survey, self-identified as Puerto Rican and were born on the island of Puerto Rico. ² The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters. ³ For detailed information on how poverty status is determined, see <http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/variables/POVERTY>. Due to the way in which the IPUMS assigns poverty values, these data will differ from those that might be provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. ⁴ Regions and top five states are ranked based on recent Puerto Rican migrants in 2012.

Source: Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project tabulations of the 2012 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample) and the 2000 decennial census (5% IPUMS sample)

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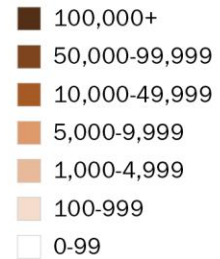
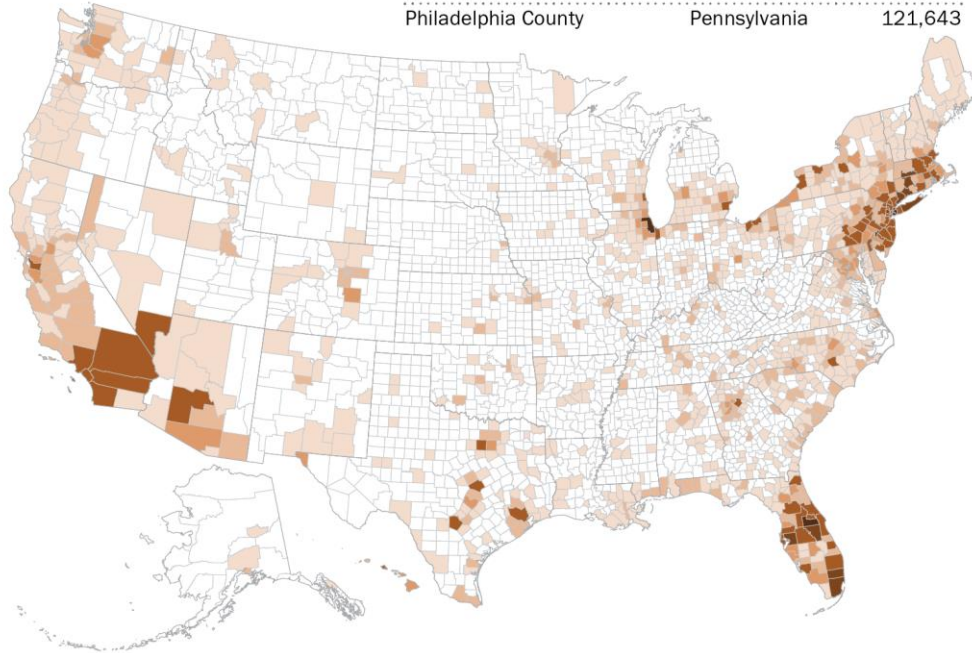
Appendix B: Maps of the U.S. Mainland and Puerto Rico

U.S. Puerto Rican Population

By county

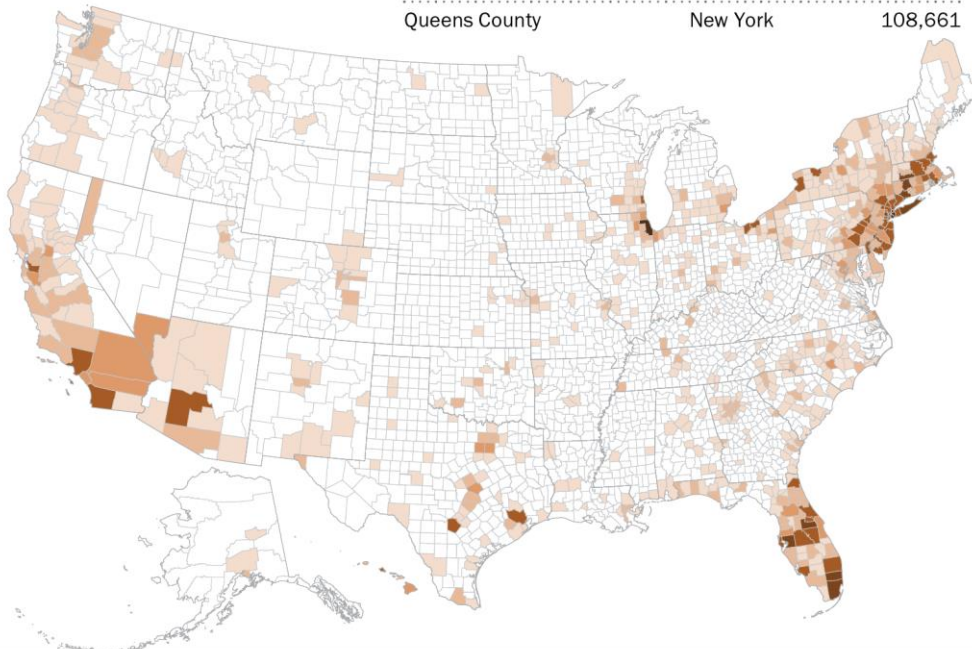
2010

Top five county Puerto Rican populations		State	Population
Bronx County		New York	298,921
Kings County		New York	176,528
Orange County		Florida	149,457
Cook County		Illinois	133,882
Philadelphia County		Pennsylvania	121,643



2000

Top five county Puerto Rican populations		State	Population
Bronx County		New York	319,240
Kings County		New York	213,025
Cook County		Illinois	130,414
New York County		New York	119,718
Queens County		New York	108,661



Notes: Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin are based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth in response to a question on the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. People who are of Puerto Rican origin could be born on the island of Puerto Rico, on the U.S. mainland or in another country.

