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U.S. Hispanic Country-of-Origin Counts for Nation, Top 30 Metropolitan Areas

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About this Report

This report examines the Hispanic population of the United States by its 10 largest country-of-origin sub-groups, both at the national level and in the 30 metropolitan areas with the largest Hispanic populations.

The data for this report are derived from the 2010 U.S. Census and from the 2009 American Community Survey. The 2010 Census provides population counts for Hispanic origin sub-groups. The 2009 American Community Survey provides detailed geographic, demographic and economic characteristics for each group.

Accompanying this report are [profiles](#) of the 10 largest Hispanic country-of-origin sub-groups—[Mexicans](#), [Puerto Ricans](#), [Salvadorans](#), [Cubans](#), [Dominicans](#), [Guatemalans](#), [Colombians](#), [Hondurans](#), [Ecuadorians](#) and [Peruvians](#). An [interactive graphic](#) analyzing country-of-origin data among the nation's 30 metropolitan statistical areas with the largest Hispanic populations is also available.

About the Authors

Mark Hugo Lopez is the associate director of the Pew Hispanic Center. Prior to joining the Center, Lopez was research director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement as well as a research assistant professor at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy. His areas of expertise include Latino youth, crime, labor economics, civic engagement and voting behavior. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Princeton University.

Daniel Dockterman is a research assistant at the Pew Hispanic Center. Dockterman earned his B.A. in psychology and economics from the University of Virginia. He will begin Doctoral Studies in advanced quantitative methods at the University of California, Los Angeles Graduate School of Education in the Fall.

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Hispanics in the U.S. by Country of Origin, 2010

Hispanics of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin or descent remain the nation's three largest Hispanic country-of-origin groups, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. However, while the relative position of these three groups has remained unchanged since 2000, the next four Hispanic sub-groups grew faster during the decade.

Hispanics of Salvadoran origin, the fourth largest country-of-origin group, grew by 152% since 2000. The Dominican population grew by 85%, the Guatemalan population by 180% and the Colombian population by 93%. Meanwhile, the Cuban and Puerto Rican populations grow more slowly—44% and 36% respectively ([Ennis, Ríos-Vargas and Albert, 2011](#)).¹

Country of origin is based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth in response to questions in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey and on the 2010 Census form. It is not necessarily the same as place of birth, nor is it indicative of immigrant or

Table 1
U.S. Hispanic Population,
by Country of Origin, 2010

Origin Group	POPULATION (thousands)	SHARE (%)
Mexican	31,798	63.0
Puerto Rican	4,624	9.2
All other Hispanic	3,452	6.8
Cuban	1,786	3.5
Salvadoran	1,649	3.3
Dominican	1,415	2.8
Guatemalan	1,044	2.1
Colombian	909	1.8
Spaniard	635	1.3
Honduran	633	1.3
Ecuadorian	565	1.1
Peruvian	531	1.1
Nicaraguan	348	0.7
Argentinean	225	0.4
Venezuelan	215	0.4
Panamanian	165	0.3
Chilean	127	0.3
Costa Rican	126	0.3
Bolivian	99	0.2
Uruguayan	57	0.1
Other Central American	32	0.1
Other South American	22	<0.1
Paraguayan	20	<0.1

Source: 2010 U.S. Census ([Ennis, Ríos-Vargas and Albert, 2011](#))

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¹ Real growth rates are likely smaller as Census 2000 counts of Dominican, Central and South American origin Hispanics were low, possibly due to changes in the wording of the Hispanic origin question. In both 1990 and 2000, the census form's Hispanic origin question provided check boxes for those who identified as Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Mexican/Mexican-American/Chicano. For those who wanted to identify as part of another Hispanic origin group, a check box was provided along with a box to write in the respondent's self-identified country of origin. However, the caption for the "other" origin check box and the direction for the write-in box changed. In 1990, the check box caption read "other Spanish/Hispanic," with the direction for the write-in box stating "Print one group, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on" ([Lapham, 1992](#)). On the Census 2000 form, the check box caption read "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" with the write-in box instruction being "Print group" with no country-of-origin examples provided ([Guzman, 2001](#)). Subsequently, the counts of Dominican, Central and South American origin Hispanics from Census 2000 were lower than expected while the number of Hispanics who said their origin was "other" was higher. Subsequent analysis by the Census Bureau found that population estimates for these groups were substantially higher than their Census 2000 counts. In the case of Salvadorans, for example, the population was estimated to be 60% larger than the count reported by the 2000 Census ([Suro, 2002](#)). In 2010, the wording of the Hispanic origin question on the Census form was changed—it offered country-of-origin examples for the write-in box.

citizenship status. For example, a U.S. citizen born in Los Angeles of Mexican immigrant parents or grandparents may (or may not) identify his or her country of origin as Mexico. Likewise, some immigrants born in Mexico may identify another country as their origin depending on the place of birth of their ancestors.

