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Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin in the United States, 2013

Statistical Profile

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

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

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

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BY *Gustavo López* AND *Eileen Patten*

An estimated 5.1 million Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin resided in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia in 2013, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. That is a substantially greater number than the population of Puerto Rico itself, which was 3.6 million in 2013 and has been in decline for the past few years largely due to out-migration. As a result, the number of Puerto Rican-origin Hispanics living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia has exceeded the number of people of Puerto Rican ancestry living on the island of Puerto Rico at least since 2005.

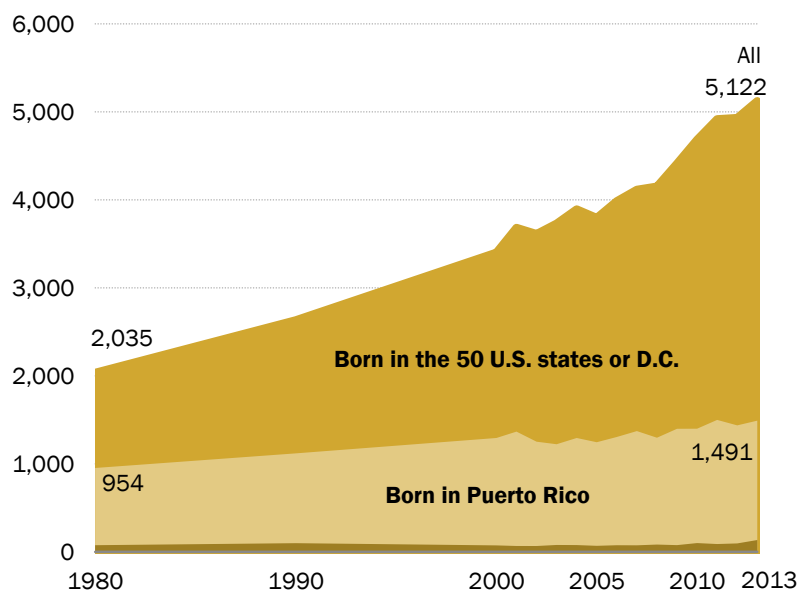
Puerto Ricans in this statistical profile are people who self-identified as

Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin; this means either they themselves were born in Puerto Rico¹ or they were born in the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia or elsewhere, but trace their family

FIGURE 1

Puerto Rican-Origin Population in the U.S., 1980-2013

In thousands



Note: Includes only Hispanics who self-identify as Puerto Rican and are currently residing in the 50 states or District of Columbia. People in group quarters such as college dormitories or institutions are not included in figures for 2001 to 2005. People born outside of the U.S. or Puerto Rico and who were not U.S. citizens at birth are shown but not labeled. Changes in the wording of the Hispanic origin question in the 2000 decennial census may have led to an undercount of some Hispanic origin groups in that year. For more, see <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2002/05/09/counting-the-other-hispanics/>

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of 1980, 1990 and 2000 censuses (5% IPUMS) and 2001-2013 American Community Surveys (1% IPUMS)

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¹ Puerto Rico-born include only those who claim Puerto Rican ancestry; some 129,000 people who were born in Puerto Rico and are now living on the mainland are either non-Hispanics or Hispanics of a different ancestry (i.e. Dominican).

ancestry to Puerto Rico. This statistical profile focuses on the characteristics of Puerto Rican-origin Hispanics residing in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.²

Puerto Ricans are the second-largest Hispanic origin population living in the United States, accounting for 9.5% of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2013. In comparison, Mexicans, the nation's largest Hispanic origin group, constituted 34.6 million, or 64.1%, of the Hispanic population in 2013. Since 1980, the Puerto Rican-origin population living on the mainland has more than doubled, growing from 2.0 million to 5.1 million over the period. At the same time, the Puerto Rican-born population living in the U.S. grew by 56%, up from 954,000 in 1980 to 1.5 million in 2013.³

About the Data

This statistical profile of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin is based on the Census Bureau's 2013 [American Community Survey](#) (ACS) and a nationally representative [Pew Research Center survey](#) of 5,103 Hispanic adults conducted May 24-July 28, 2013. The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish on cellular as well as landline telephones and has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.1 percentage points. For a complete methodology, see: <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/appendix-a-survey-methodology-2/>

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 S. Passel. 2007. "[Growing Share of Immigrants Choosing Naturalization](#)." Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, March). 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/hhes/www/laborfor/laborfactsheet092209.html> and <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/datasources/factsheet.html>).

