

The Puerto Rican population grew in the U.S. from 5.4 million in 2016 to 5.5 million in 2017. Of note is the fact that 2017 is the first time Florida becomes the state of the union with the most Puerto Ricans, according to estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau in its yearly American Community Survey. This can be attributed to three factors: migration from Puerto Rico, internal migration from other U.S. states (especially from the Northeast), and natural growth of the population (greater birth than deaths).



Table 1. United States Population by Major Ethnic Groups, 2016-2017

	2016	2017 ¹	Change	Percent Change (%)
Total Population	323,127,515	325,719,178	2,591,663	0.8%
Non-Hispanic White	197,479,450	197,285,202	-194,248	-0.1%
Non-Hispanic Black	39,717,127	40,129,593	412,466	1.0%
Hispanic or Latino¹	51,948,247	53,257,470	1,309,223	2.5%
Puerto Rican²	5,450,472	5,588,664	138,192	2.5%
Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico³	3,263,755	3,201,679	-62,076	-1.9%
Total Population in Puerto Rico⁴	3,411,307	3,337,177	-74,130	-2.2%

1. Not including Puerto Ricans.
 2. Stateside Puerto Ricans only.
 3. Includes only the Puerto Rican population.
 4. Includes overall population in Puerto Rico.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 & 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Data from the 2017 American Community Survey also showed Puerto Ricans (2.5%) and Latinos overall (2.5%) were among the fastest growing population groups in the United States, compared to non-Hispanic blacks (1%), and the total U.S. population (0.8%). The population among non-Hispanic whites slightly decreased between 2016 and 2017 (-0.1%). Latinos account for more than half of total population growth in the U.S. (see table 1). These figures keep track with long-term population trends in the country.

By State

Overall, the Puerto Rican population in Puerto Rico (excluding non-Puerto Rican individuals) continues to decline from 2016 to 2017. In a one-year period, Puerto Rico experienced a net loss of about 74,000 residents, an overall population decline of 2.2 percent. Of these 74,000 individuals' population decline on the island, 62,000 (-1.9%) were of Puerto Rican origin or descent. These figures suggest that the population decline of the island involves both Puerto Rican and

non-Puerto Rican residents, with non-Puerto Ricans representing a slightly larger proportion of the loss. In contrast to the Puerto Rican population in Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rican population in the U.S. added 138,192 new statewide residents. Overall, Puerto Ricans in the U.S. continue to grow and disperse throughout the country, especially in the nation's South, West, and Midwest regions.

Among the selected states, Florida (+60,478) had the largest increase followed by New York (+32,013), Massachusetts (+15,917), North Carolina (+11,557), and California (+10,245) (see table 2). On the other hand, Illinois (-14,592) experienced the largest decline followed by Texas (-11,817), Virginia (-6,722), Connecticut (-6,642), and Hawaii (-5,389). Overall, the 2017 American Community Survey shows both growth and dispersion for Puerto Ricans in

the U.S., especially in states of more recent settlement.

IMPACT OF MIGRATION

The growth of the Puerto Rican population in the U.S. in 2017 was partly the result of heightened migration. The 2017 American Community Survey, reports that 97,488 migrants from Puerto Rico relocated throughout the U.S. and 20,167 returned to Puerto Rico for a net emigration of 77,321 people. This is an increase from prior years when net migration from Puerto Rico reached an average of 65,000 people.

The 2017 ACS population estimates include households surveyed from January to December of 2017. This includes a representative sample of the population in Puerto Rico collected after September 2017 when Hurricane Maria

Table 2. Puerto Rican Population by States and Puerto Rico, 2016-2017⁴

	2016	2017 ¹	Change	Percent Change (%)
Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico	3,263,755	3,201,679	-62,076	-1.9%
Puerto Ricans in U.S.	5,450,472	5,588,664	+138,192	+2.5%
Top 5 States with Growth				
Florida	1,067,747	1,128,225	60,478	5.7%
New York	1,081,110	1,113,123	32,013	3.0%
Massachusetts	319,042	334,959	15,917	5.0%
North Carolina	95,915	107,472	11,557	12.0%
California	214,255	224,500	10,245	4.8%
Top 5 States with Declines				
Hawaii	51,384	45,995	-5,389	-10.5%
Connecticut	298,245	291,603	-6,642	-2.2%
Virginia	102,807	96,085	-6,722	-6.5%
Texas	196,460	184,643	-11,817	-6.0%
Illinois	209,638	195,046	-14,592	-7.0%

4. Includes only the Puerto Rican population.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 & 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

struck Puerto Rico and induced a massive emigration from the Island. Yet, according to the U.S. Census survey protocols, evacuees from Puerto Rico would only be counted as emigrants in the survey if they had arrived in the United States prior to the hurricane's landfall or planned to stay in the United States for two or more months. Therefore, population and migration figures reported here are likely to underestimate actual changes in residence between Puerto Rico and the United States in 2017, and by implication total population and migration estimates.

