

Puerto Rican and Hispanic or Latino Population Growth in Connecticut by Decade, 1850-2021

BY Luis Palomino and Charles R. Venator-Santiago

About This Report

This report aims to document the population growth trends of Puerto Ricans and Latin Americans in Connecticut by decade for the period 1850-2021. We use decennial microdata from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS) harmonized by IPUMS USA. First, census microdata has three categories: (1) 1850-1940, 100% sample; 1950-1970, 1% sample; (3) 1980-1990, 5% sample. Second, survey microdata corresponds to ACS 1-year.

About the Authors

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Historical Population Counts in Connecticut by Decade

- The total population in Connecticut increased by 860% or from 370,872 in 1850 to 3,561,894 in 2021.
- The percentage of the Puerto Rican population residing in Connecticut increased from 0.004% in 1950 to 7.9% in 2020.
- The percentage of Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico who reside in Connecticut increased from 0.003% in 1850 to 2.7% in 2020.
- The percentage of Hispanic or Latino population residing in Connecticut increased from 0.097% in 1850 to 9.5% in 2020.
- The most significant population growth of Puerto Ricans in Connecticut took place between 1940 and 1960, when the Puerto Rican population grew by 20.01% per year, and the island-born residents grew by 21.44% per year.

Table 1: Puerto Rican and Hispanic or Latino Population Growth in Connecticut by Decade, 1850-2020

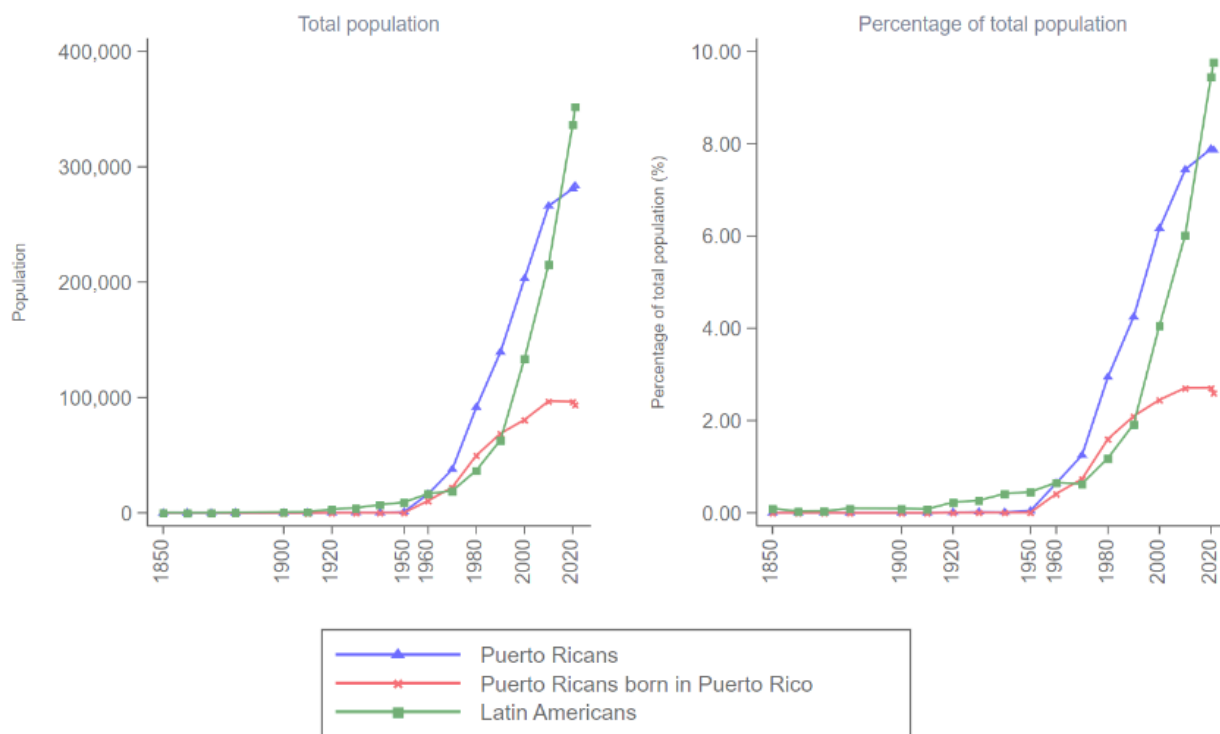
	1850	1870	1900	1920	1940	1960	1980	2000	2020
Population (Thousands)									
All population	371	538	909	1,381	1,714	2,535	3,113	3,295	3,562
Puerto Ricans	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.19	0.30	16.4	91.6	203.1	281.0
Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.09	0.15	10.6	49.8	80.7	96.5
Latin Americans	0.36	0.22	0.85	3.19	7.13	16.7	36.9	133.8	336.8
Percentage of population (%)									
Puerto Ricans	0.004	0.004	0.002	0.013	0.017	0.645	2.943	6.165	7.890
Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico	0.003	0.003	0.001	0.006	0.008	0.417	1.601	2.451	2.710
Latin Americans	0.097	0.041	0.093	0.231	0.416	0.657	1.185	4.062	9.455
Annual population growth rate (%)									
All population		1.24	1.75	2.09	1.08	1.96	1.03	0.28	0.39
Puerto Ricans		1.26	0.00	11.41	2.37	20.01	8.61	3.98	1.62
Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico		1.77	-2.12	11.34	2.55	21.44	7.76	2.41	0.89
Latin Americans		-1.61	4.46	6.61	4.03	4.24	3.98	6.45	4.61