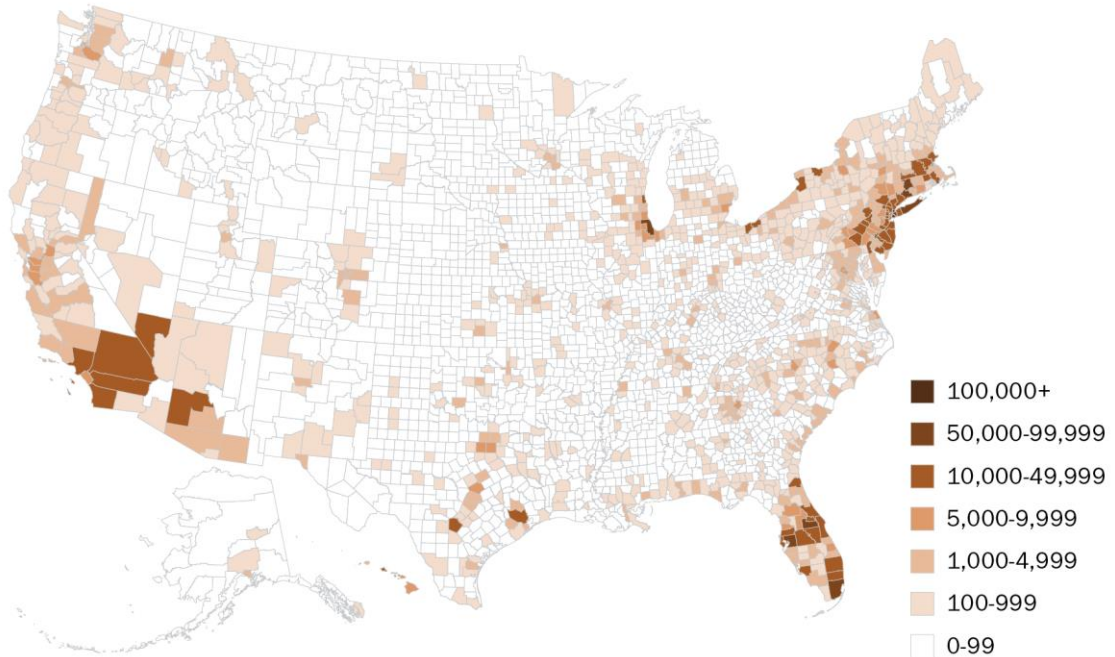
Source: 2010 and 2000 decennial censuses Summary File data

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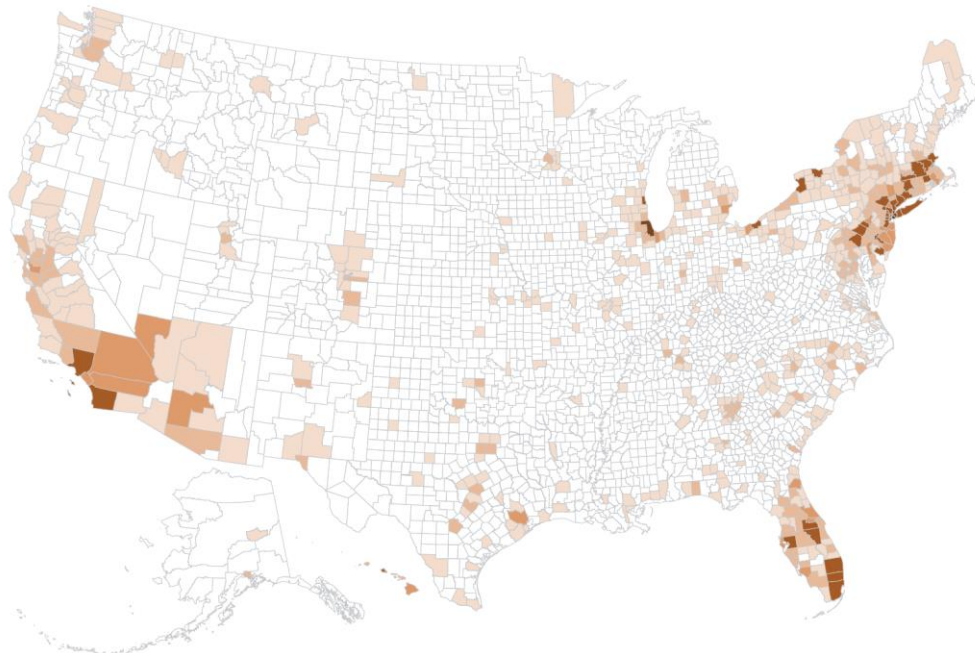
U.S. Mainland-born Puerto Rican Population

By county

2010



2000



Notes: Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin are based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth in response to a question on the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. County populations for mainland-born Puerto Ricans are approximate.

