

## RESEARCH BRIEF

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## COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS

In 2014 there were an estimated 1.56 million Puerto Rican households in the United States. These households accounted for 1.3 percent of all 116.2 million households in the U.S. and 11 percent of all 14.1 million Hispanic households in the U.S. Married male-female couples and single female households each accounted for over a third of Puerto Rican households (36.4% and 36.5%, respectively) with the third largest householder group being that of single males (17.9%). Unmarried male-female and same-sex households, including married and unmarried, accounted for 8.5 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively, of Puerto Rican households in the U.S.



Compared to the distribution of all U.S. households, the sharpest differences among Puerto Rican households were seen in the underrepresented proportion of married male-female couples and over-representation of single female-headed households. Married male-female households accounted for nearly half of all U.S. households (48.3%), but only 36.4 percent of all Puerto Rican households in the U.S. Non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households had a higher proportion of married male-female households (see table 1). The majority of this difference was found in the proportion of single female householders. Among Puerto Rican homes more than one in three (36.5%) households belong to single female householders. This proportion was 28.1 percent among all U.S. households and lower among non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households (25.1%).

Proportions of single-male households were similar among all three populations ranging from 16.4 percent among non-Puerto Rican Hispanics to 17.5 percent among all

U.S. households, and 17.9 percent among Puerto Ricans in the U.S. Among Puerto Rican Hispanics and non-Puerto Rican Hispanics, the proportion of unmarried male-female couples was consistent at 8.5 percent, higher than the 5.5 percent proportion among all households in the U.S. Same-sex couples represented less than 1 percent of households across all three populations accounting for 0.7 percent of all Puerto Rican households, 0.6 percent of all households in the U.S., and 0.5 percent of non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households (see table 1).

## FERTILITY

Broadly speaking, Puerto Rican households reported higher proportions of households with children than the total U.S. population, but less than non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households (see table 2). Several patterns were observed across all three household groups. Married male-female households had the highest proportions reporting to live with chil-

dren, followed by unmarried male-female households, and single female-headed households. The proportion of single male-led households with children was the lowest across all three groups.

Slightly over half of all Puerto Rican households in the U.S. (51.8%) reported having at least one child, either socially or biologically related and under the age of 18, living in their household (see table 2). Among all U.S. households this proportion was lower (40.2%), but higher among non-Puerto Rican Hispanics (61.1%). Puerto Rican households had one average child per household, compared to 1.6 among non-Puerto Rican Hispanics and 0.7 among all U.S. households.

Within all three populations married male-female couples had the highest proportions of households with children. Close to two-thirds (65.4%) of all married male-female Puerto Rican households reported living with children. Among Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics this rate over three-fourths (75.7%), but for all U.S. households was slightly over half (52.7%).

Similarly, among all three populations the second highest proportion of households with children was the unmarried male-female households. Over half (59.2%) of unmarried Puerto Rican male-female households reported living with children, a proportion more than fifteen percentage points higher than among all U.S. unmarried male-female house-

**Table 1. Household by Relationship to Head of Household in the U.S., 2014**

	Total U.S. Population		Puerto Ricans		Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics	
	Total Count	Percentage	Total Count	Percentage	Total Count	Percentage
Total Households	116,211,074	100	1,561,066	100	12,520,160	100
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	674,300	0.6	10,842	0.7	60,614	0.5
Married M/F Couples	56,085,386	48.3	568,227	36.4	6,190,485	49.4
Unmarried M/F Couples	6,442,036	5.5	133,142	8.5	1,068,167	8.5
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	20,319,308	17.5	278,717	17.9	2,057,607	16.4
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	32,690,044	28.1	570,138	36.5	3,143,287	25.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-yr. estimate 2014

<sup>1</sup> includes single, divorced, separated, widowed, and individuals who are married but the spouse resides in a separate household

<sup>2</sup> includes both married and unmarried couples cohabitating

**Table 2. Households with Children in the U.S., 2014**

	Total U.S. Population		Puerto Ricans		Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics	
	Percentage	Average no. of children per HH	Percentage	Average no. of children per HH	Percentage	Average no. of children per HH
All Households	40.2	0.7	51.8	1	61.1	1.3
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	20.5	0.3	26.6	0.5	32.6	0.6
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	13.5	0.2	14.3	0.3	25.8	0.5
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	26.9	0.5	38.0	0.7	39.4	0.7
Married M/F Couples	52.7	1	65.4	1.3	75.7	1.7
Unmarried M/F Couples	43	0.8	59.2	1.2	68.2	2.1
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	13.4	0.2	15.7	0.2	20	0.3
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	35.2	0.6	54.8	1	57.4	1.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-yr. estimate 2014

<sup>1</sup> includes single, divorced, separated, widowed, and individuals who are married but the spouse resides in a separate household

<sup>2</sup> includes both married and unmarried couples cohabitating

holds (43%). Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics had the highest proportion of unmarried male-female couples reporting as living with children (68.2%). The average counts of children per household of unmarried male-female couples were 1.2 for Puerto Rican households, 2.1 among non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households, and 0.8 for all U.S. households (see table 2).