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (IPUMS USA). Own elaboration.

Trends in Puerto Rican and Hispanic or Latino Population Growth in Connecticut by Decade

Puerto Rican population increased by 2,180,885% or from 13 in 1850 to 283,528 in 2021. Puerto Rican migration to Connecticut began in the aftermath of World War II and during the 1950s. The Hispanic/Latino and Latin American population increased by 97,460% or from 361 in 1850 to 352,192 in 2021. This population began to arrive in significant numbers later than Puerto Ricans. While the Puerto Rican population growth in Connecticut has tempered, the Hispanic or Latino and Latin American migration growth began to surpass Puerto Ricans after the 2000s.

Figure 1: Trends in Puerto Rican and Hispanic or Latino Population in Connecticut by Decade, 1850-2021

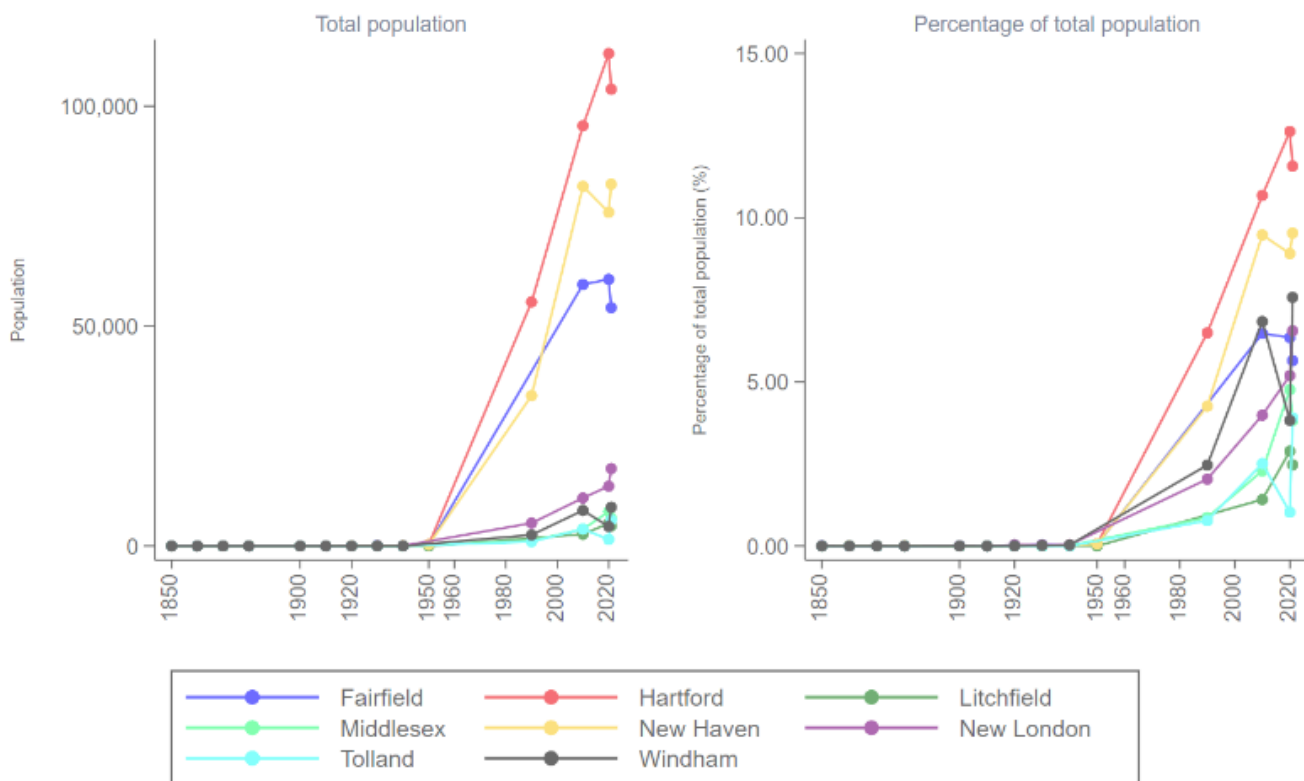


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (IPUMS USA). Own elaboration.

Puerto Rican Population in Connecticut by Decade and County

Earlier arrivals of Puerto Ricans to Connecticut tended to settle in Windham and New London counties, but since the 1950s, the largest proportion of the Puerto Rican population has been concentrated in Hartford, New Haven, and Fairfield counties. In the period 1950-2021, Puerto Ricans in Hartford County grew annually by 8.1% or from 330 in 1950 to 103,867 in 2021; in New Haven County increased annually by 7.8% or from 330 in 1950 to 82,284 in 2021; and in Fairfield County increased annually by 9.0% or from 246 in 1950 to 54,182 in 2021. Figure 2.2 provides a visual representation of the evolving spatial distribution of the Puerto Rican population at the county level for years 1940, 1990, 2010, and 2020.

