

Puerto Ricans in Florida, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 2014

In 2014, for the first time in history, the Puerto Rican population exceeded one million in Florida. Florida joins New York as the only other state with more than one million Puerto Ricans. The Puerto Rican population grew from 3% of the Florida population in 2000 to 5.1% in 2014. Puerto Ricans and Cubans represent half the total Latino population in the state.

Findings from an examination of recently released Census data for 2014 reveal that:

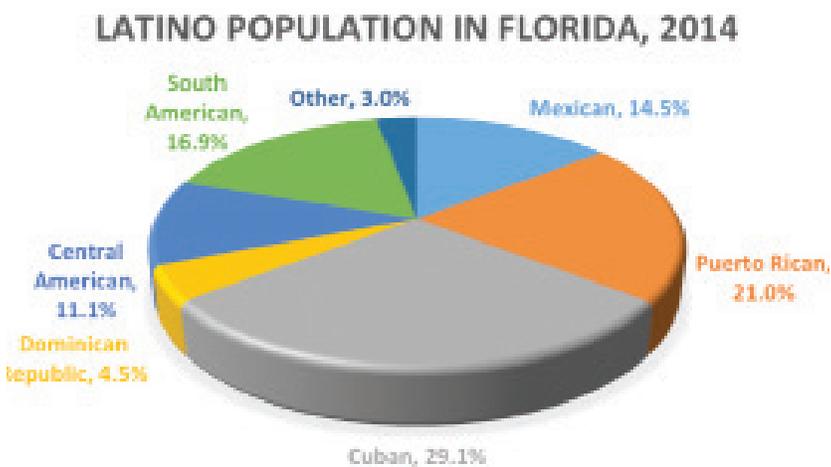
- The employment rate of stateside and Floridian Puerto Ricans (54.9% and 54.4%, respectively) is about 20% higher than it is in Puerto Rico, at 35.4%. The disparity in unemployment is equally significant: for Puerto Ricans in Florida, 10%, slightly lower than the rate for other stateside Puerto Ricans, at 11.6%, but much lower than the unemployment rate in Puerto Rico—18.9%.
- The average earnings of full-time, year-round stateside Puerto Ricans concentrated in the Northeast (\$50,756 for men and \$42,263 for women) are slightly higher than in Florida (\$45,500 and \$35,096, respectively). However, earnings for Puerto Ricans in Florida are substantially higher than for those in Puerto Rico, where full-time, year-round men in 2014 earned \$32,512 and women earned \$29,166.
- From an economic perspective, stateside Puerto Ricans represent 72.1% of the \$133.6 billion total purchasing power of the Puerto Rican community. Puerto Ricans in Florida, with their proximity to Puerto Rico and \$17.7 billion in purchasing power, represent a significant potential market for trade, investments, tourism in general and medical tourism in particular, and other economic activities in the island.
- Puerto Ricans in Florida are not more educated than Puerto Ricans in other states, but the population 25 years and older in Florida has achieved bachelor's and graduate degrees at a much lower rate than in Puerto Rico.
- The structure of Puerto Rican employment in Florida by major occupational category is similar to that of other stateside Puerto Ricans and those in Puerto Rico with one notable exception—Puerto Rican women in Florida are underrepresented in managerial occupations.
- The age distribution of stateside and Floridian Puerto Ricans is very similar.
- Despite the large number of recent migrants, four of five stateside Puerto Ricans declare they speak English at the very-well fluency level or speak English only.
- The proportion of households receiving cash public assistance income was 4.10% for Puerto Ricans in Florida, 6.90% for other stateside Puerto Ricans, and 8.10% in Puerto Rico. By staying in Puerto Rico, a higher proportion of Puerto Ricans would have received public assistance income. The available data does not support the notion that Puerto Ricans are migrating to the U.S. because they will enjoy welfare benefits.

