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Statistical Profile

Hispanics of Nicaraguan Origin in the United States, 2011

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An estimated 395,000 Hispanics of Nicaraguan origin resided in the United States in 2011, according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Nicaraguans in this statistical profile are people who self-identified as Hispanics of Nicaraguan origin; this means either they themselves are Nicaraguan immigrants or they trace their family ancestry to Nicaragua. Nicaraguans are the 12th-largest population of Hispanic origin living in the United States, accounting for 0.8% of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2011. Mexicans, the nation's largest Hispanic origin group, constituted 33.5 million, or 64.6%, of the Hispanic population in 2011.¹

This statistical profile compares the demographic, income and economic characteristics of the Nicaraguan population with the characteristics of all Hispanics and the U.S. population overall. It is based on tabulations from the 2011 American Community Survey by the Pew Hispanic Center, a project of the Pew Research Center. Key facts include:

- **Immigration status.** Six-in-ten Nicaraguans (60%) in the United States are foreign born compared with 36% of Hispanics and 13% of the U.S. population overall. Four-in-ten immigrants from Nicaragua (40%) arrived in the U.S. in 1990 or later. More than half of Nicaraguan immigrants (53%) are U.S. citizens.
- **Language.** About six-in-ten (62%) Nicaraguans ages 5 and older speak English proficiently.² The other 38% of Nicaraguans report speaking English less than very well, compared with 34% of all Hispanics.
- **Age.** Nicaraguans are younger than the U.S. population but older than Hispanics overall. The median age of Nicaraguans is 32; the median ages of the U.S. population and all Hispanics are 37 and 27, respectively.
- **Marital status.** Nicaraguans ages 15 and older are about as likely to be married (44%) as Hispanics overall (43%) but less likely to be married than the U.S. population overall (48%).
- **Fertility.** About one-in-twenty (6%) Nicaraguan women ages 15 to 44 gave birth in the 12 months prior to this survey. That was similar to the rate for all Hispanic women—8%—and the same as the overall rate for U.S. women.

¹ Percentages are computed before numbers are rounded.

² This includes Nicaraguans ages 5 and older who report speaking only English at home or speaking English very well.

- **Regional dispersion.** Nicaraguans are concentrated in the South (54%), mostly in Florida (36%), and in the West (35%), mostly in California (31%).
- **Educational attainment.** Nicaraguans have higher levels of education than the Hispanic population overall but lower levels than the U.S. population overall. Two-in-ten (20%) Nicaraguans ages 25 and older—compared with 13% of all U.S. Hispanics and 29% among the entire U.S. population—have obtained at least a bachelor’s degree.
- **Income.** The median annual personal earnings for Nicaraguans ages 16 and older were \$22,000 in the year prior to the survey—higher than the median earnings for all U.S. Hispanics (\$20,000) but lower than the median earnings for the U.S. population (\$29,000).
- **Poverty status.** The share of Nicaraguans who live in poverty, 18%, is higher than the rate for the general U.S. population (16%) and less than the rate for Hispanics overall (26%).
- **Health Insurance.** Three-in-ten Nicaraguans (31%) do not have health insurance compared with 30% of all Hispanics and 15% of the general U.S. population. Additionally, 10% of Nicaraguans younger than 18 are uninsured.
- **Homeownership.** The rate of Nicaraguan homeownership (44%) is similar to the rate for all Hispanics (46%) and lower than the 65% rate for the U.S. population as a whole.

About the Data

This statistical profile of Hispanics of Nicaraguan origin is based on the Census Bureau's 2011 [American Community Survey](#) (ACS). The ACS is the largest household survey in the United States, with a sample of about 3 million addresses. The data used for this statistical profile come from 2011 ACS Integrated Public Use Microdata Series ([IPUMS](#)), representing a 1% sample of the U.S. population.

Like any survey, estimates from the ACS are subject to sampling error and (potentially) measurement error. Information on the ACS sampling strategy and associated error is available at http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/methodology_main/. An example of measurement error is that citizenship rates for the foreign born are estimated to be overstated in the Decennial Census and other official surveys, such as the ACS (see Jeffrey Passel, “[Growing Share of Immigrants Choosing Naturalization](#),” Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C. (March 28, 2007)). Finally, estimates from the ACS may differ from the Decennial Census or other Census Bureau surveys due to differences in methodology and data collection procedures (see, for example, http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/methodology/ASA_nelson.pdf, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/laborfor/laborfactsheet092209.html> and <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/datasources/factsheet.html>).