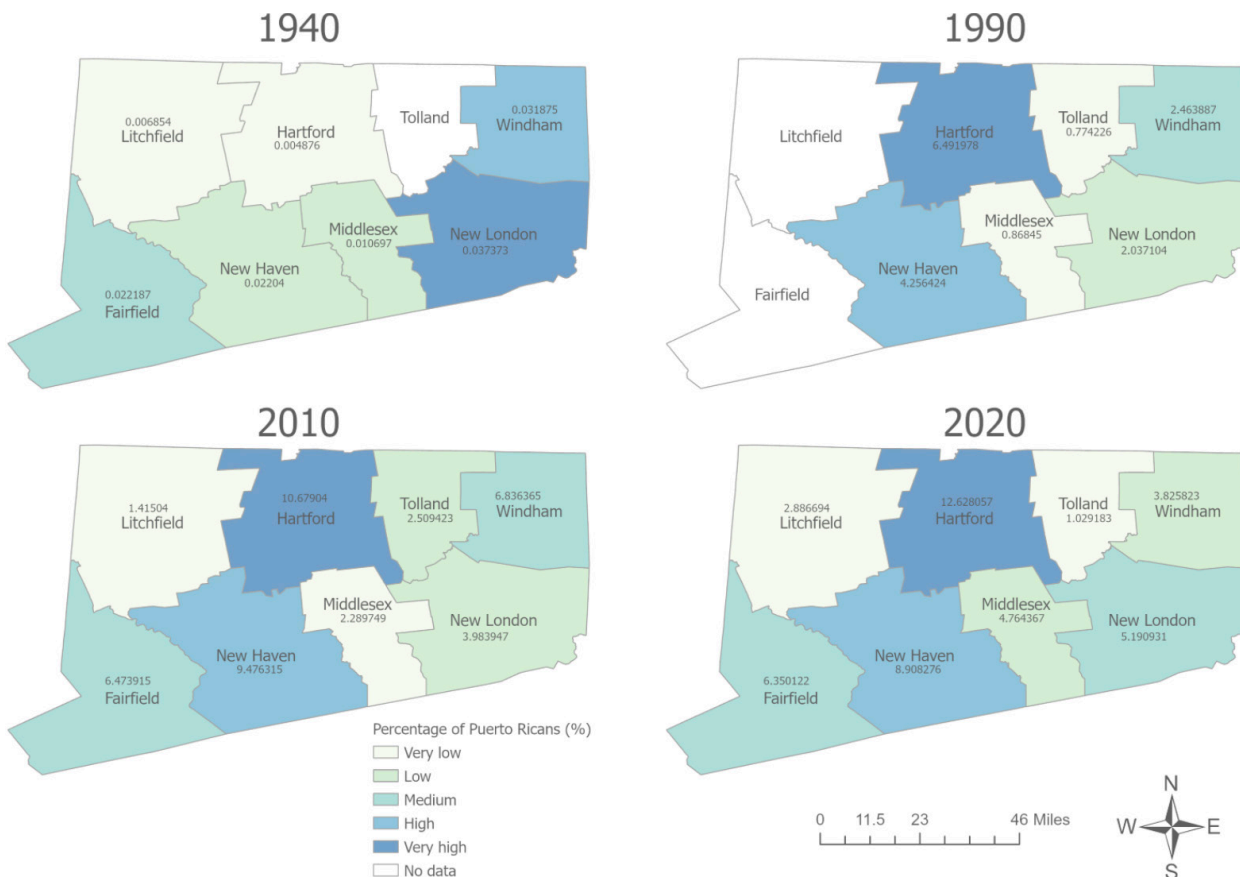
Figure 2.1: Puerto Rican Population in Connecticut by Decade and County, 1850-2021



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (IPUMS USA). Own elaboration.

Note: The available public microdata does not allow for generating statistics at the county level for the years 1960, 1970, 1980, and 2000.