All in all, employment opportunities and higher earnings seem to be the main propellers of the growing Puerto Rican population in Florida. In general, stateside Puerto Ricans' gains in employment and earnings are reflected in higher household income, higher per capita income, and lower poverty rates. Relocation of Puerto Ricans to the United States leads to substantial improvement in socioeconomic well-being. The data supports a view of labor market integration where Puerto Ricans' occupational distribution is very similar stateside. The data also indicates that higher welfare benefits are not a significant factor inducing migration.

Florida has one of the most diverse Latino populations in the country. The Latino population in Florida grew from 16.8%

of the state's total population in 2000 to 24.1% in 2014. After Cubans (29.1% of total Latino population) and Puerto Ricans (21.0%), Mexicans (3.5%), Colombians (1.8%), and Dominicans (1.1%) constitute the next largest groups.

The median age of Puerto Ricans in Florida of 32.2 years is 3.3 percentage points higher than the average for stateside Puerto Ricans of 28.9 but 6.7 percentage points lower than the 38.9 median age in Puerto Rico. These differences in median age are evident in the percent of the population older than 62 years of age. 12.3% of Puerto Ricans in Florida are 62 years of age or older, a slightly higher percent than stateside Puerto Ricans (9.9%) in this age group. With 21.0% of the population 62 years of age or older Puerto Rico has a significantly higher proportion of the population in this age group. Though Florida has received a number of elderly migrants from Puerto Rico and other states, the population in Florida is not significantly older than in other parts of the country and is significantly younger than the comparable age cohort in the island.



Puerto Ricans in Florida have lower English-fluency indicators than Puerto Ricans in other states. In Florida, 28.9% of the population speaks only English at home, while 38.8% of Puerto Ricans in other states do so. Similarly, 61.2% of Puerto Ricans in other parts of the country speak a language other than English at home, while 71.1% of Puerto Ricans Floridians do so. Only about one in five stateside Puerto Ricans declare they speak English at a less-than-very-well fluency level.

One of the assertions commonly made in the media is that Puerto Ricans in Florida are more educated than Puerto Ricans in other parts of the country or Puerto Rico. That is not the case. Puerto Ricans residing in Puerto Rico have a significantly higher proportion of individuals 25 years of age or older with bachelor's or graduate degrees than stateside Puerto Ricans, whether they reside in Florida or elsewhere. The most pronounced difference is found among women: 28% of women in Puerto Rico have earned bachelor's or graduate degrees when compared to residents in Florida, where 19.1% have completed similar degrees, or in other states where 10.5% have completed similar degrees. For men, the differences are 3 and 4 percentage points, respectively.

Another commonly-made assertion in the media is that among recent migrants from the island there is a brain drain. Besides education, where the data suggests that there is no bias toward a more-educated Puerto Rican in Florida, another way to ascertain this proposition is to examine the occupational distribution of Puerto Ricans in various regions of the country and the island.

The data by major occupational category indicates that the structure of Puerto Rican employment in Florida is similar to that of other

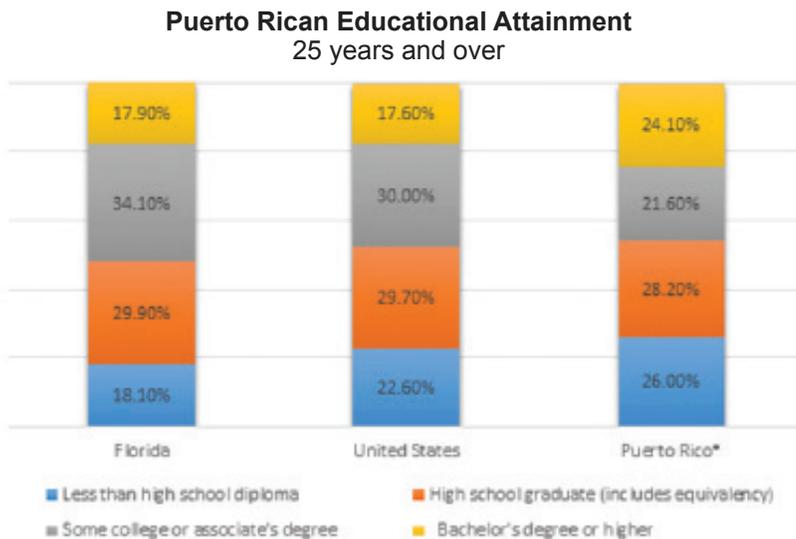
Table 1. Puerto Rican and Latino Population in Florida

