

## Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin in the United States, 2008

A total of 4.2 million Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin resided in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia in 2008, according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. That is a slightly greater number than the population of Puerto Rico itself in 2008, which was 4.0 million. 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 Rico or they trace their family ancestry to Puerto Rico. This statistical profile focuses on the characteristics of Puerto Ricans residing in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, henceforth the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Puerto Ricans are the second-largest population of Hispanic origin living in the United States, accounting for 8.9% of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2008. Mexicans constituted 30.7 million, or 65.7%, of the Hispanic population.<sup>2</sup> This profile compares the demographic, income and economic characteristics of Puerto Ricans with the characteristics of all Hispanics and the U.S. population overall. It is based on Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 American Community Survey. Key facts include:

- **Immigration status.** Most Puerto Ricans in the United States—2.8 million in all—were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Additionally, one-third of the Puerto Rican population in the U.S.—1.3 million—was born in Puerto Rico. People born in Puerto Rico are also considered native born because they are U.S. citizens by birth. A small number of people of Puerto Rican origin—46,000—were born outside of the U.S. or Puerto Rico and were not U.S. citizens by birth. They are considered foreign born.
- **Language.** Eight-in-ten Puerto Ricans (80.5%) speak English proficiently.<sup>3</sup> Some 19.5% of Puerto Ricans ages 5 and older report speaking English less than very well, compared with 37.3% of all Hispanics.

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<sup>1</sup> Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States, but all references to the United States in this profile refer to the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages are computed before numbers are rounded.

<sup>3</sup> Puerto Ricans ages 5 and older who report speaking only English at home or speaking English very well.

- **Age.** Puerto Ricans are younger than the U.S. population and older than Hispanics overall. The median age of Puerto Ricans is 29; the median ages of the U.S. population and all Hispanics are 36 and 27, respectively.
- **Marital status.** Puerto Ricans are less likely than Hispanics overall to be married—37.3% versus 46.5%.
- **Fertility.** Nearly six-in-ten (57.1%) of Puerto Rican women ages 15 to 44 who gave birth in the 12 months prior to the survey were unmarried. That was greater than the rate for all Hispanic women—38.8%—and the rate for U.S. women—34.5%.
- **Regional dispersion.** A majority of Puerto Ricans (55.4%) live in the Northeast, mostly in the New York (26.0%). Nearly three-in-ten (27.9%) Puerto Ricans live in the South, mostly in Florida (17.9%).
- **Educational attainment.** Puerto Ricans have higher levels of education than the Hispanic population overall. Twenty-seven percent of Puerto Ricans ages 25 and older—compared with 39.2% of all U.S. Hispanics—have not obtained at least a high school diploma.
- **Income.** The median annual personal earnings for Puerto Ricans ages 16 and older were \$26,478 in 2008; the median earnings for all U.S. Hispanics were \$21,488.
- **Poverty status.** The share of Puerto Ricans who live in poverty, 22.6%, is higher than the rate for the general U.S. population (12.7%) and similar to the 20.7% share among all Hispanics.
- **Health Insurance.** Nearly one-in-six Puerto Ricans (15.6%) do not have health insurance compared with 31.7% of all Hispanics and 15.4% of the general U.S. population. Additionally, 8.1% of Puerto Ricans younger than 18 are uninsured.
- **Homeownership.** The rate of Puerto Rican homeownership (40.3%) is lower than the rate for all Hispanics (49.1%) and the U.S. population (66.6%) as a whole.

### About the Data

This statistical profile of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin is based on the Census Bureau's 2008 [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 2008 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 [www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf). 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, 2008)). 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/Report10.pdf> and [http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/ASA\\_nelson.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/ASA_nelson.pdf)).

**Table 1**  
**Population Characteristics, 2008**  
*(residents of the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, in thousands, unless otherwise noted)*