Figure 2.2: Spatial Distribution of the Puerto Rican Population By County



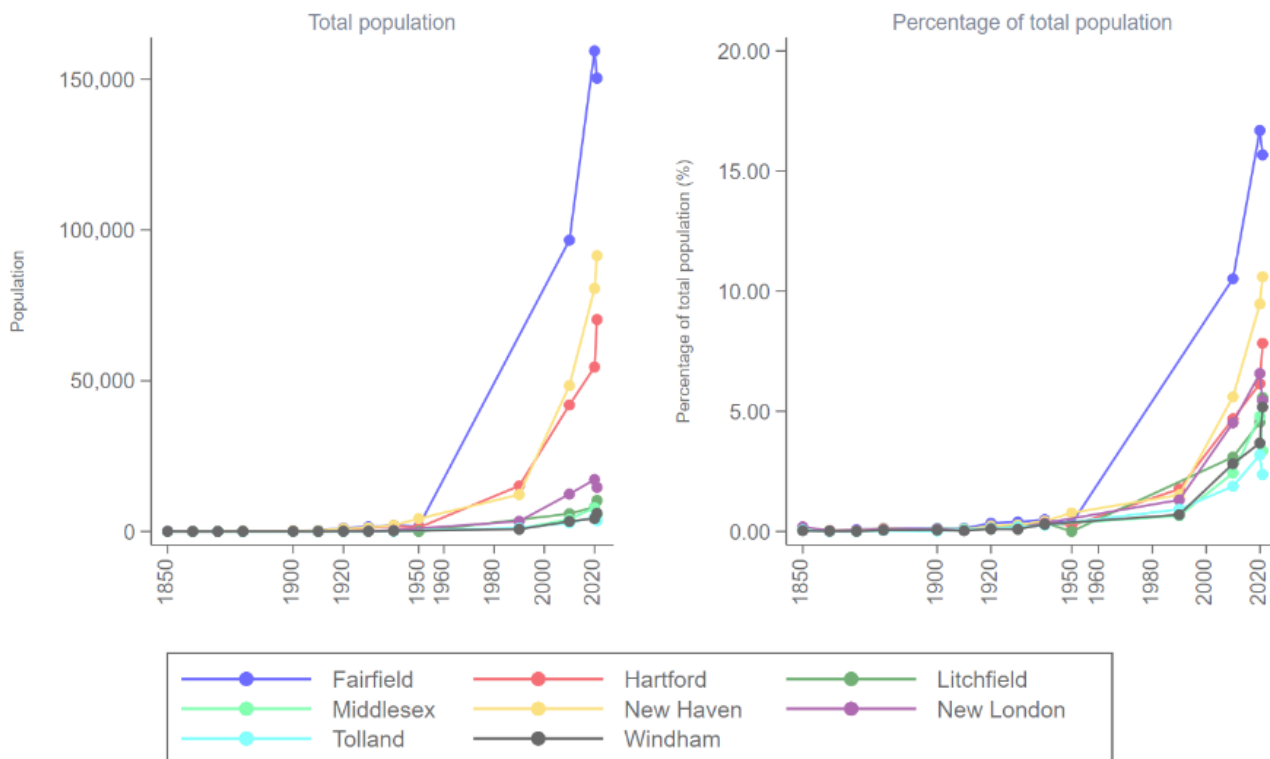
Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (IPUMS USA), and IPUMS NHGIS’ geospatial data. Own elaboration.

Note: The dark colors correspond to the regions with the largest Puerto Rican population, while the light colors correspond to the areas with the least Puerto Rican population in each year of analysis.

Hispanic or Latino Population Growth in Connecticut by Decade and County

Historically, the largest proportion of the Hispanic or Latino population in Connecticut has been concentrated in Fairfield, New Haven, and Hartford counties. In the period 1950-2021, Hispanic or Latinos in Fairfield County grew annually by 6.4% or from 2,062 in 1950 to 150,367 in 2021; in New Haven County this population increased annually by 4.3% or from 4,225 in 1950 to 91,489 in 2021; and in Hartford County increased annually by 5.7% or from 1,272 in 1950 to 70,277 in 2021. **Figure 3.2** provides a visual representation of the evolving spatial distribution of the Hispanic or Latino population at the county level for years 1940, 1990, 2010, and 2020.