At least 74% of migrants from Puerto Rico relocated to the top 10 states which included both states of traditional and areas of more recent settlement. The remaining 26% of migrants from the island dispersed throughout the U.S. As shown in table 3, the top 10 receiving states includes: Florida at 29% (28,538) followed by 8% in Pennsylvania (7,783), 7% in Massachusetts (6,748), 6% in New York (5,910), 5% in Texas (5,105), 4% in New Jersey (4,195), 4% in Connecticut (3,780), 4% in Ohio (3,765), 3% in Georgia (3,345), and 3% in North Carolina (3,011).

Table 3. Migration from Puerto Rico to the Top 10 States, 2017

	Migration from Puerto Rico	Percent (%)
United States	97,488	100%
Top 10 States	72,180	74%
Florida	28,538	29%
Pennsylvania	7,783	8%
Massachusetts	6,748	7%
New York	5,910	6%
Texas	5,105	5%
New Jersey	4,195	4%
Connecticut	3,780	4%
Ohio	3,765	4%
Georgia	3,345	3%
North Carolina	3,011	3%
Other States	25,308	26%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates. Table.B07204



For more details, Centro has created PDF and Excel files for selected social characteristics in the United States from the 2017 American Community Survey one-year estimates. To access these data, [click here](#).

The American Community Survey's (ACS) annual data release provides statistics on population and housing characteristics, such as statistics on income and earnings, health insurance, and poverty. For each geographic location that has a sufficient sample size to produce estimates, Centro has created files focusing on the Puerto Rican population. In addition, the files include data on the total population, other Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites for comparison purposes.

Geographies with sufficient sample size for estimates include:

States:

- California
- Connecticut
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Massachusetts
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Texas
- Virginia

Counties:

- Hartford County, Connecticut
- New Haven County, Connecticut
- Broward County, Florida
- Hillsborough County, Florida

- Miami-Dade County, Florida
- Orange County, Florida
- Cook County, Illinois
- Bronx County, New York
- Kings County, New York
- New York County, New York
- Queens County, New York
- Suffolk County, New York

Places/Cities:

- Chicago City, Illinois
- New York City, New York
- Philadelphia City, Pennsylvania

Metropolitan Areas:

- Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ Metro Area
- Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH Metro Area
- Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL-IN-WI Metro Area
- Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT Metro Area
- Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL Metro Area
- New Haven-Milford, CT Metro Area
- New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area
- Orlando -Kissimmee-Sanford, FL Metro Area
- Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD Metro Area
- Springfield, MA Metro Area
- Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL Metro Area

Consolidated Statistical Areas:

- Boston-Worcester-Manchester, MA-RI-NH CSA
- Chicago-Naperville-Michigan City, IL-IN-WI CSA
- Cleveland-Akron-Elyria, OH CSA
- Hartford-West Hartford-Willimantic, CT CSA
- Los Angeles-Long Beach-Riverside, CA CSA
- New York-Newark-Bridgeport, NY-NJ-CT-PA CSA
- Orlando-Deltona-Daytona Beach, FL CSA
- Philadelphia-Camden-Vineland, PA-NJ-DE-MD CSA
- Washington-Baltimore-Northern Virginia, DC-MD-VA-WV CSA

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The Centro Library and Archives is devoted to collecting, preserving and providing access to resources documenting the history and culture of Puerto Ricans. The Centro Library and Archives was established in 1973 as a component of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. The collections include books, current and historic newspapers and periodicals, audio, film & video, manuscripts, photographs, art prints, and recorded music. The Library and Archives provides services and programs to the scholarly community as well as the general public. Constituents are diverse and come from the United States and abroad. The Library and Archives facilitates access to information on its holdings through the City University's online public catalog or CUNY+. It also provides research and information assistance via phone and email.

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