	U.S. Population	All Hispanics	Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin
<b>Total</b>	304,060	46,822	4,151
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	149,863	24,214	2,075
Female	154,196	22,608	2,076
<b>Nativity</b>			
Native Born	266,044	28,985	4,105
Born in Puerto Rico	1,398	1,349	1298 <sup>1</sup>
Foreign Born	38,016	17,837	46 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Age</b>			
Median (in years)	36	27	29
<b>Age Groups</b>			
Younger than 5	20,879	5,216	423
5-17	53,012	10,787	945
18-29	51,086	9,344	770
30-39	40,407	7,769	622
40-49	44,673	6,087	555
50-64	55,207	4,989	546
65 and older	38,797	2,631	290
<b>Marital Status (ages 15 and older)</b>			
Married	120,805	15,422	1,117
Never married	75,960	12,713	1,284
Divorced/separated/widowed	46,228	5,030	594
<b>Fertility (women ages 15 to 44)</b>			
Total number of women	62,005	10,543	932
Women who had a birth in the past 12 months	4,354	936	65
Unmarried women <sup>3</sup> who had a birth in the past 12 months	1,503	363	37
<b>School Enrollment (ages 5 to 18)</b>			
K-12	52,068	10,497	922
<b>Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)</b>			
Less than high school diploma	30,050	10,011	627
High school diploma or equivalent	57,016	6,637	674
Some college	57,595	5,601	666
Bachelor's degree or more	55,356	3,302	376
<b>Median Annual Personal Earnings (in dollars)</b>			
All (ages 16 and older with earnings)	\$29,533	\$21,488	\$26,478
Full-time, year-round workers	\$40,736	\$28,820	\$35,644
<b>Persons in Poverty<sup>4</sup></b>			
Younger than 18	13,131	4,390	401
18-64	21,919	4,792	466
65 and older	3,648	491	71
<b>Health Insurance</b>			
Uninsured, all ages	46,729	14,852	647
Uninsured, younger than 18	7,354	2,985	111
<b>Persons in Households by Type of Household<sup>5</sup></b>			
In family households	247,692	41,549	3,482
In married-couple households	181,848	27,094	1,862
In non-family households	48,121	4,379	530
<b>Citizenship</b>			
Citizen	282,374	34,097	4,128
Non-citizen	21,686	12,726	23
<b>Language (ages 5 and older)</b>			
Speaks only English at home	227,375	9,855	1,249
Does not speak only English at home	55,806	31,752	2,479
Speaks English very well	31,376	16,223	1,752
Speaks English less than very well	24,430	15,529	727
<b>Regional Dispersion</b>			
Northeast	54,925	6,405	2,298
New York	19,490	3,232	1,080
New Jersey	8,683	1,424	406
Pennsylvania	12,448	589	313
Massachusetts	6,498	557	228
Midwest	66,561	4,252	368
South	111,719	16,441	1,160
Florida	18,328	3,846	744
West	70,855	19,724	326

<sup>1</sup>Persons born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth. <sup>2</sup>Persons who indicated they were not born in the U.S. or Puerto Rico and were not U.S. citizens by birth.  
<sup>3</sup>Unmarried women includes those who were never married, divorced or widowed. <sup>4</sup>For detailed information on how poverty status is determined, see <http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/variableDescription.do?mnemonic=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. <sup>5</sup>The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters.  
Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 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/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.

	U.S. Population	All Hispanics	Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin
<b>Total (in thousands)</b>			
	113,101	12,612	1,328
<b>Homeownership (household heads)</b>			
In owner-occupied homes <i>(in thousands)</i>	75,342	6,188	536
In renter-occupied homes <i>(in thousands)</i>	37,760	6,424	792
Homeownership rate (%)	66.6	49.1	40.3
<b>Household Annual Income (in dollars)</b>			
Median	\$51,938	\$41,754	\$40,736
<b>Household Size</b>			
Average number of persons	2.6	3.5	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.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 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/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.

	U.S. Population	All Hispanics	Hispanics of Puerto Rican Origin
<b>Employment Status (civilians ages 16 and older)</b>			
Employed	146,246	20,683	1,668
Unemployed	9,984	1,678	183
Not in labor force	81,350	9,885	1,045
Unemployment rate (%)	6.4	7.5	9.9
<b>Industries<sup>1</sup></b>			
Construction, agriculture and mining	13,429	3,229	96
Manufacturing	16,385	2,389	163
Trade and transportation	27,777	3,913	347
Information, finance and other services	88,654	11,151	1,063
<b>Occupations<sup>1</sup></b>			
Management, professional and related occupations	54,413	4,233	507
Services	21,669	4,614	300
Sales and office support	37,260	4,579	483
Construction, extraction and farming	9,637	2,858	80
Maintenance, production, transportation and material moving	23,268	4,399	297

<sup>1</sup>Currently employed civilians ages 16 and older.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2008 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/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.