² The island of Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States, but all references to the United States or the U.S. mainland in this profile refer to the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

³ Percentages are computed before numbers are rounded.

This profile compares the demographic, income and economic characteristics of Puerto Ricans with the characteristics of all Hispanics and the U.S. population overall and includes public opinion data of Puerto Rican and Hispanic adults. Unless otherwise noted, data are based on tabulations from the 2013 American Community Survey and Pew Research Center’s 2013 National Survey of Latinos. Key facts include:

- ***Immigration status.*** A majority of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin in the United States—3.5 million in all—were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Additionally, about one-third (29%) of the U.S. Puerto Rican population—1.5 million—was born in Puerto Rico. People born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, a small number of people of Puerto Rican origin—135,000—were born outside of the U.S. or Puerto Rico to parents who were not U.S. citizens. This group also self-reports that they were not U.S. citizens at birth.⁴
- ***English proficiency and speaking Spanish at home.*** According to the 2013 ACS, more than eight-in-ten (83%) Puerto Ricans ages 5 and older speak English proficiently.⁵ The other 17% of Puerto Ricans report speaking English less than very well, compared with 32% of all Hispanics. Overall, 61% of Puerto Ricans ages 5 and older speak Spanish at home, below the share (73%) of all Hispanics who do the same.
- ***Bilingualism and language dominance.*** [According to the 2013 Pew Research survey](#), about four-in-ten Puerto Rican adults (42%) are English-dominant,⁶ higher than the share of Hispanics overall (25%). Some 16% of Puerto Rican adults are Spanish-dominant, and about four-in-ten (41%) are bilingual. Some 38% of Hispanic adults are Spanish-dominant, and 36% are bilingual. For Puerto Ricans who were born on the island, 36% are Spanish-dominant, while about half (49%) are bilingual. Only 15% of Puerto Rican adults who were born on the island are English-dominant. By comparison, about six-in-ten Puerto Ricans (62%) born on the U.S. mainland are English-dominant.

⁴ For example, 22,700 people who say they are of Puerto Rican origin also say they were born in Mexico to parents who were both not U.S. citizens. They also self-report that they were not U.S. citizens at birth.

⁵ This includes Puerto Ricans ages 5 and older who speak only English at home or, if they speak a non-English language at home, indicate they can speak English “very well.”

⁶ Language dominance, or primary language, is a composite measure based on self-described assessments of speaking and reading abilities. “Spanish-dominant” persons are more proficient in Spanish than in English, i.e., they speak and read Spanish “very well” or “pretty well” but rate their English-speaking and reading ability lower. “Bilingual” refers to persons who are proficient in both English and Spanish. “English-dominant” persons are more proficient in English than in Spanish.

