

Fact Sheet: Hispanic/Latinos in the United States

The 2000 Census provided for a different conceptual enumeration than previous Censuses for categorizing persons in the Hispanic category. In Census 2000, people of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin could identify as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. Persons who marked the "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" were provided additional space to write Hispanic origins. The 2002 US Census Population Characteristics Report for Hispanics reported that there were 281.4 million persons that comprised the population of the United States, and of this population, 37.4 million were Latinos.

- ❑ The Hispanic population represents 13.3% of the total, making one in eight persons Hispanic. The population includes persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban descent as well as Hispanics from Central America, South America, and Spain. The largest Central American group were composed of Salvadorians (1.9% of the total Hispanic population), Guatemalans (1.1%), Hondurans (.6%), Columbians (1.3%), Ecuadorians (.7%), and Peruvians (.7%) (US Census 2000, The Hispanic Population).
- ❑ Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic population increased by 57.9%, from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000. Population growth varied by subgroup. Mexicans increased by 52.9%, from 13.5 million to 20.6 million. Puerto Ricans increased by 24.9%, from 2.7 million to 3.4 million. Cubans increased by 18.9%, from 10.0 million to 1.2 million. Hispanics who reported other origins saw a population increase of 96.9%, from 5.1 million to 10.0 million (US Census 2000).
- ❑ Half of the Hispanic population lives in two states: California and Texas. In 2002, Latinos of Mexican origin were more likely to live in the West (54.6%) and the South (34.3%). Puerto Ricans were most likely to live in the Northeast (58.0%) and Cubans were highly concentrated in the South (75.1%). Central and South Americans were predominately found in the Northeast, the South and the West.
- ❑ Nearly half of all Hispanics (45.6%) live in central cities within a metropolitan area compared with non-Hispanic Whites (21.1%). In 2002, 45.7% of Hispanics lived outside central cities but still within metropolitan areas, compared to 56.8% of non-Hispanic whites. The percentage of Hispanics living in non-metropolitan areas 98.7%) was much smaller than that of non-Hispanic Whites (22.1%).
- ❑ Among Latino groups, Puerto Ricans were more likely to live in a central city within a metropolitan area (57.4%) than were Cubans (76.9%), who were more likely than other groups to live outside the central city but still within a metropolitan area (US Census, Population Characteristics).
- ❑ Sizable proportions of Hispanics were also present in some counties within non traditional states, such as Georgia and North Carolina. Hispanics within some counties in North Carolina, Georgia, Iowa, Arkansas, Minnesota, and Nebraska represented between 6.0 percent and 24.9 % of their county's population. Counties with the largest Hispanic numbers were Los Angeles County, California (3 million), Harris County, Texas (815,000), and Cook County, Illinois (786,000). The two largest Puerto Rican populations lived in two New York counties: Bronx (319,000) and Kings (213,000). More than half of all Cubans lived in Miami-Dad County, Florida (651,000).

- ❑ The places with the largest Mexican populations were Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, San Antonio, and Phoenix. The largest Puerto Rican populations lived in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. The largest Cuban populations lived in Hialeah, Miami, New York, Tampa and Los Angeles. The largest Central American populations lived in Los Angeles, New York, Houston, Miami, and San Francisco, while the largest South American populations lived in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami (US Census 2000). The two cities with the largest Hispanic populations are New York City, NY, with 2,160,554 persons, or 27% of the city's population, and Los Angeles, Ca, with 1,719,073 persons, or 46.5%, followed by Chicago with 753,644 persons or 26% of the total population being Hispanic. (US Census 2000).
- ❑ While the nation's Latino population grew quickly in US metropolitan areas, not all the growth occurred in the same way. Wide variations in the rate and location of growth has contributed to distinct local experiences. Half of the Latino population across the 100 largest metropolitan areas lived in sixteen established Latin metropolises in 2000. These centers started out with the largest number of Latinos and experienced the greatest numerical growth. Three cities dominated this growth: Los Angeles, New York and Chicago. These three metros accounted for more than half of the growth among established Latino metros, with a population increase was 3.9 million persons.
- ❑ Fifty-one metropolitan areas that had initially small Latino communities in 1980 saw explosive growth, indicating new Latino destinations and new settlement areas. For example, in Chicago, 63% of the growth took place in the suburbs. Although the growth rates for these new destination metros must be understood in the context of small absolute numbers, their presence is noteworthy in that none of the new Latino destinations experienced a Hispanic growth rate of less than 42% in the 1990s.
- ❑ Eighteen of the new Latino destinations are considered sites of hypergrowth. In these metros, The Hispanic population grew at more than 300%, or twice the national average, after 1980. This group of metros includes immigrant gateways such as Washington and Atlanta and several of the nation's fastest growing metros, for example, Las Vegas and Orlando. In addition, eleven metropolitan areas have been identified as fast growing Latino hubs, where the population grew at extraordinary rates from very large base populations, and now these populations supplement the established Latino metros as major population centers in Hispanic America. With the exception of Phoenix, the metros in this category are located in either California or Texas (Suro, 2002).
- ❑ More than one third of the foreign born population in the United States is from Mexico or another Central American country. Among the foreign born, 52.2% are from Latin America. The foreign born population from Central America, including Mexico, accounted for more than two-thirds of the foreign born from Latin America. The foreign born from Latin America is more likely to live in the West than in any other region of the United States (US Census Foreign Born Population).
- ❑ Hispanic family households tend to be larger than those of non-Hispanic whites. In 2002, 26.5% of family households consisted of five or more people. In contrast, only 10.8% of non Hispanic White family households were this large.

Mexican family households were most likely to have five or more people. Cuban family households were most likely to have only two people (US Census, the Hispanic population).

- ❑ Educational attainment among Hispanics varies widely. Among Latinos 25 years of age and older, Other Hispanics (74%), Cubans (70.8%), Puerto Ricans (66.8%), and Central and South Americans (64.7%) were most likely to have at least graduated from high school than were Mexicans (50.6%). Those who attained at least a bachelor's degree ranged from 18.6% for Cubans, and 17.3% for Central and South Americans, while Mexicans were at 7.6%.

References

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