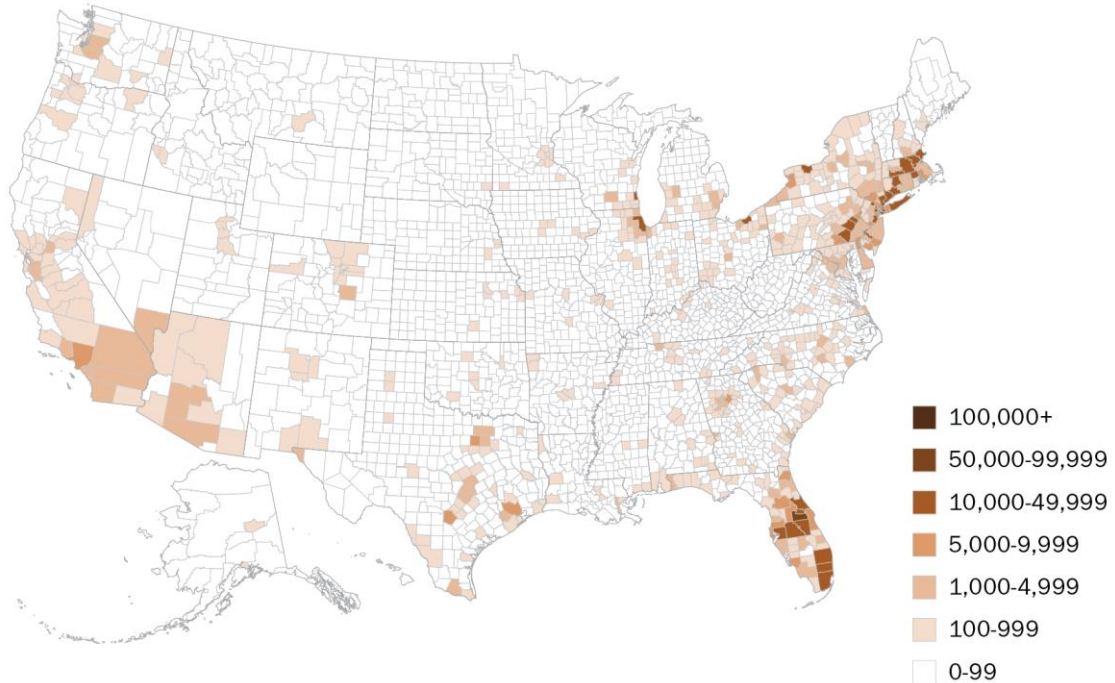
Source: 2006-2010 5-year American Community Survey data and 2010 and 2000 decennial censuses Summary File data.

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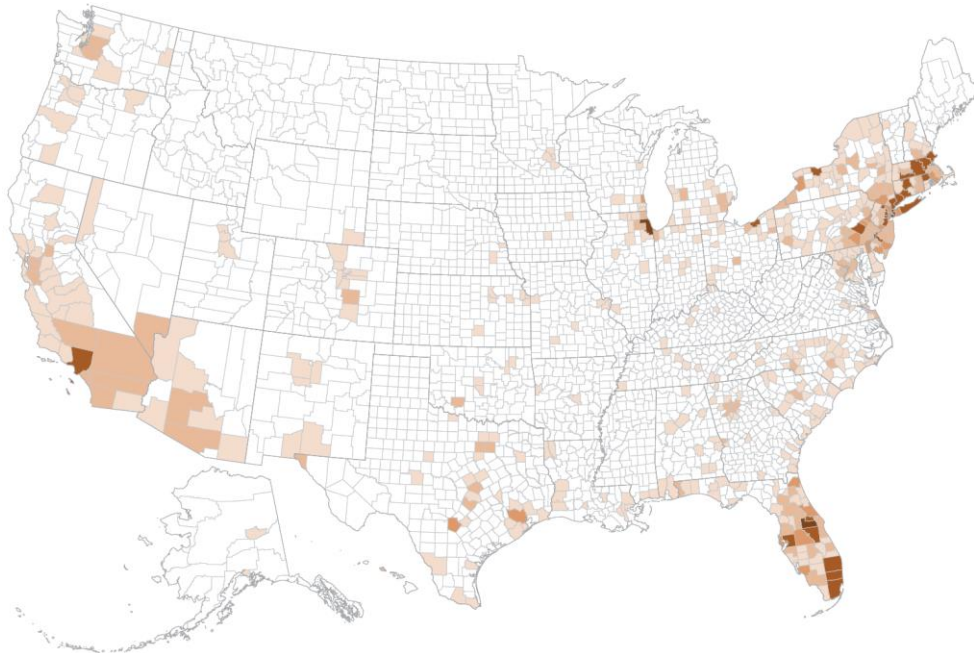
U.S. Island-born Puerto Rican Population