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Table 1
U.S. Population, by Ethnicity and Nicaraguan Origin, 2011

Thousands, unless otherwise noted

	All	Hispanics	Hispanics of Nicaraguan Origin
TOTAL	311,592	51,927	395
Gender			
Male	153,248	26,336	186
Female	158,344	25,591	210
Nativity			
Native Born	271,210	33,139	159
Foreign Born	40,382	18,788	236
Age			
Median (in years)	37	27	32
Age Groups			
Younger than 5	20,024	5,141	30
5-17	53,826	12,245	69
18-29	52,253	10,665	80
30-39	40,205	8,160	66
40-49	43,344	6,762	61
50-64	60,552	6,013	61
65 and older	41,388	2,940	29
Marital Status (ages 15 and older)			
Married	120,912	16,154	137
Never married	81,300	15,417	120
Divorced/separated/widowed	48,223	5,671	53
Fertility (women ages 15 to 44)			
Total number of women	62,611	12,050	97
Women who had a birth in the past 12 months	4,031	932	6
Unmarried women ¹ who had a birth in the past 12 mo	1,544	435	***
School Enrollment (ages 5 to 18)			
K-12	52,875	12,015	68
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)			
Less than high school diploma	29,077	10,383	61
High school diploma or equivalent	58,586	7,581	67
Some college	59,874	6,424	75
Bachelor's degree or more	58,996	3,759	51
Median Annual Personal Earnings (in dollars)			
All (ages 16 and older with earnings)	\$29,000	\$20,000	\$22,000
Full-time, year-round workers	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Persons in Poverty ²			
Younger than 18	16,493	5,894	24
18-64	28,212	6,755	43
65 and older	3,737	556	4
Health Insurance			
Uninsured, all ages	47,903	15,572	123
Uninsured, younger than 18	5,540	2,232	9
Persons in Households by Type of Household ³			
In family households	254,071	46,317	354
In married-couple households	182,097	29,159	227
In non-family households	49,515	4,649	37
Citizenship			
Citizen	289,366	38,905	285
Non-citizen	22,226	13,022	110
Language (ages 5 and older)			
Speaks only English at home	230,923	11,827	52
Does not speak only English at home	60,644	34,959	313
Speaks English very well	35,389	19,051	174
Speaks English less than very well	25,255	15,908	140
Year of Entry (foreign-born only)			
Before 1990	15,208	6,658	141
1990-1999	10,759	5,399	41
2000-2005	8,093	4,340	31
2006 or later	6,321	2,391	23
Regional Dispersion			
Northeast	55,522	7,186	29
New York	19,465	3,497	14
Maryland	5,828	489	10
Midwest	67,159	4,772	15
South	116,047	18,820	214
Florida	19,058	4,354	143
Texas	25,675	9,794	23
West	72,865	21,149	137
California	37,692	14,358	123

¹Unmarried women includes those who were never married, divorced, separated or widowed. ²For 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. ³The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters.

Note: Numbers may not sum to the total due to rounding. Analysis is based on the following number of observations: all 3,112,017; Hispanics 427,432; Hispanics of Nicaraguan origin 3,265. The symbol *** indicates insufficient number of observations to provide a reliable estimate.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2011 ACS (1% IPUMS sample). More information on the source data and sampling error is available at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/design.shtml> and http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2011.pdf.

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Table 2

Household Characteristics, by Ethnicity and Nicaraguan Origin, 2011

	All	Hispanics	Hispanics of Nicaraguan Origin
Total (in thousands)	114,992	13,668	107
Homeownership (household heads)			
In owner-occupied homes (in thousands)	74,376	6,351	47
In renter-occupied homes (in thousands)	40,615	7,317	60
Homeownership rate (%)	64.7	46.5	43.9
Household Annual Income (in dollars)			
Median	\$50,000	\$39,000	\$46,700
Household Size			
Average number of persons	2.6	3.5	3.6

Note: The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters. Households are classified by the ethnicity of the household head. Numbers may not sum to the total due to rounding. Analysis is based on the following number of observations: all 1,204,830; Hispanics 118,668; Hispanics of Nicaraguan origin 967. The symbol *** indicates insufficient number of observations to provide a reliable estimate.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2011 ACS (1% IPUMS sample). More information on the source data and sampling error is available at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/design.shtml> and http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2011.pdf.

Table 3

Employment Characteristics, by Ethnicity and Nicaraguan Origin, 2011

Thousands, unless otherwise noted

	All	Hispanics	Hispanics of Nicaraguan Origin
Employment Status (civilians ages 16 and older)			
Employed	140,458	21,368	193
Unemployed	16,037	3,014	22
Not in labor force	88,723	11,847	88
Unemployment rate (%)	10.2	12.4	10.3
Industries¹			
Construction, agriculture and mining	11,261	2,799	16
Manufacturing	14,700	2,303	15
Trade and transportation	25,998	4,032	48
Information, finance and other services	88,499	12,233	113
Occupations¹			
Management, professional and related occupations	54,208	4,658	50
Services	22,055	5,138	41
Sales and office support	34,521	4,755	53
Construction, extraction and farming	8,019	2,485	13
Maintenance, production, transportation and material moving	21,656	4,332	36

¹Currently employed civilians ages 16 and older.

Note: Analysis is based on the following number of observations: all 2,509,144; Hispanics 303,057; Hispanics of Nicaraguan origin 2,559. The symbol *** indicates insufficient number of observations to provide a reliable estimate.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2011 ACS (1% IPUMS sample). More information on the source data and sampling error is available at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/design.shtml> and http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2011.pdf.