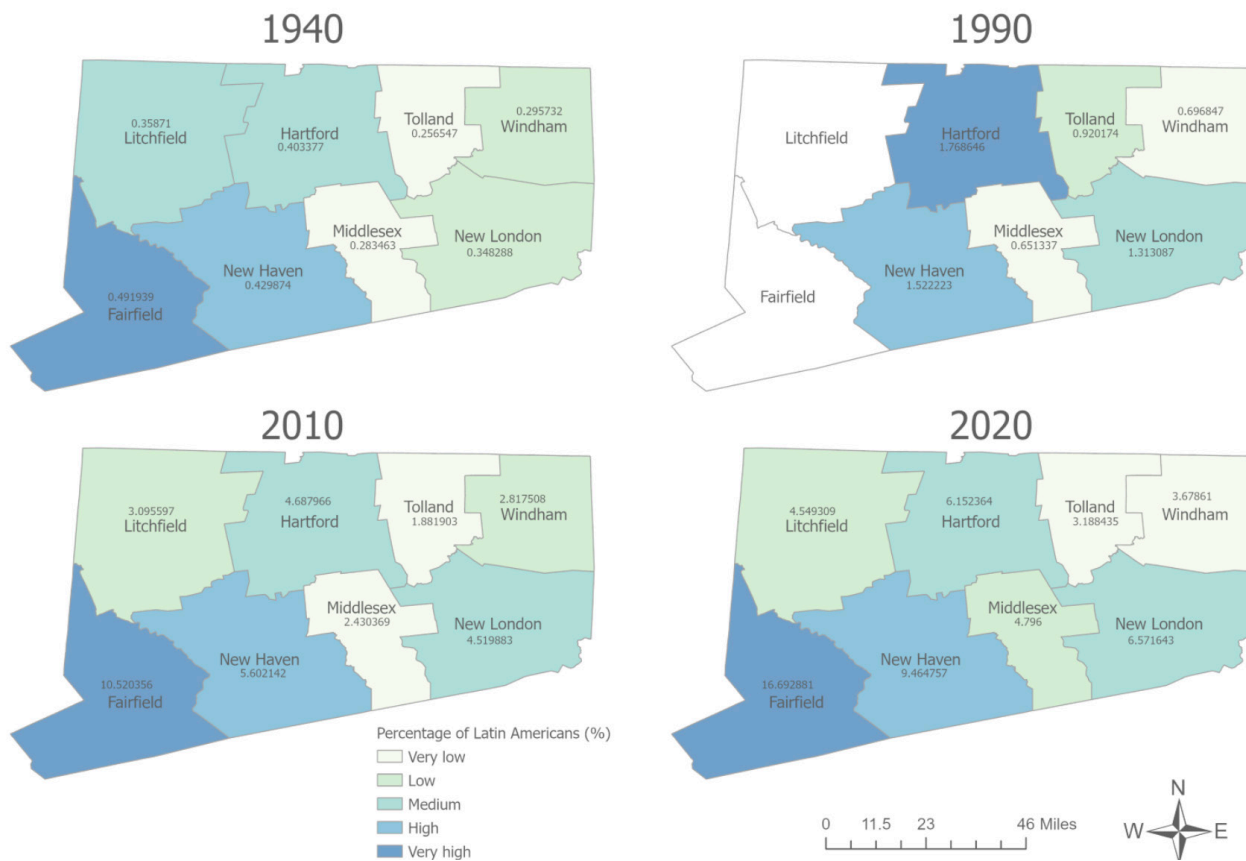
Figure 3.1: Hispanic or Latino Population in Connecticut by Decade and County, 1850-2021



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (IPUMS USA). Own elaboration.

Note: The available public microdata does not allow for generating statistics at the county level for the years 1960, 1970, 1980, and 2000.

Figure 3.2: Spatial Distribution of the Hispanic or Latino Population By County



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (IPUMS USA), and IPUMS NHGIS’ geospatial data. Own elaboration.

Note: The dark colors correspond to the regions with the largest Latin American population, while the light colors correspond to the areas with the least Latin American population in each year of analysis.

Where Did We Get This Information From?

We use microdata from the Census and American Community Survey for the period 1850-2021. We use microdata harmonized by IPUMS USA to estimate the Puerto Rican and Latin American population statistics at state and county in Connecticut. We also use ArcGIS Pro to generate the maps at the county level.

About Our Funding

The Puerto Rican Studies Initiative was initially funded by an American Rescue Plan Act grant awarded by the Connecticut General Assembly. It is currently funded by a grant from the Connecticut General Assembly, in collaboration with the Puerto Rican and Latino Legislative Caucus.

How To Cite This Report

2024. Luis Palomino and Venator-Santiago, Charles R. *Puerto Rican and Latin American Population Growth in Connecticut by Decade, 1850-2021*. Storrs, Connecticut: University of Connecticut, Puerto Rican Studies Initiative.

The Puerto Rican Studies Initiative for Community Engagement and Public Policy (PRSI) is a research initiative seeking to document and support 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.

For more information, please visit our website:
<https://puerto-rican-studies-initiative.clas.uconn.edu/>