Table 2
U.S. Hispanic Population Growth, by Country of Origin, 2000-2010

	POPULATION		GROWTH	
	2010	2000	Number	%
All Hispanics	50,478	35,306	15,172	43.0
Guatemalan	1,044	372	672	180.3
Salvadoran	1,649	655	994	151.7
Colombian	909	471	438	93.1
Dominican	1,415	765	650	84.9
Mexican	31,798	20,641	11,158	54.1
Cuban	1,786	1,242	544	43.8
Puerto Rican	4,624	3,406	1,218	35.7

Notes: Hispanic population growth among country of origin groups with a population of 900,000 or more in 2010. Growth rates are computed from unrounded data.

Source: 2010 Census and 2000 Census ([Ennis, Rios-Vargas and Albert, 2011](#))

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The 2010 Decennial Census counted 50.5 million Hispanics. Among them, there were 31.8 million Mexican-origin Hispanics--the largest Hispanic country-of-origin group. They are followed by Puerto Rican origin Hispanics, who number 4.6 million in the U.S. and make up 9.2% of all Hispanics. Next are Cubans at 1.8 million or 3.5%, Salvadorans at 1.6 million or 3.3% and Dominicans at 1.4 million or 2.8%.

Census 2010 also revealed that there are now more than one million Guatemalan-origin Hispanics in the U.S. Together, Hispanic-origin populations with more than one million people comprise nine-in-ten (90.7%) of the nation's Hispanics.

This report is accompanied by national level [profiles](#) containing geographic, demographic and economic details for the 10 largest Hispanic country-of-origin sub-groups. These profiles are based on the 2009 American Community Survey and include details such as the share foreign born, citizenship rates, household income and levels of educational attainment for each group. The report is also accompanied by two interactive [graphics](#), [one](#) ranking the top 10 country-of-origin sub-groups on a number of characteristics, and [another](#) showing the country-of-origin sub-groups within the nation's 30 metropolitan areas with the largest Hispanic populations.

About the Data

The data for this report come from the 2010 Census and the 2009 American Community Survey. The 2010 Census provides information on population counts, including those by country of origin. The 2009 American Community Survey was used to extract detailed demographic and economic information on each of the top 10 country-of-origin groups.

Metropolitan Area Diversity

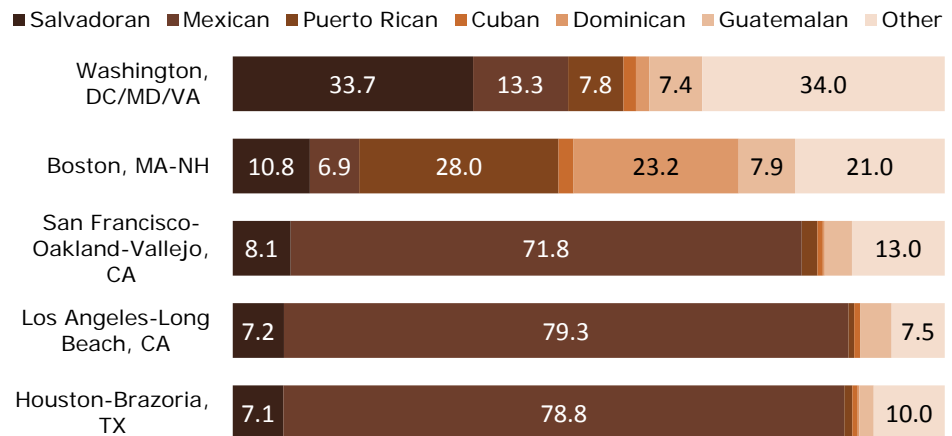
Even though about two-thirds of all Hispanics nationwide are of Mexican origin, in many of the nation's metropolitan areas Mexicans are not the largest Hispanic-origin group.