By county

2010



2000

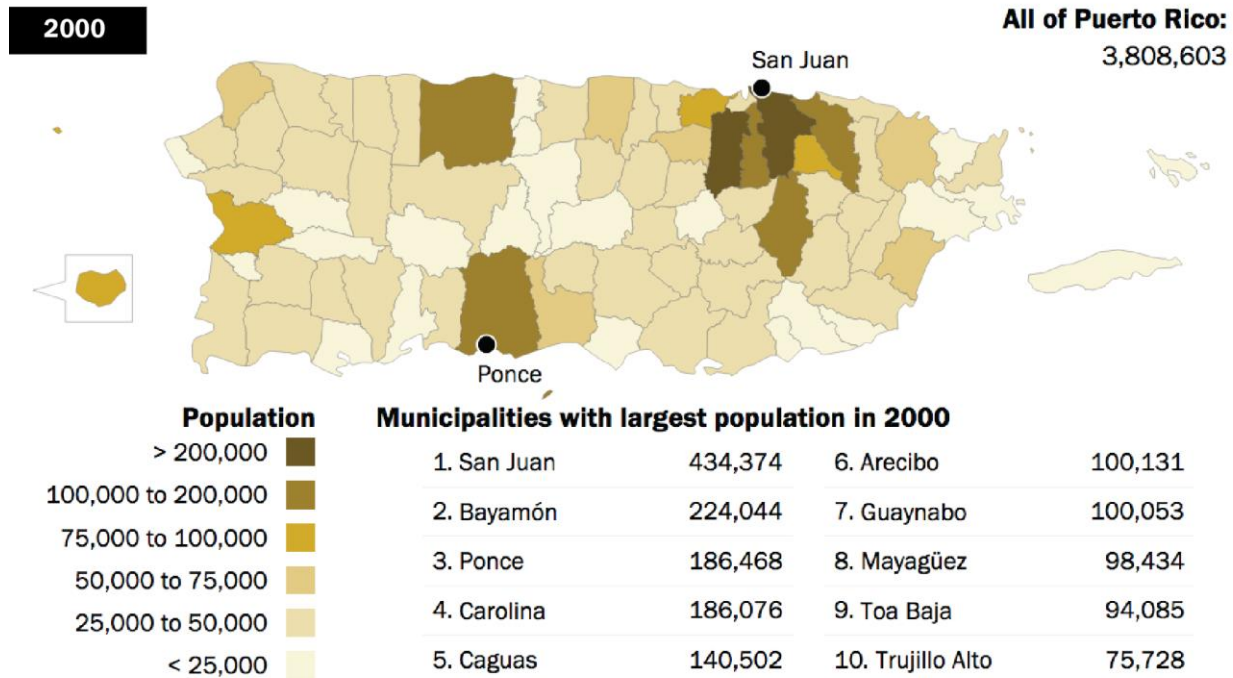
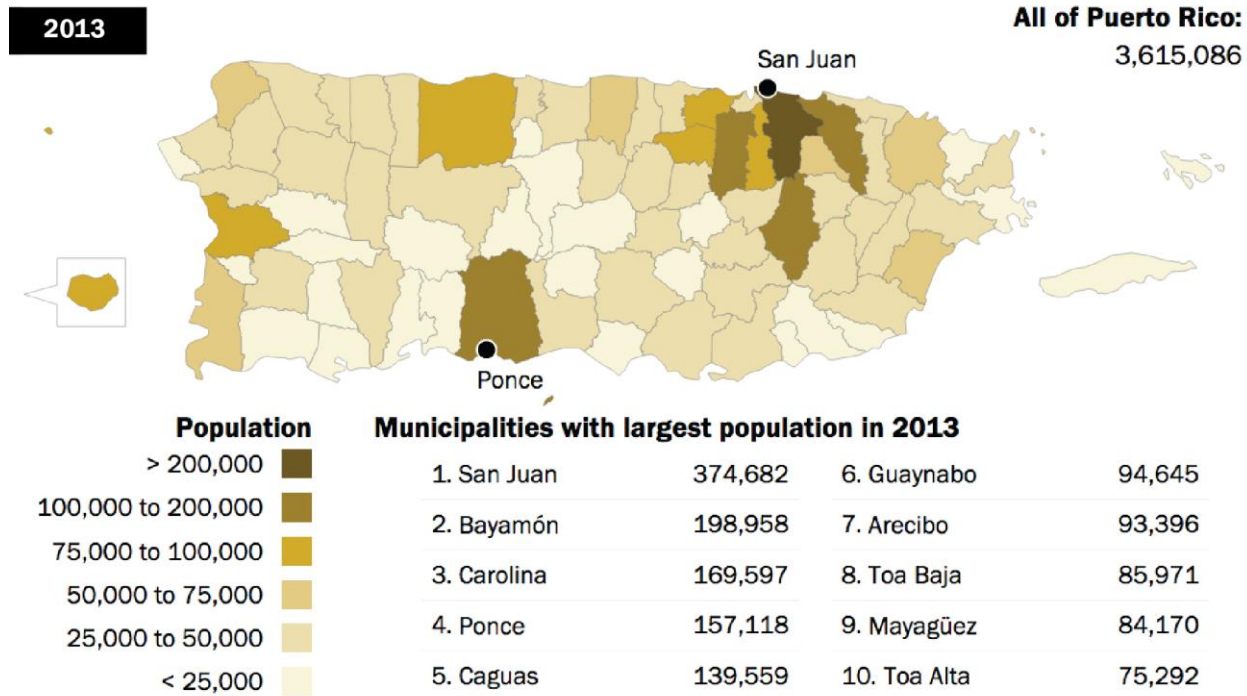


Notes: Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin are based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth in response to a question on the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. County populations for island-born Puerto Ricans are approximate.

Source: 2006-2010 5-year American Community Survey data and 2010 and 2000 decennial censuses Summary File data.