	2000		2010		2014	
Total	15,982,378	100.0%	18,801,310	100.0%	19,893,297	100.0%
Not Hispanic or Latino	13,299,663	83.2%	14,577,504	77.5%	15,104,427	75.9%
Hispanic or Latino	2,682,715	16.8%	4,223,806	22.5%	4,788,870	24.1%
Mexican	363,925	2.3%	629,718	3.3%	693,483	3.5%
Puerto Rican	482,027	3.0%	847,550	4.5%	1,006,542	5.1%
Cuban	833,120	5.2%	1,213,438	6.5%	1,392,605	7.0%
Dominican Republic	70,968	0.4%	172,451	0.9%	216,202	1.1%
Central American:	202,772	1.3%	432,665	2.3%	530,143	2.7%
Nicaraguan	79,559	0.5%	135,143	0.7%	166,730	0.8%
South American	301,236	1.9%	674,542	3.6%	807,465	4.1%
Colombian	138,768	0.9%	300,414	1.6%	348,504	1.8%
Other	428,667	2.7%	253,442	1.3%	142,430	0.7%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, 2010 Census. Summary File 1, and 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

stateside Puerto Ricans and those in Puerto Rico with one notable exception. Though 23% of men are employed in managerial occupations in Florida and elsewhere, women in Florida have a lower representation in this category; 31.6% of Puerto Rican women in Florida are in managerial occupations compared to 33.1% of stateside Puerto Ricans and 39.7% in Puerto Rico. The underrepresentation of women in managerial occupations clearly disputes the notion of Puerto Ricans in Florida having an overrepresentation in professional occupations.

The employment status of Puerto Ricans in Florida is very similar to other stateside Puerto Ricans, but Floridians participate more actively in the labor force and have a lower unemployment rate when compared to Puerto Rico. The employment rate of stateside and Floridian Puerto Ricans (54.9 and 54.4%, respectively) is about 20% higher than the similar rate in Puerto Rico of 35.4%. The disparity in unemployment is equally significant. In 2014, the unemployment rate in Puerto Rico stood at 18.9% of those in the labor force. In contrast, the unemployment rate for Puerto Ricans in Florida was 10%, slightly lower than the rate for other stateside Puerto Ricans of 11.6%.



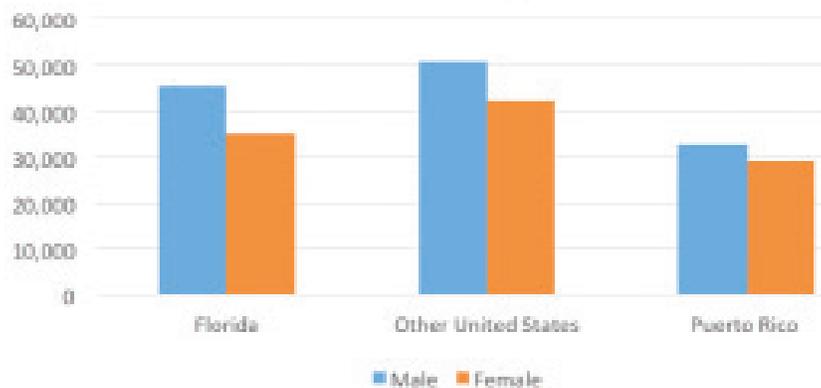
Besides better employment opportunities, an important factor inducing migration to the United States from Puerto Rico or interstate mobility among Puerto Ricans are differences in earnings. Given that stateside Puerto Rican are concentrated in the Northeast, where earnings are higher than in the South, the average earnings of full-time, year-round stateside Puerto Ricans of \$50,756 for men and \$42,263 for women are higher than in Florida of \$45,500 and \$35,096 respectively. However earnings for Puerto Ricans in Florida are substantially higher than for Puerto Rico where full-time, year-round men in 2014 earned \$32,512 and women earned \$29,166.