For example, Puerto Ricans are the largest Hispanic-origin group in the New York area and Cubans are the largest in the Miami area.

And in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, Salvadorans are the single largest Hispanic group, comprising 33.7% of the area's more than 700,000 Hispanics. There is no other major metropolitan area in the U.S. in which the Salvadoran population exceeds 11%.

Figure 1
Metropolitan Statistical Areas with Highest Salvadoran Population Share, 2009

(% among Hispanics)



Note: "Other" includes all Hispanic country-of-origin sub-groups not shown.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2009 ACS (1% IPUMS sample)

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When one looks at absolute

numbers rather than population shares, the story of Salvadoran settlement patterns changes. Even though Salvadorans are the largest Hispanic-origin group in the Washington, D.C. area, there are almost twice as many Salvadorans in the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area. In 2009, 414,000 Salvadorans resided in Los Angeles-Long Beach, compared with 240,000 in the Washington, D.C. area. However, in Los Angeles-Long Beach, Salvadorans make up just 7% of the Hispanic population, putting them a distant second to Hispanics of Mexican origin, who comprise 79.3%.

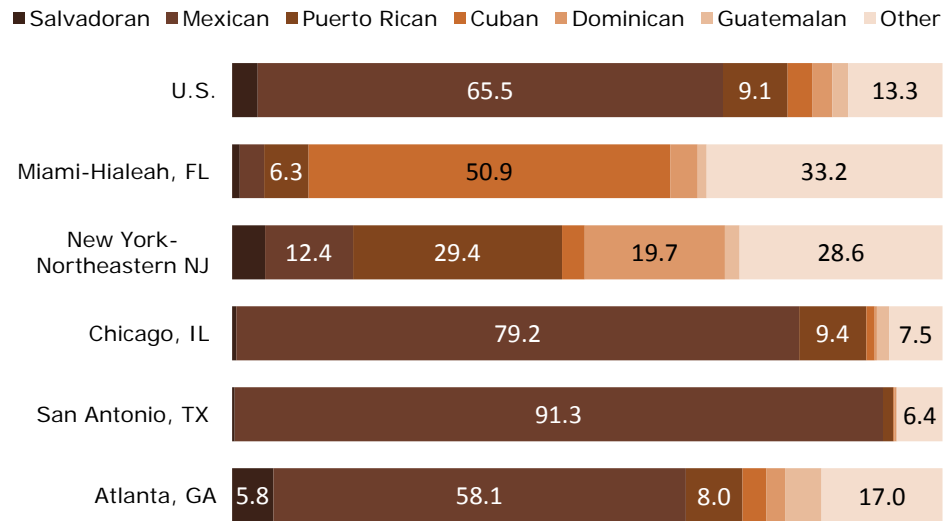
Mexicans are not the dominant Hispanic-origin group in all metropolitan areas, despite their No. 1 status in the nation. Among the Miami metropolitan area's 1.5 million Hispanics, half (50.9%) are Cuban. In the New York-Northeastern New Jersey metropolitan area, 29.4% of Hispanics are of Puerto Rican origin and 19.7% are of Dominican origin.

However, in many metropolitan areas, Mexican-origin Hispanics are by far the dominant group. In Chicago, nearly eight-in-ten (79.2%) of the area's Hispanics are of Mexican origin. In the San Antonio, TX metropolitan area, Mexicans make up 91.3% of all Hispanics. And in Atlanta, GA, nearly six-in-ten (58.1%) Hispanics are of Mexican origin.

The appendix to this report shows detailed country of origin information for each of the 30 metropolitan areas with the largest Hispanic populations. They range in size from 5.8 million Hispanics in the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area down to 343,000 in the Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito metropolitan area in Texas.

Figure 2
Select Metropolitan Statistical Areas by Hispanic Country of Origin, 2009

(% among Hispanics)



Note: "Other" includes all Hispanic country-of-origin sub-groups not shown.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2009 ACS (1% IPUMS sample)

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<http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=8>

Appendix

Appendix Table 1

Hispanic Country-of-Origin Groups, by Metropolitan Statistical Area, 2009

(thousands)