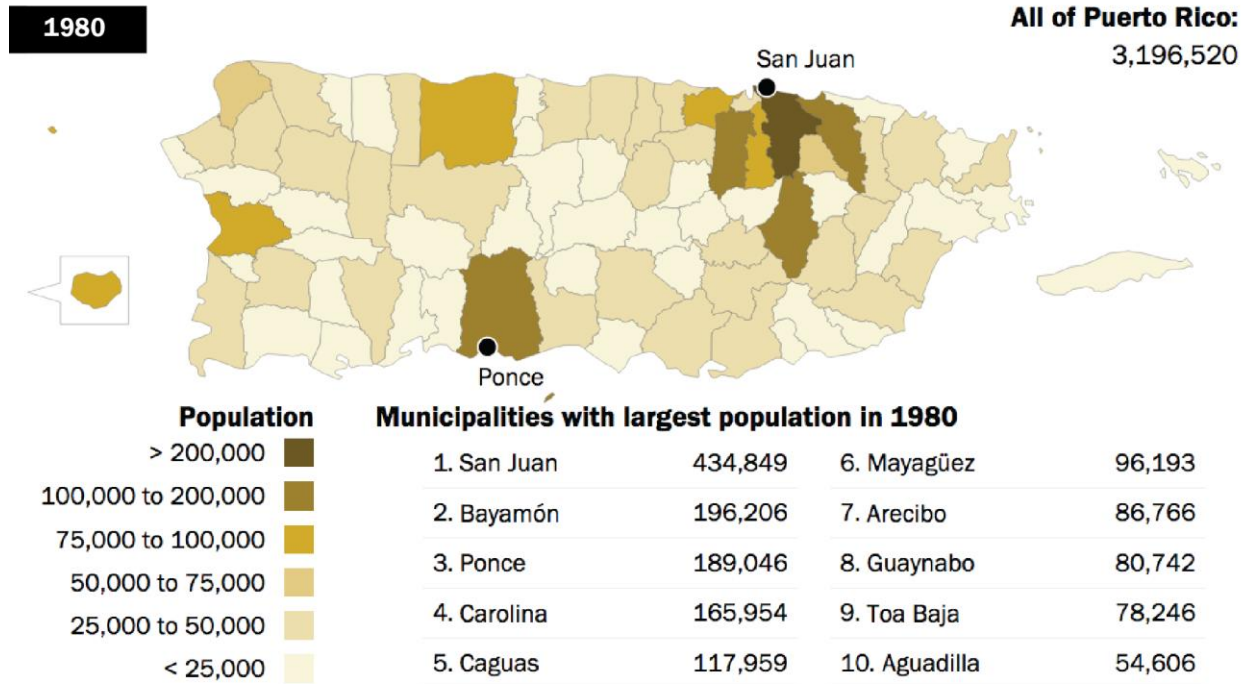
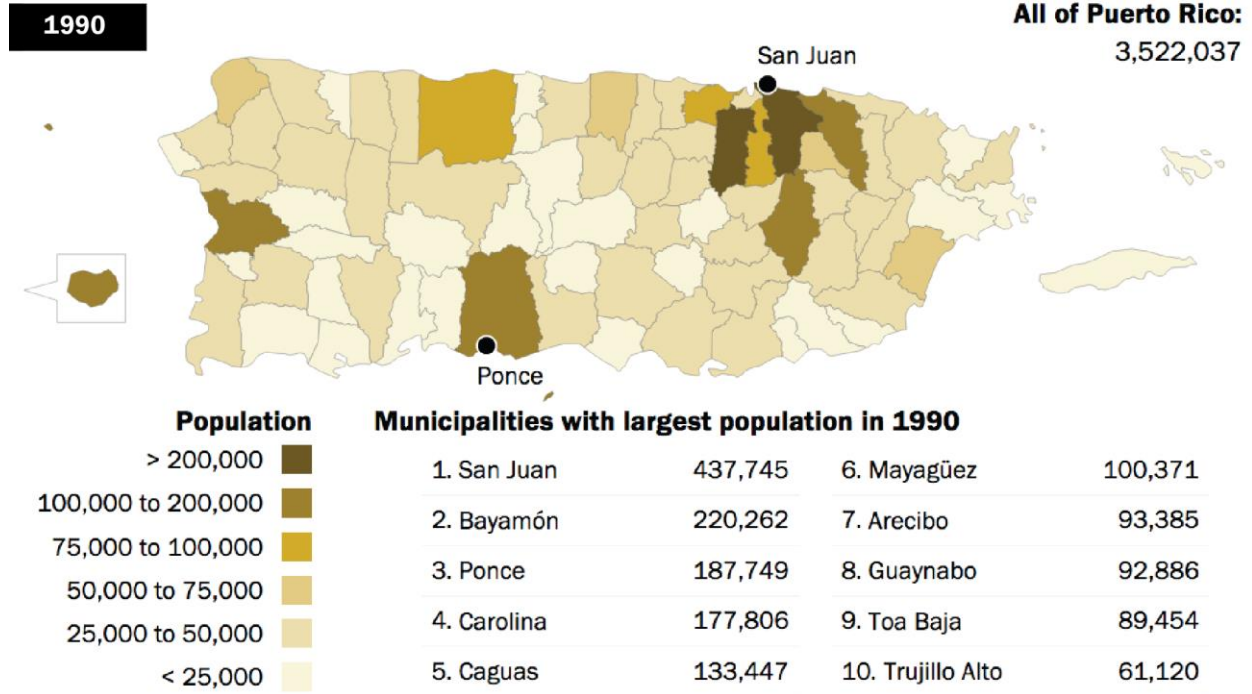
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Total Puerto Rico Population by Municipality



Notes: 2013 population estimates are as of July 1 of that year. 2000 population counts are as of April 1 of that year.
Source: For 2013, U.S. Census Bureau's annual estimates of the resident population. For 2000, U.S. Census Bureau decennial census, Summary File 1 (SF-1) data.