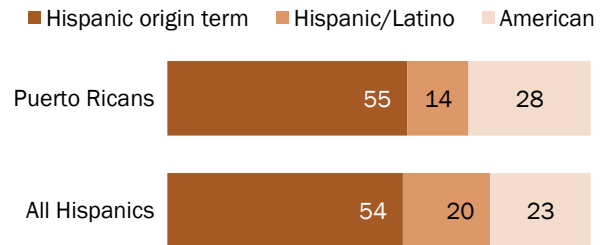
- **Age.** Puerto Ricans are younger than the U.S. population and have about the same median age as Hispanics overall. The median age of Puerto Ricans is 29; the median ages of the U.S. population and all Hispanics are 37 and 28, respectively. Among Puerto Ricans, the median age of those born on the island is 47 years, while it's 22 years among those born on the mainland.
- **Marital status.** Puerto Ricans ages 18 and older are less likely to be married (36%) than Hispanics overall (46%) and the U.S. population overall (50%). Among Puerto Ricans ages 18 and older, those who are island born are more likely to be married than those who are mainland born—43% vs. 32%.
- **Fertility.** About one-in-twenty (6%) Puerto Rican women ages 15 to 44 gave birth in the 12 months prior to the survey. That was similar to the rate for all Hispanic women (7%) and the same as the overall rate for U.S. women. About six-in-ten (62%) Puerto Rican women ages 15 to 44 who gave birth in the 12 months prior to the survey were unmarried. That was higher than the 45% rate for all Hispanic women and the overall 38% rate for U.S. women
- **Regional dispersion.** Puerto Ricans are concentrated in the Northeast (51%), mostly in New York (21%), and in the South (31%), mostly in Florida (19%).
- **Educational attainment.** Puerto Ricans have higher levels of education than the U.S. Hispanic population but lower levels than the total U.S. population. Some 18% of Puerto Ricans ages 25 and older—compared with 14% of all U.S. Hispanics and 30% among the U.S. population—have obtained at least a bachelor's degree.
- **Income.** The median annual personal earnings for Puerto Ricans ages 16 and older was \$25,000 in the year prior to the survey—higher than the median earnings for all U.S. Hispanics (\$21,900) but lower than the median earnings for the U.S. population (\$30,000).
- **Poverty status.** The share of Puerto Ricans who live in poverty, 27%, is higher than the rate for the general U.S. population (16%) and for Hispanics overall (25%).
- **Health insurance.** Some 14% of Puerto Ricans do not have health insurance, compared with 29% of all Hispanics and 15% of the general U.S. population. Additionally, 5% of Puerto Ricans younger than 18 are uninsured. (These data reflect insurance rates prior to the implementation of the individual insurance mandate of the Affordable Care Act.)

- Homeownership.** The rate of Puerto Rican homeownership (38%) is lower than the rate for all Hispanics (45%) and the U.S. population (64%) as a whole.
- “Puerto Rican” is the identity term used most often.** When asked in a [2013 Pew Research Center survey](#) what term they use most often to describe themselves, some 55% of Puerto Rican adults say they most often use “Puerto Rican.” About three-in-ten (28%) say they describe themselves most often as “American,” while 14% most often use the pan-ethnic terms of “Hispanic” or “Latino” to describe their identity. By comparison, 54% of all U.S. Hispanics say they prefer their ancestor’s Hispanic origin term to describe their identity, 23% say they describe themselves most often as “American” and two-in-ten use the pan-ethnic terms of “Hispanic” or “Latino” to describe their identity.
- Preference for Hispanic or Latino.** In regard to the pan-ethnic terms “Hispanic” and “Latino,” 56% of Puerto Rican adults say they have no preference for either term. Among those who have a preference, twice as many prefer “Hispanic” (30% of all Puerto Ricans) as prefer the term “Latino” (14%). By comparison, half of all Hispanic adults have no preference for either term, and among those who do have a preference, Hispanic is favored over Latino 2-to-1.

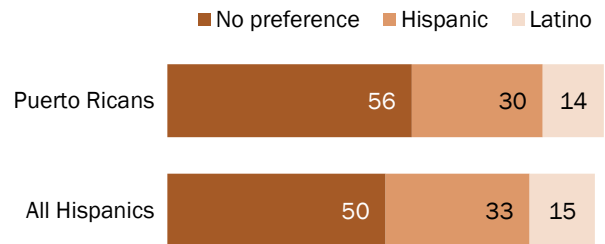
FIGURE 2

Puerto Rican Views of Identity

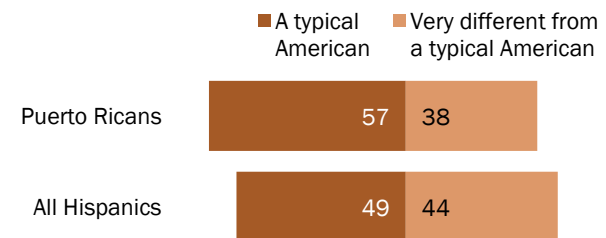
% saying they most often describe themselves as...



% saying they prefer the term...



% saying they think of themselves as...



