

PUERTO RICAN POPULATION CHANGE IN THE UNITED STATES, 2016-2021

Puerto Rican Studies Initiative for Community Engagement and Public Policy Data Report DR 2022-1 September 2022

Charles R. Venator-Santiago & Volodymyr Gupan University of Connecticut

About this report

Central to the discussion of the location/residence of Puerto Ricans in the United States are impacts on the displacement/migration of islands-based Puerto Ricans caused by push factors such as the economic conditions of Puerto Rico, climate events like hurricanes Irma/Maria and Fiona, earthquakes, and the COVID pandemic. The mobility of Puerto Ricans is also contingent on pull factors such as the presence of kin/family and friends outside of Puerto Rico as well as friendly labor conditions in various states.

Current Puerto Rican Population Counts in the US and Connecticut

Connecticut	%	Count		
Puerto Ricans	8	288,922		
Hispanics	17	637,113		
Total state population	100	3,605,597		
National	%	Count		
Puerto Rican diaspora	2	5,798,287		
Hispanics	19	62,529,064		
Total US population	100	331,893,745		
Puerto Rico	%	Count		
Total Islands' Population	100	3,263,584		

What is our source of data?

This Data Report provides a simple overview of the Puerto Rican population change in the United States between 2016 and 2021. The mobility of Puerto Ricans includes mobility of Puerto Ricans between Puerto Rico and the states as well as among the states.

The data for this report was gathered from annual American Community Survey (ACS) conducted by the US Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau, however, does not publish data on states that have Puerto Rican population at or lower than margin of error for a corresponding year of American Community Survey.

The 2021 U.S. Census estimated that the current population of Puerto Ricans in the United States at 9,061,871. About two-thirds (5,789,287) of the Puerto Rican live in the states or the District of Columbia and one-third (3,263,584) reside in the Puerto Rican islands. Puerto Rican diaspora in the US account for 9% of the Hispanic or Latino population and about 2% of the total population.

The 2021 U.S. Census estimated that Hispanics accounted for 17% or 637,113 residents of Connecticut. Puerto Ricans made more than half of the Hispanic population and 8% or 288,922 of the residents of Connecticut.

Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2021, Table S0201, V2021. Base: n= 5,680,597, MOE = +/- 1%

NATIONAL PUERTO RICAN POPULATION CHANGES, 2016-2021

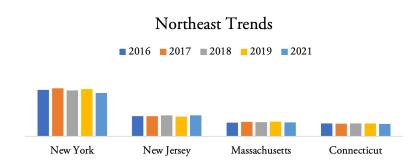
American Community Survey (ACS) publishes open access data on Puerto Rican population only in states where that population is greater than margin of error for a corresponding survey year. In 2021, 14 states had population greater than ACS margin of error of 65,000.

State	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	Net change 2016 vs 2019	Net change 2019 vs 2021	Net change 2016 vs 2021
Florida	1,067,747	1,128,225	1,187,437	1,190,891	1,176,465	123,144	(14,426)	108,718
New York	1,081,110	1,113,123	1,070,071	1,096,823	1,008,909	15,713	(87,914)	(72,201)
New Jersey	470,143	470,640	488,181	455,615	484,727	(14,528)	29,112	14,584
Pennsylvania	444,263	445,442	477,312	493,255	466,450	48,992	(26,805)	22,187
Massachusetts	319,042	334,959	329,713	340,893	323,528	21,851	(17,365)	4,486
Connecticut	298,245	291,603	298,006	302,027	288,922	3,782	(13,105)	(9,323)
Texas	196,460	184,643	214,765	239,157	253,800	42,697	14,643	57,340
California	214,255	224,500	226,738	226,314	223,991	12,059	(2,323)	9,736
Illinois	209,638	195,046	206,543	207,109	206,062	(2,529)	(1,047)	(3,576)
Ohio	122,204	126,554	137,104	130,700	143,688	8,496	12,988	21,484
Georgia	100,398	101,921	103,647	108,719	131,779	8,321	23,060	31,381
North Carolina	95,915	107,472	110,248	110,028	122,272	14,113	12,244	26,357
Virginia	102,807	96,085	106,886	106,781	109,439	3,974	2,658	6,632
Wisconsin					69,917			
Puerto Rico	3,411,307	3,337,177	3,195,153	3,193,694	3,263,584	(217,613)	69,890	(147,723)

Summary of Findings

The Northeast, excepting a post-COVID increase in New Jersey, is in an overall downward trend.

New York (7% loss since 2016) and Connecticut (3% loss since 2016) loss the Puerto Rican population gains after hurricane Maria. Massachusetts is also in a downward population loss trend.



All southern states, excepting Florida, posted the largest gains between 2019 and 2021.

The main beneficiaries of outmigration from the Northeast are Deep South states such as Georgia (31% increase since 2016), North Carolina (27% increase since 2016) and Texas (29% increase since 2016).

Florida and Texas were main destination states for post-Maria Puerto Rican migrants.

However, COVID migration reduced these gains in Florida by 22% and in Pennsylvania by 55%.

Midwestern and Mid-Atlantic states posted modest gains or losses within the American Community Surveys' margin of error.

In the Midwest, Ohio stands out with an 18% net gain of Puerto Rican residents between 2016 and 2021.

Pennsylvania also gained more Puerto Rican residents.

Connecticut Puerto Rican Population Changes, 2016-2021

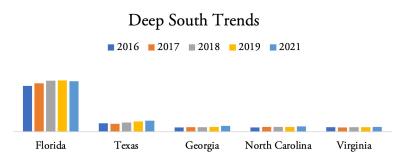
Although Connecticut did not gain as many Puerto Rican residents as other states as a result of the displacements/migrations caused by hurricanes Irma and Maria, it also did not lose as many Puerto Ricans as other states during the COVID pandemic.

Connecticut has the 6th largest Puerto Rican population in the United States.

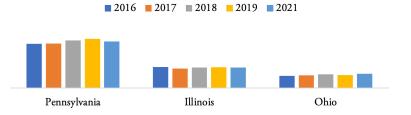
Connecticut gained 3,782 Puerto Ricans between 2016 and 2019. This population increase was largely driven by the post-Hurricane Maria displacement/migration to Connecticut.

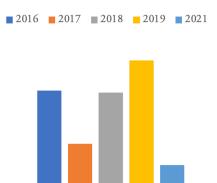
Overall Connecticut lost 9,323 Puerto Rican residents between 2016 and 2021.

The reported losses of Puerto Rican residents between 2019 and 2021 are only slightly higher than the margin of error for the 2019 and 2021 American Community Surveys.



Midwest and Mid-Atlantic Trends





Connecticut trends



The Puerto Rican Studies Initiative for Community Engagement and Public Policy (PRSI) is a research initiative that can help document and support the Puerto Ricans' vital economic, intellectual, and cultural contributions to Connecticut and provide research-based support for the development of public policies addressing the needs of Puerto Ricans in the State of Connecticut.

This initiative is part of a collaboration between El Instituto (CLAS, UConn Storrs), the Puerto Rican and Latin@ Studies Project (School of Social Work, UConn Hartford) and the Hispanic Health Council.

For more information, please contact Charles R. Venator-Santiago, Director of the Puerto Rican Studies Initiative, University of Connecticut: <u>charles.venator@uconn.edu</u>