Total Puerto Rico Population by Municipality

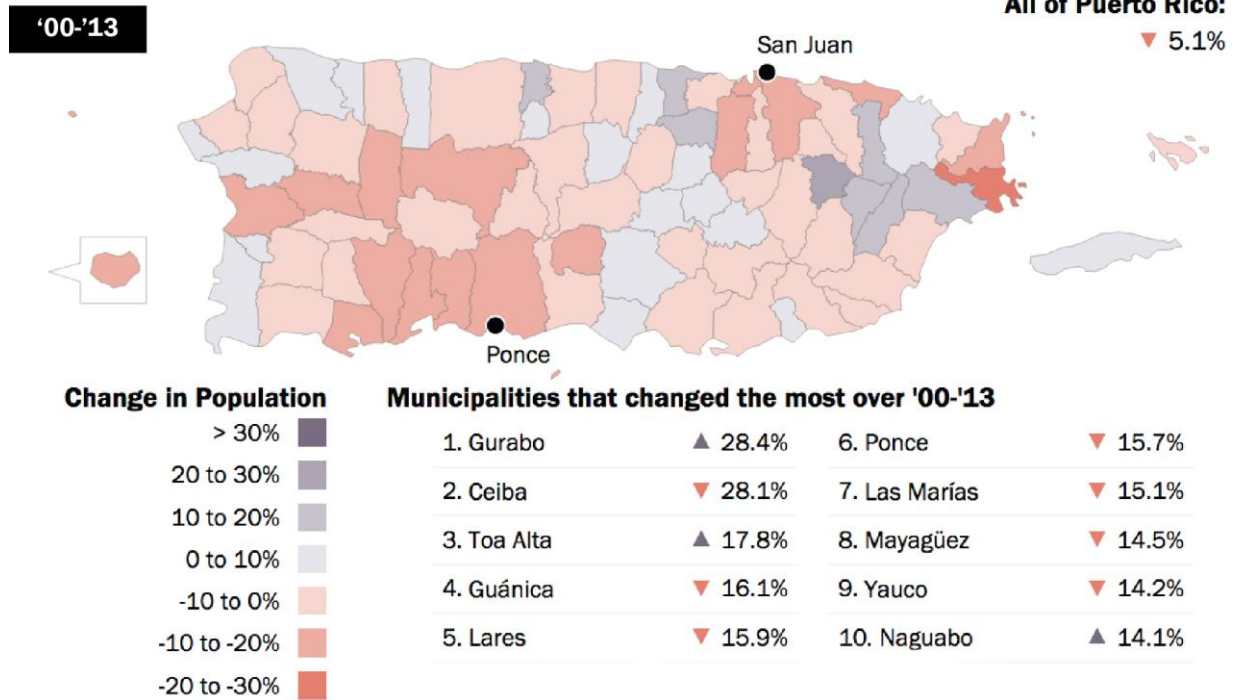


Notes: Population counts are as of April 1 of that year.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau decennial censuses, Summary File 1 (SF-1) data.