Note: “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. For top chart, volunteered responses of “Depends” not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center survey of Hispanic adults living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, May 24-July 28, 2013 (N=5,103 including 659 Puerto Rican adults)

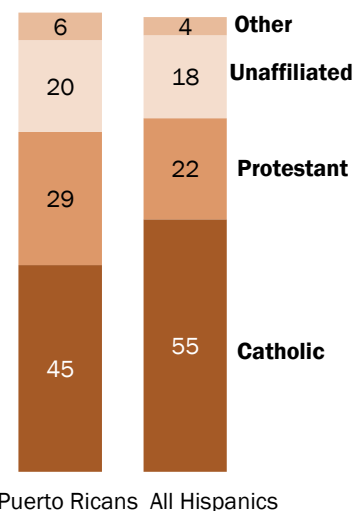
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- Typical American or not.** When asked whether they think of themselves as a typical American or very different from a typical American, roughly six-in-ten Puerto Rican adults (57%) see themselves as a typical American, while 38% think of themselves as very different from a typical American. By comparison, Hispanic adults overall are less likely to think of themselves as typical Americans (49%) compared with Puerto Ricans, and on balance Hispanic adults are more likely to see themselves as a typical American (49%) than very different from a typical American (44%).
- Religious affiliation.** A [2013 Pew Research Center survey](#) of Hispanic adults finds that some 45% of Puerto Rican adults identify themselves as Catholic. About three-in-ten (29%) Puerto Ricans are Protestant, and among all Puerto Ricans, 8% are mainline Protestants and 22% are evangelical Protestants. Two-in-ten Puerto Ricans are religiously unaffiliated. By contrast, among all Hispanics, 55% identify as Catholic, 22% identify as Protestant, and about two-in-ten (18%) are unaffiliated.

FIGURE 3

Puerto Rican Religious Affiliation

% of adults who belong to each religious group



Note: "Don't know" responses not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center survey of Hispanic adults living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, May 24-July 28, 2013 (n=4,080 including 540 Puerto Rican adults)

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Table 1
U.S. Population, by Ethnicity and Puerto Rican Origin, 2013

	Thousands, unless otherwise noted				
	All	Hispanics	Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin		
			All	Mainland Born	Island Born
TOTAL	316,129	53,964	5,122	3,495	1,491
Gender					
Male	155,592	27,377	2,540	1,762	708
Female	160,537	26,587	2,582	1,734	783
Nativity					
U.S. Born	274,788	34,981	5,041	3,495	---
Born in Puerto Rico ¹	1,621	1,569	1,491	---	1,491
Foreign Born ²	41,341	18,983	81	---	---
Age					
Median (in years)	37	28	29	22	47
Age Groups					
Younger than 5	19,682	5,053	446	431	13
5-17	53,820	12,635	1,142	1,004	126
18-29	53,007	10,923	1,033	814	186
30-39	40,997	8,454	740	471	242
40-49	42,158	7,039	646	388	238
50-64	61,801	6,560	715	321	368
65 and older	44,663	3,301	400	66	318
Marital Status (ages 18 and older)					
Married	122,043	16,750	1,290	656	588
Never married	71,957	13,603	1,533	1,098	387
Divorced/separated/widowed	48,628	5,924	711	307	377
Fertility (women ages 15 to 44)					
Total number of women	63,071	12,411	1,172	844	294
Women who had a birth in the past 12 months	3,893	873	73	52	19
Unmarried women ³ who had a birth in the past 12 mo	1,478	393	46	34	***
School Enrollment (ages 5 to 18)					
K-12	52,794	12,383	1,117	978	127
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)					
Less than high school graduate	28,268	10,491	665	237	397
High school graduate ⁴	58,768	8,037	858	475	353
Two-year degree/Some college	61,501	6,988	863	534	304
Bachelor's degree or more	62,454	4,169	509	290	200
Median Annual Personal Earnings (in dollars)					
All (ages 16 and older with earnings)	\$30,000	\$21,900	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$27,000
Full-time, year-round workers	\$42,000	\$30,000	\$36,000	\$37,200	\$35,000
Persons in Poverty ⁵					
Younger than 18	16,224	5,739	532	454	74
18-64	28,336	6,693	706	408	278
65 and older	4,155	631	91	10	76
Health Insurance ⁶					
Uninsured, all ages	46,654	15,411	737	478	231
Uninsured, younger than 18	5,245	2,033	82	67	12
Persons in Households by Type of Household ⁷					
In family households	257,066	48,026	4,297	3,034	1,159
In married-couple households	183,952	30,351	2,242	1,512	666
In non-family households	51,033	4,944	668	354	290
Citizenship					
Citizen	294,112	41,173	5,084	3,495	1,491
Non-citizen	22,016	12,791	38	---	---
Language (ages 5 and older)					
Speaks only English at home	234,715	12,893	1,781	1,619	127
Does not speak only English at home	61,732	36,019	2,894	1,445	1,352
Speaks English very well	36,673	20,287	2,084	1,279	752
Speaks English less than very well	25,059	15,732	810	166	600
Years in the U.S. (foreign-born only)					
0 to 5 years	5,959	1,960	7	---	---
6 to 10 years	5,791	2,926	9	---	---
11 to 15 years	7,012	3,811	14	---	---
16 to 20 years	4,915	2,456	9	---	---
Over 20 years	17,664	7,830	41	---	---
Regional Dispersion					
Northeast	55,943	7,537	2,602	1,814	738
New York	19,651	3,609	1,091	796	271
New Jersey	8,899	1,685	480	345	125
Pennsylvania	12,774	803	422	278	140
Massachusetts	6,693	704	282	172	104
Midwest	67,548	4,953	472	348	114
South	118,384	19,724	1,612	977	574
Florida	19,553	4,620	991	557	402
West	74,254	21,749	437	356	65

