

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA

CENSUS INFORMATION CENTER



MAINLAND PUERTO RICAN POPULATION FACT SHEET

NOVEMBER 1993

Mainland Puerto Ricans comprise one-tenth of the total Hispanic population (10.6%).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- Puerto Ricans made modest gains in educational attainment between 1991 and 1992, but the educational attainment gap between Puerto Ricans and non-Hispanics remains wide. Three in five Puerto Ricans 25 years old and over have completed high school (60.5%), up from 58.0% the previous year, compared to 81.5% of non-Hispanics.
- The Puerto Rican college completion rate remains low compared to the non-Hispanic population. Just over one in 12 Puerto Ricans completed college (8.4%); more than one in five non-Hispanics have four year college degrees (22.3%).

LABOR FORCE STATUS

- Partly as a result of insufficient educational levels, Puerto Rican men have among the lowest labor force participation rates of any ethnic/racial group. Seven in ten Puerto Rican men 16 years and over were participating in the labor force in March 1992 (70.3%), compared to almost four in five Hispanic men (79.6%) and almost three in four non-Hispanic men (74.3%).
- Although the Puerto Rican female labor force participation rate has increased in the past decade, it remains low compared to other women and is the lowest of any Hispanic subgroup. In 1980, 35.6% of Puerto Rican women were in the labor force. A little more than two-fifths of Puerto Rican women 16 years old and over (44.7%), compared to slightly more than half of all Hispanic women and almost three-fifths of non-Hispanic women (57.8%) were working or looking for work in 1991.

EARNINGS

- Median earnings of Puerto Rican men are higher than those of all Hispanic men and lower than those of their non-Hispanic counterparts. In

1991, the median earnings for Puerto Rican men were \$18,256 compared to \$14,503 for all Hispanic men. Among Hispanic subgroups, Other Hispanic men had the highest median earnings of \$20,456. Puerto Rican male median earnings were equal to four-fifths the earnings of non-Hispanic men (\$22,628).

- **Although Puerto Rican women have lower labor force participation rates, the median earnings of employed Puerto Rican women are among the highest of all Hispanic subgroups, but still lower than those of non-Hispanic women.** In 1991, the median earnings for Puerto Rican women that had year-round full-time earnings were \$18,656, compared to \$16,244 for all Hispanic women and \$19,999 for Central and South American women. Median earnings for non-Hispanic women that had year-round full-time earnings \$20,799.
- **The median income of non-Hispanic families is nearly twice the median income of Puerto Rican families.** In 1991, non-Hispanic families had a median income of \$37,013 compared to \$20,654 for Puerto Rican families. The median family income for all Hispanic families was \$23,884, in 1991.

POVERTY

- **Puerto Ricans continue to be the poorest Hispanic subgroup.** In 1991, just under two-fifths of all Puerto Ricans (39.4%) lived below the poverty level, compared to almost one-third of all Mexican (29.5%), less than one-fifth of all Cuban (18.0%), and one-fourth of all Central and South Americans (24.6%).
- **The poverty rate of Puerto Rican families is four times that of White families and slightly higher than that of African American families.** In 1991 over one-third of all Puerto Rican families (35.6%) lived below the poverty level, compared to less than one-tenth of White families (9.6%), and more than one-third of African American families (33.6%).
- **Puerto Rican female-headed households are especially likely to be poor.** Almost two-thirds of Puerto Rican female-headed households were poor (66.3%) in 1991, compared to just over half of African American single female-headed households (51.2%).



- **The poverty rate for all Puerto Rican children is three and one-half times that of White children and Puerto Rican children are the poorest racial/ethnic group in the United States. Almost three-fifths of all Puerto Rican children under 18 were poor in 1991 (57.9%), compared to two-fifths of all Hispanic children, almost half of all African American children (45.9%), and one-sixth of all White children (16.8%).**

Source: *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1992; Poverty in the United States: 1992, and Poverty in the United States: 1992*, Bureau of the Census.