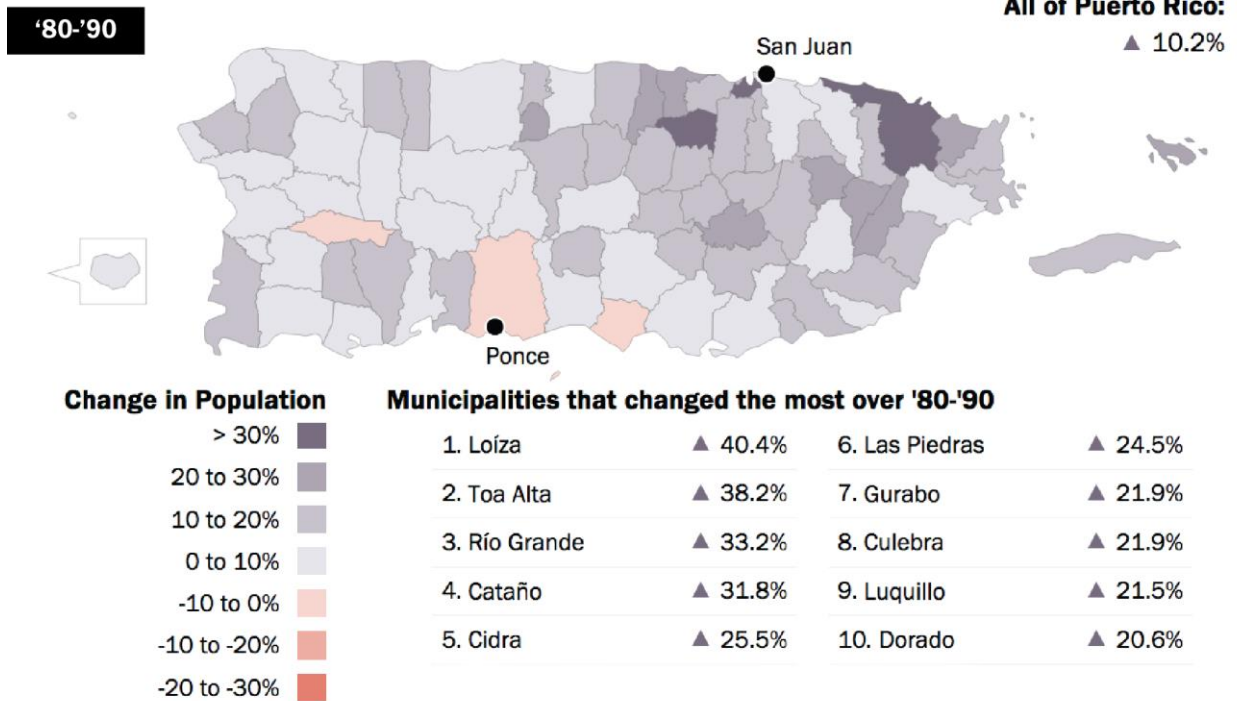
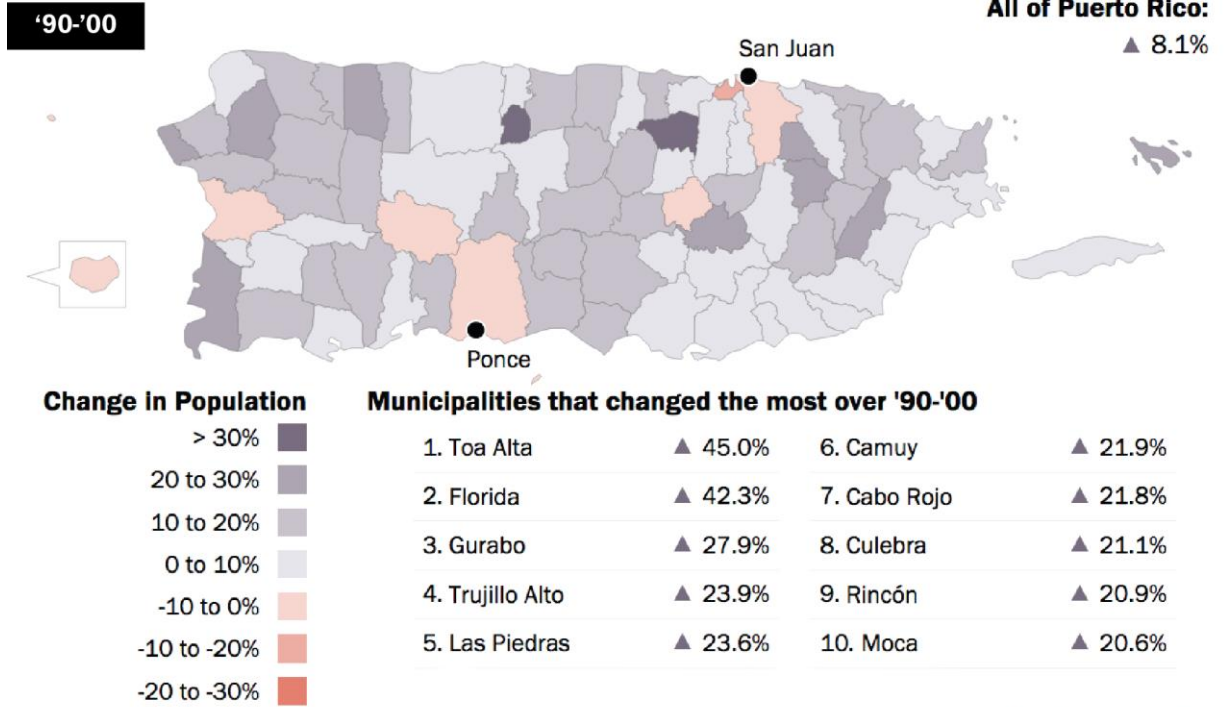
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Percent Change in Puerto Rico Population by Municipality



Notes: 2013 population estimates are as of July 1 of that year. 2000 population counts are as of April 1 of that year.
 Source: For 2013, U.S. Census Bureau's annual estimates of the resident population. For 2000, U.S. Census Bureau decennial census, Summary File 1 (SF-1) data.

Percent Change in Puerto Rico Population by Municipality



Notes: Population counts are as of April 1 of that year.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau decennial censuses, Summary File 1 (SF-1) data.

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Appendix C: Data Sources

The data in this report come mainly from five U.S. Census Bureau sources: the American Community Survey for 2006-2012; the Puerto Rican Community Survey for 2006-2012; the decennial census for 1980-2010; the Current Population Survey for 2007-2013 and annual population estimates for the island of Puerto Rico. For all sources except the population estimates, data was accessed via the [Integrated Public Use Microdata Series \(IPUMS\)](#).¹⁵

The ACS is the largest household survey in the United States, with an initial sample of [about 3.7 million selected addresses](#) among the 50 states and District of Columbia. The PRCS, which is similar in design and methodology, includes an initial sample of [37,000 selected addresses in Puerto Rico](#). The survey covers the topics previously covered in the long form of the decennial census. It is designed to provide estimates of the size and characteristics of the resident population, which includes people living in households and group quarters. The ACS and PRCS are the source of most information about characteristics of the Puerto Rican origin population.

The specific data sources for this report are the 1% sample of the 2006-2012 ACS and 2006-2012 PRCS Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) and the 5% sample of the 1980, 1990 and 2000 censuses IPUMS provided by the University of Minnesota. The IPUMS assigns uniform codes, to the extent possible, to data collected by the decennial census and the ACS from 1850 to 2012.

In the interest of greater accuracy, the Pew Research Center developed new survey estimates for the 2006-2009 ACS and PRCS that are consistent with the results of both the 2000 and 2010 censuses. These new survey estimates are based on the Census Bureau's revised annual intercensal population estimates, i.e., those that are consistent with both the preceding and subsequent censuses.