More than half (54.8%) of Puerto Rican single female led households reported living with children. Among all U.S. households this proportion was significantly lower (35.2%) and slightly higher among non-Puerto Rican Hispanic house-

holds (57.4%). However, the proportion of single female-led households with children exceeded that of all households only in the case of Puerto Rican households. The average number of children per single Puerto Rican female led household was one, equal to that of all Puerto Rican households.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

When examined by household type there are several observable differences in educational attainment (see table 3). The majority (58.7%) of all Puerto Rican household members fell between having completed high school

**Table 3. Puerto Rican Educational Attainment for Household Members 25 years and Older, 2014**

	No HS diploma Percentage	HS diploma Percentage	Some College Percentage	BA or Above Percentage
Total Households	23.7	29.5	29.7	17.1
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	10.4	21.1	36.7	31.9
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	8.4	20.4	34.8	36.5
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	12.2	21.7	38.4	27.8
Married M/F Couples	17.0	28.3	32.3	22.4
Unmarried M/F Couples	24.3	32.5	30.2	13
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	29.4	33.5	25.1	12
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	29.0	27	29.5	14.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-yr. estimate 2014

<sup>1</sup> includes single, divorced, separated, widowed, and individuals who are married but the spouse resides in a separate household

<sup>2</sup> includes both married and unmarried couples cohabitating

**Table 4. Puerto Rican Labor Force Participation by Household in the U.S., 2014**

	In labor force Percentage	Employed Percentage	Unemployment (as percentage of labor force) Percentage	Not in labor force Percentage
All Households	62.3	53.7	13.8	37.7
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	82	75.4	8.1	17.9
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	80	74.8	6.8	19.8
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	83.7	76.0	9.2	16.3
Married M/F Couples	69.8	64.6	7.6	30.2
Unmarried M/F Couples	78.2	67.6	13.5	21.8
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	58	46.1	19.9	42.5
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	54.9	45.7	16.7	45.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-yr. estimate 2014

<sup>1</sup> includes single, divorced, separated, widowed, and individuals who are married but the spouse resides in a separate household

<sup>2</sup> includes both married and unmarried couples cohabitating

**Table 5. Household Median Income in U.S., 2014**

	Total U.S. Population	Puerto Ricans	Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics
All Households	\$52,800	\$38,622	\$42,107
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	\$85,897	\$78,213	\$68,626
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	\$96,555	\$85,457	\$76,000
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	\$76,300	\$70,000	\$61,592
Married M/F Couples	\$79,116	\$69,106	\$57,537
Unmarried M/F Couples	\$54,293	\$45,736	\$41,264
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	\$37,791	\$30,491	\$36,843
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	\$28,872	\$21,053	\$25,778

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-yr. estimate 2014

<sup>1</sup> includes single, divorced, separated, widowed, and individuals who are married but the spouse resides in a separate household

<sup>2</sup> includes both married and unmarried couples cohabitating

(29.5%) and some college education below a bachelor's degree (29.7%). Overall, the proportion of Puerto Rican household members age 25 and older having attained at least a bachelor's degree was 17.1 percent.

Same-sex couples, examined in a separate report, had the highest levels of educational attainment with over two-thirds (71.3%) of all same-sex couple household members over the age of 24 having completed beyond a high school diploma. Married male-female couples followed with over half (54.6%) of all members having also completed beyond a high school diploma. Single female led households reported a 44 percent proportion of members over age 24 having attained some college or at least a bachelor's degree. Although the proportion of household members in single female led households with at least bachelor's degree (14%) was lower than that of all Puerto Rican household members (17.1%), it was higher than that of single male led households (12%) and unmarried male-female households (13%).

Whereas less than one in four (23.7%) Puerto Rican household members over the age of 24 had not attained a high school diploma or equivalent, these rates were particularly high for single male and female led households (29.4% and 29%, respectively) and particularly low for same-sex couple households (10.4%) and married male-female couples (17%).

## EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

The overall labor force participation rate for all Puerto Rican households was 62.3 percent. Same-sex couples were most active within the labor force with a participation rate of 82 percent, followed by unmarried male-female couples at 78.2 percent. Married male-female couples had a relatively lower labor force participation rate of 69.8 percent, but still exceeded the rate for all Puerto Rican household (62.3%). Single male and female households both had labor force participation rates below that of all households (58% and 54.9%, respectively).

The employment rate among all Puerto Rican household members over 16 years of age was just slightly above half (53.7%). Same-sex couple households had the highest rate of employment (75.4%), seconded by unmarried male-female couples (67.6%) and married male-female couples (64.6%). Employment for single male and female householders was lowest (46.1% and 45.7%, respectively).

Unemployment as measured by percentage of the civilian labor force was 13.8 percent for all Puerto Rican household members. Married male-female couples had the lowest rate of unemployment (7.6%) relative to their labor force participation, followed by same-sex couples (8.1%), and unmarried male-female couples (13.5%). Single male household members had the highest unemployment rate of nearly one in five (19.9%). Single female household members had the second highest unemployment rate at 16.7 percent.

## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As shown in table 4, median household incomes among Puerto Rican households (\$38,622) were below those of all U.S. households (\$52,800) and non-Puerto Rican Hispanics (\$42,107). Within all three populations same-sex couples had the highest median incomes (\$78,213 for Puerto Ricans, \$85,897 for all U.S. households, and \$68,626 for non-Puerto Rican Hispanics). The second highest median incomes belonged to married male-female couples (\$69,106 for Puerto Ricans, \$79,116 for all U.S. households, and \$57,537 for non-Puerto Rican Hispanics).

Puerto Rican same-sex and married male-female couple households have lower rates of unemployment (8.1% and 7.6%, respectively) which likely contribute to their higher median household earnings. Conversely, single male and female households have unemployment rates more than twice as high (19.9% and 16.7%, respectively) and lower median incomes of \$30,491 and \$21,053, respectively. The median incomes of single male and female Puerto Rican households fell below those of single non-Puerto Rican Hispanic male and female households (\$36,843 and \$25,778, respectively).

## HOUSEHOLD TENURE

Among Puerto Ricans in the U.S., a little over a third of householders (37.3%) owned their home, a figure significantly lower than among all U.S. householders, which was close to two-thirds (64.1%) (see table 6). The Puerto Rican householder proportion of homeownership was also lower than among non-Puerto Rican Hispanics (47.1%). However, despite these differences in homeownership, the median home values of Puerto Rican homeowners matched those of

Table 6. Home Tenure by Household Type in the U.S., 2014

	Total U.S. Population		
	Own home Percent	Median home value \$	Rent home Percent
All Households	64.1	\$175,000	35.9
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	68.5	\$220,000	31.5
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	69.5	\$250,000	30.5
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	67.5	\$200,000	32.5
Married M/F Couples	80.1	\$200,000	19.9
Unmarried M/F Couples	42	\$149,000	58
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	48.6	\$140,000	51.4
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	50.7	\$140,000	49.3
	Puerto Ricans		
	Own home Percent	Median home value \$	Rent home Percent
All Households	37.3	\$175,000	62.7
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	45.4	\$195,000	54.6
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	48.9	\$195,000	51.1
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	42.1	\$189,000	57.9
Married M/F Couples	60.0	\$200,000	40.0
Unmarried M/F Couples	25.6	\$150,000	74.4
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	26.3	\$197,720	73.7
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	22.6	\$192,690	77.4
	Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics		
	Own home Percent	Median home value \$	Rent home Percent
All Households	47.1	\$150,000	52.9
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Couples	52.3	\$190,000	47.7
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Males	53	\$224,000	47
<sup>2</sup> Same-Sex Females	51.5	\$160,000	48.5
Married M/F Couples	60	\$150,000	40
Unmarried M/F Couples	27.9	\$130,000	72.1
<sup>1</sup> Male Householders	34	\$130,000	66
<sup>1</sup> Female Householders	36.9	\$125,000	63.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-yr. estimate 2014

<sup>1</sup> includes single, divorced, separated, widowed, and individuals who are married but the spouse resides in a separate household

<sup>2</sup> includes both married and unmarried couples cohabitating

all U.S. households (\$175,000) and surpassed those of Non-Puerto Rican Hispanics (\$150,000).

When examined by household type, the largest homeowner proportions in all three populations were observed in married male-female couples (60% for Puerto Ricans, 80.1% for all U.S. households, and 60% for non-Puerto Rican Hispanics). Same-sex couples, which generally had the highest levels of educational attainment and higher median incomes, had the second highest rates of homeownership (45.4% for Puerto Ricans, 68.5% for all U.S. households, and 52.3% for non-Puerto Rican Hispanics).

Among Puerto Rican households, the lowest rate of homeownership was observed in single female households (22.6%, compared to 50.7% for all U.S. and 36.9% for non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households). However, among all U.S. and non-Puerto Rican Hispanic households unmarried male-female couples had the lowest rates of homeownership (42% and 27.9%, respectively).

## FINAL NOTES

Puerto Rican households are disproportionately comprised of single householders when compared to all U.S. households and those of non-Puerto Rican Hispanics. More than half (54.4%) of all Puerto Rican households are headed either by a single male (17.9%) or by a single female (36.5%). Among all U.S. household these proportions are 17.5 per-

cent for single male led households and 28.1 percent for single female led households, and 16.4 percent for single male led households and 25.1 percent for single female led households among non-Puerto Rican Hispanics. Most of this difference in single households is observed in the larger Puerto Rican proportion of single female households.

Among Puerto Rican households, single households tended to underperform joint households in terms of income, educational attainment, and labor force participation. However, the proportion of single female households living with children was 54.9 percent, a figure greater than the 51.8 percent proportion for all Puerto Rican households. Given the financial obligation children present and the relatively lower median incomes, lower levels of labor force participation, higher unemployment rates, and subpar levels of educational attainment, single-female households are not only the most common type of Puerto Rican household in the U.S., but the most acutely vulnerable.

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