¹Persons born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth. ²Persons who indicated they were not born in the U.S. or Puerto Rico and were not U.S. citizens by birth. ³Unmarried women includes those who were never married, divorced, separated or widowed. ⁴"High school graduate" includes those who have attained a high school diploma or its equivalent, such as a General Education Development (GED) certificate. ⁵For 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. ⁶These data reflect insurance coverage prior to the implementation of the individual insurance mandate of the Affordable Care Act. ⁷The 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, 3,132,795; Hispanics, 435,427; Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, 40,523; mainland-born Puerto Ricans, 39,797; island-born Puerto Ricans, 11,801.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2013 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS). 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_2013.pdf.

Table 2

Household Characteristics, by Ethnicity and Puerto Rican Origin, 2013

	All	Hispanics	Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin		
			All	Mainland Born	Island Born
Total (in thousands)	116,291	14,246	1,592	843	706
Homeownership (household heads)					
In owner-occupied homes (in thousands)	73,933	6,452	597	326	254
In renter-occupied homes (in thousands)	42,358	7,794	995	517	452
Homeownership rate (%)	63.6	45.3	37.5	38.6	36.0
Household Annual Income (in dollars)					
Median	\$52,000	\$41,000	\$38,900	\$44,300	\$31,600
Household Size					
Average number of persons	2.6	3.5	2.9	2.9	2.8

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, 1,211,264; Hispanics, 121,664; Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, 12,920; mainland-born Puerto Ricans, 6,801; island-born Puerto Ricans, 5,733.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2013 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS). 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_2013.pdf.

Table 3

Employment Characteristics, by Ethnicity and Puerto Rican Origin, 2013

Thousands, unless otherwise noted

	All	Hispanics	Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin		
			All	Mainland Born	Island Born
Employment Status (civilians ages 16 and older)					
Employed	145,238	22,948	1,974	1,282	621
Unemployed	13,365	2,535	290	212	71
Not in labor force	91,321	12,437	1,412	688	680
Unemployment rate (%)	8.4	9.9	12.8	14.2	10.2
Industries¹					
Construction, agriculture and mining	11,827	3,116	106	64	35
Manufacturing	15,283	2,383	164	85	72
Trade and transportation	26,636	4,322	428	282	131
Information, finance and other services	91,492	13,127	1,275	850	383
Occupations¹					
Management, professional and related occupations	56,566	5,087	607	397	188
Services	22,944	5,522	373	249	111
Sales and office support	35,127	5,037	569	397	157
Construction, extraction and farming	8,287	2,724	82	48	28
Maintenance, production, transportation and material moving	22,314	4,577	343	191	137

¹Currently employed civilians ages 16 and older.

Note: Analysis is based on the following number of observations: all, 2,530,954; Hispanics, 311,328; Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin, 29,423; mainland-born Puerto Ricans, 17,418; island-born Puerto Ricans, 10,958.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2013 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS). 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_2013.pdf.