Characteristics of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and on the island are based only on those who self-identify as Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin. Not everyone born on the island of Puerto Rico or currently living on the island of Puerto Rico is considered Puerto Rican in this analysis, as not all of them are of Puerto Rican origin. In most cases, individual or household characteristics refer to those at the time of the survey. However, earnings, household income and poverty status are based on the respondent's income characteristics in the 12 months prior to the survey.

¹⁵ Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010.

Due to differences in the way in which the IPUMS and Census Bureau adjust income data and assign poverty status, data provided about these variables might differ from data on these variables that are provided by the Census Bureau. Dollar figures in the report were converted to 2012 dollars using the research series of the consumer price index (CPI-U-RS) for the mainland and the consumer price index downloaded from the [Instituto de Estadísticas de Puerto Rico](#) for the island. In addition, in table 1 of [Appendix A](#), personal earnings and household income figures for people living on the U.S. mainland are inflated by 15% in order to account for the higher cost of living on the island of Puerto Rico.

The 1980, 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses are the source of population data about Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin for those years.

In addition, characteristics of recent migrants in two time periods were generated using data from both the decennial census and American Community Survey. For recent migrants from Puerto Rico living in the U.S. in 2012, the 2012 ACS was used to analyze people who self-identified as Puerto Rican, were born on the island of Puerto Rico and first came to live in the U.S. between 2000 and 2012. For recent migrants from Puerto Rico living in the U.S. in 2000, the 2000 decennial census was used to analyze people who self-identified as Puerto Rican, were born on the island of Puerto Rico and first came to live in the U.S. between 1988 and 2000.

Finally, the analysis of migration patterns from the island to the mainland and across states and regions within the mainland uses a pooled sample of the 2006-2012 ACS in order to obtain a large enough sample size. The [IPUMS variable MIGPLAC1](#) was used to identify moves—because the ACS records residence in the year prior to the survey, and the analysis combines six years of data, the data likely include multiple moves by some people. As a result, the report refers to “moves” rather than “movers.” Furthermore, while MIGPLAC1 includes moves to different households within a state, the analysis did not include these intra-state moves.

Current Population Survey

The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a monthly survey of about 55,000 households conducted jointly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Census Bureau. The CPS was the source of information about the reasons that island-born Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin moved to the mainland United States. To achieve an adequate sample, surveys of 2007-2013 were combined.

Because of data limitations, the analysis could not isolate only those island-born Puerto Rican origin migrants who moved from the island to the mainland, so the sample probably includes a small number who moved from another U.S. territory or foreign country. According to the 2012

American Community Survey, 92.7% of island-born Puerto Ricans who migrated to the U.S. from abroad in the 12 months prior to the survey had come from Puerto Rico.

The category “job-related reasons” includes new job or job transfer; to look for work or lost job; easier commute; and other job-related reasons. The “household/family” reasons include change in marital status; to establish own household; and other family reasons. The “housing” category includes wanted better neighborhood; for cheaper housing; and other housing-related reasons. The residual “other reasons” includes a general other-reasons category, as well as attend/leave college and health reasons.

Other data

[Population estimates](#) for the island are the source of the 2013 Puerto Rico population total, for some estimates of migration from the island, and for population change in island municipios. The estimates are [generated annually](#), along with revised and updated estimates for prior years. They are based on government data on births, deaths, immigration and migration, rather than an actual count. The bureau’s annual estimates include a breakdown of the components of population change, including net migration. The bureau also produced estimates for 1980-1990 and for 1990-2000.

Maps

The maps of the 50 states and D.C. showing the 2010 and 2000 county-level Puerto Rican populations are based on U.S. Decennial Census Summary File data, as well as 2006-2010 5-year American Community Survey data, downloaded from the U.S. Census Bureau’s [American Fact Finder](#). These maps show the distribution of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, as well as approximations of the distributions of island-born and mainland-born Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin. Approximations were used for the island born because of limitations in the population groups available in the ACS data, which group together all people born on the island of Puerto Rico, including some Hispanics who are not of Puerto Rican origin and some non-Hispanics. According to Pew Research analysis of the 2012 American Community Survey, 93% of people born in Puerto Rico who are currently residing in the U.S. are Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, 3% are non-Hispanic, and the remaining 4% are Hispanics of other origin groups. Thus, the island-born approximations used in these maps could overstate the true number of island-born Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin.

Another limitation of the data used to produce the maps is that the overall Puerto Rican origin population living stateside includes a small number of people born in another country (equaling 2.2% of the total Puerto Rican origin population in the U.S., according to analysis of the 2012

American Community Survey). To produce an approximation of the county-level mainland-born Puerto Rican population, the population of all people born on the island of Puerto Rico was subtracted from the total Puerto Rican origin population in each county. As a result, because some people who are not Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin are included in the island-born population, this could lead to a slight underestimate of the mainland-born Puerto Rican county populations (as an overly large number was subtracted from the base of all Puerto Ricans). Second, because some people who were not born on *either* the island or the U.S. mainland are included in the total Puerto Rican population, this could lead to a slight overestimate of the mainland-born Puerto Rican population.

For 2010, data are also approximations for both the island-born and mainland-born due to the differences in data sources—2010 SF-1 data is used to calculate the entire Puerto Rican origin population, while 2006-2010 ACS data is used to calculate the island-born and mainland-born components of this population. For 2000, decennial census Summary File data is used for all three populations.