Table 2. Age, Education, and Language

	2014		
	Florida	United States	Puerto Rico*
Puerto Ricans			
TOTAL POPULATION	1,006,542	5,266,738	3,404,122
Median age (years)	32.2	28.9	38.9
62 years and over	12.30%	9.90%	21.00%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
Population 25 years and over			
Less than high school diploma	18.10%	22.60%	26.00%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	29.90%	29.70%	28.20%
Some college or associate's degree	34.10%	30.00%	21.60%
Bachelor's degree or higher	17.90%	17.60%	24.10%
Male, bachelor's degree or higher	16.70%	15.60%	19.60%
Female, bachelor's degree or higher	19.10%	19.50%	28.10%
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH			
Population 5 years and over			
English only	28.90%	38.80%	5.30%
Language other than English	71.10%	61.20%	94.70%
Speak English less than "very well"	20.90%	17.30%	78.80%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
* Puerto Ricans only excluding foreign born residents in the island.

Mean earnings for full-time, year-round Puerto Rican workers, 2014



Household and family income are important indicators of economic well-being. These indicators are similar for stateside Puerto Ricans, including those in Florida, but double that of the island. Median household income was \$40,465 for Puerto Ricans in Florida and \$39,322 for other stateside Puerto Ricans, but less than half those levels for the island at \$18,710. These differences are also evident in per capita income. In 2014, per capita income for Puerto Ricans in Florida was \$17,570 and \$18,457 for other stateside Puerto Ricans, but only \$10,960 for the island.

From an economic perspective, stateside Puerto Ricans represent 72.1% of the \$133.6 billion

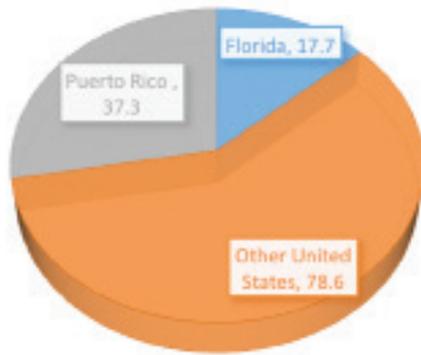
Table 3. Employment and Occupations

Puerto Ricans	2014		
	Florida	United States	Puerto Rico*
EMPLOYMENT STATUS			
Population 16 years and over			
In labor force	61.20%	62.40%	43.70%
Civilian labor force	60.90%	61.60%	43.70%
Employed	54.90%	54.40%	35.40%
Unemployed	10.00%	11.60%	18.90%
Not in labor force	38.80%	37.60%	56.30%
OCCUPATION			
Civilian employed population 16 years and over			
Male	216,575	1,058,918	516,762
Management, business, science, and arts	23.20%	23.40%	23.90%
Service occupations	22.80%	22.50%	23.00%
Sales and office occupations	20.80%	19.60%	21.30%
Construction and maintenance	15.30%	13.80%	18.00%
Production, transportation, and moving	17.80%	20.70%	13.70%
Female	193,256	999,105	456,356
Management, business, science, and arts	31.60%	33.10%	39.70%
Service occupations	23.60%	24.40%	16.60%
Sales and office occupations	40.10%	35.70%	38.30%
Construction and maintenance	0.80%	0.60%	0.60%
Production, transportation, and moving	3.90%	6.20%	4.80%
CLASS OF WORKER			
Civilian employed population 16 years and over			
Private wage and salary workers	85.70%	82.00%	69.00%
Government workers	10.80%	14.80%	22.50%
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	3.50%	3.10%	8.30%
VETERAN STATUS			
Civilian population 18 years and over			
Civilian veteran	6.90%	6.00%	3.30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

* Puerto Ricans only excluding foreign born residents in the island.

**PUERTO RICAN PURCHASING POWER,
IN BILLIONS, 2013**



total purchasing power of the entire Puerto Rican community. Purchasing power is here defined simply as per capita income multiplied by the Puerto Rican population. Stateside Puerto Ricans have more than double the total purchasing power of Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico of \$37.3 billion. Puerto Ricans in Florida, with their proximity to Puerto Rico and \$17.7 billion in purchasing power, represent a significant potential market for trade, investments, tourism in general and medical tourism in particular, and other economic activities in the island.

One of the often alluded-to data about Puerto Ricans in the U.S. is that welfare or public assistance is a motivation for migration. In 2014, the proportion of households receiving cash public assistance income was 4.1%

Table 4. Income and Earnings

Puerto Ricans	2014		
	Florida	United States	Puerto Rico*
INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS			
(IN 2013 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)			
Households	305,143	1,635,808	1,175,297
Median household income (dollars)	40,465	39,322	18,710
With earnings	80.20%	76.90%	54.70%
Mean earnings (dollars)	54,257	61,065	36,407
With Social Security income	27.80%	24.10%	43.20%
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	15,274	13,727	12,159
With Supplemental Security Income	8.30%	12.60%	0.40%
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	8,015	8,780	10,025
With cash public assistance income	4.10%	6.90%	8.10%
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	2,402	3,441	2,316
With retirement income	11.70%	10.10%	15.60%
Mean retirement income (dollars)	19,627	20,452	15,387
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits	25.40%	31.50%	39.70%
Families	220,178	1,114,628	830,807
Median family income (dollars)	43,164	44,499	22,220
Married-couple family	64.10%	53.90%	56.10%
Median income (dollars)	55,093	67,129	29,417
Male householder, no spouse present	9.40%	10.20%	9.50%
Median income (dollars)	37,319	37,513	17,797
Female householder, no husband present	26.50%	35.90%	34.40%
Median income (dollars)	26,005	23,957	13,554
Individuals	1,006,542	5,266,738	3,404,122
Per capita income (dollars)	17,570	18,457	10,960
Mean earnings (dollars) for full-time, year-round workers:			
Male	45,500	50,756	32,512
Female	35,096	42,263	29,166

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
* Puerto Ricans only excluding foreign born residents in the island.

for Puerto Ricans in Florida, 6.9% for other stateside Puerto Ricans, and 8.1% in Puerto Rico. In other words, by staying in Puerto Rico a higher proportion of Puerto Ricans would have received public assistance income. In addition, the difference in the amount households received in public assistance is only slightly higher for stateside Puerto Ricans (\$3,441) while cash public assistance income in Florida of \$2,402 was only marginally higher—\$2,316—than in Puerto Rico. The proportion of Puerto Rican households in Florida receiving benefits

from the Food Stamp/SNAP program was 25.4% in 2014, six percentage points lower than the 31.5% rate for Puerto Rican households in other parts of the U.S. and fifteen percentage points higher than the 39.7% for Puerto Rico. The available data does not support the notion that Puerto Ricans are migrating to the U.S. because they will enjoy welfare benefits.

Puerto Rico has a higher incidence of public assistance simply because it has higher poverty rates and thus a higher proportion of qualified recipients. The poverty rate for all Puerto Rican families was 18% in Florida, 22.7% in other parts of the U.S., and 42.8% in Puerto Rico. Though stateside Puerto Ricans' rates were about half or lower than poverty rates in Puerto Rico, families with female householder, no husband present and children under 18 years of age exhibited much higher incidence of poverty than the average family. For Puerto Rican female-headed families with children the rates were 45.8% in Florida, 49.7% for the rest of the U.S., and 69.7% in Puerto Rico. These are inordinately high poverty rates by any measure or comparative context.

Housing is a primary determinant of the cost of living. In general, the South has lower cost of home ownership than the Northeast or other

POVERTY RATES

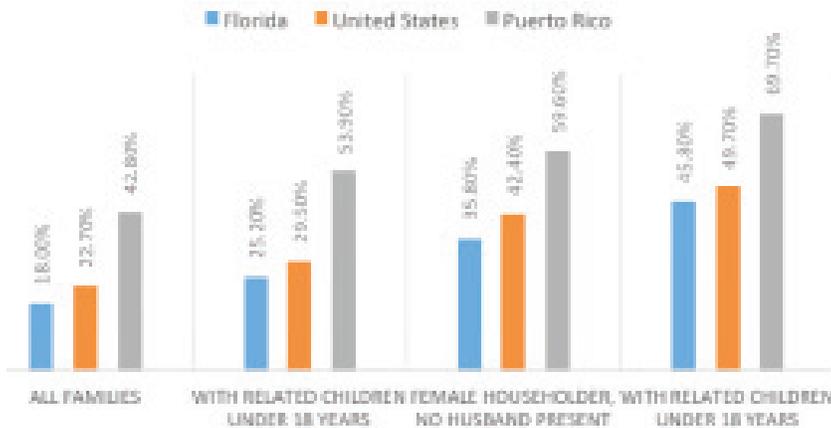


Table 5. Poverty

Puerto Ricans	2014		
	Florida	United States	Puerto Rico*
POVERTY RATES			
All families	18.00%	22.70%	42.80%
With related children under 18 years	25.20%	29.50%	53.90%
With related children under 5 years only	18.40%	24.60%	57.10%
Married-couple family	10.50%	9.70%	30.90%
With related children under 18 years	13.10%	11.30%	35.50%
With related children under 5 years only	6.70%	5.90%	33.90%
Female householder, no husband present, family	35.80%	42.40%	59.60%
With related children under 18 years	45.80%	49.70%	69.70%
With related children under 5 years only	37.30%	49.40%	75.70%
All people	22.50%	26.20%	46.60%
Under 18 years	30.80%	33.40%	58.70%
Related children under 18 years	30.50%	33.10%	58.60%
Related children under 5 years	33.10%	34.70%	62.80%
Related children 5 to 17 years	29.60%	32.40%	57.30%
18 years and over	19.20%	22.80%	43.20%
18 to 64 years	20.10%	22.80%	43.80%
65 years and over	13.70%	22.40%	41.00%
People in families	20.10%	23.60%	44.60%
Unrelated individuals 15 years and over	35.70%	38.50%	58.60%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

* Puerto Ricans only excluding foreign born residents in the island.

parts of the country. The median value of owner-occupied housing for Puerto Ricans in Florida was \$145,200, compared to \$175,900 for other stateside Puerto Ricans, and \$119,500 in Puerto Rico. The median monthly owner costs with a mortgage is \$1,247 for Puerto Ricans in Florida, and \$1,545 for other stateside Puerto Ricans. A comparable cost is \$873 in Puerto Rico. These relative prices and

ownership costs are reflected in ownership rates. Puerto Ricans in Florida have higher rates of home ownership than stateside Puerto Ricans. The Census data reveals that Puerto Ricans in Florida have a 47.1% rate of owner-occupied housing units, while the comparable rate for stateside Puerto Ricans is 36%. The home ownership rate in Puerto Rico is much higher, at 68.7%.

Table 6. Housing and Health Insurance

Puerto Ricans	2014		
	Florida	United States	Puerto Rico*
HOUSING			
Owner-occupied housing units	47.10%	36.00%	68.70%
Monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income in the past 12 months			
Less than 30 percent	58.30%	62.80%	52.60%
30 percent or more	41.70%	37.20%	47.40%
Owner-occupied housing units			
Median value (dollars)	145,200	175,900	119,500
Median selected monthly owner costs with a mortgage (dollars)	1,247	1,545	873
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE			
Civilian noninstitutionalized population			
With private health insurance	50.00%	51.60%	38.00%
With public coverage	38.80%	43.50%	62.90%
No health insurance coverage	17.90%	11.50%	5.50%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

* Puerto Ricans only excluding foreign born residents in the island.

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