	All Hispanics	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Salvadoran	Dominican	Guatemalan	Other
Metropolitan Statistical Area								
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	5,763	4,569	48	48	414	5	249	430
New York-Northeastern NJ	4,052	502	1,192	130	187	799	85	1,157
Houston-Brazoria, TX	1,945	1,532	22	15	139	4	40	194
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	1,920	1,702	21	8	47	1	24	118
Chicago, IL	1,874	1,485	177	22	11	6	32	141
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	1,782	1,507	33	8	86	3	18	126
Miami-Hialeah, FL	1,540	53	96	784	16	59	19	512
Phoenix, AZ	1,280	1,170	19	5	11	4	11	62
San Antonio, TX	1,035	945	15	2	3	3	1	66
San Francisco-Oakland-Vallejo, CA	1,028	738	23	8	84	3	39	134
San Diego, CA	957	867	19	3	6	1	7	54
Washington, DC/MD/VA	712	95	55	13	240	13	53	243
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr-Mission, TX	665	644	3	1	1	0	0	15
El Paso, TX	615	588	10	1	1	1	0	14
Denver-Boulder, CO	590	473	9	4	10	1	7	87
Las Vegas, NV	557	434	14	21	27	2	11	48
Fresno, CA	528	503	3	0	6	0	2	14
Atlanta, GA	528	306	42	18	31	14	27	90
Orlando, FL	495	67	248	35	6	31	4	102
Austin, TX	482	392	14	5	7	1	7	58
San Jose, CA	469	399	7	3	11	0	4	46
Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood-Pompano Beach, FL	434	34	76	84	9	28	7	198
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	415	80	145	81	3	15	4	87
Bakersfield, CA	387	357	5	1	10	0	4	10
Albuquerque, NM	384	199	4	2	1	0	1	177
Philadelphia, PA/NJ	381	68	210	14	5	19	4	60
Boston, MA-NH	373	26	104	8	40	86	29	78
Sacramento, CA	352	301	8	2	8	0	3	29
Tucson, AZ	344	314	3	3	1	0	2	19
Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito, TX	343	333	1	0	0	0	0	8

Note: "Other" includes all Hispanic country of origin sub-groups not shown. Numbers may not total due to rounding.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2009 ACS (1% IPUMS sample)

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Appendix Table 2

Hispanic Country-of-Origin Groups, by Metropolitan Statistical Area, 2009

(%)

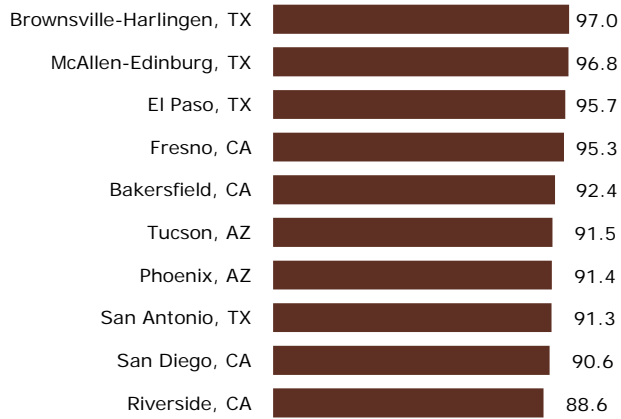
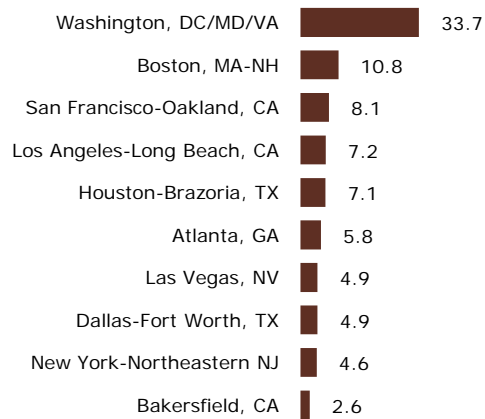
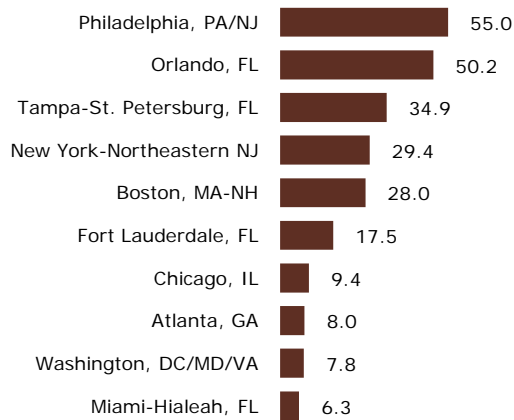
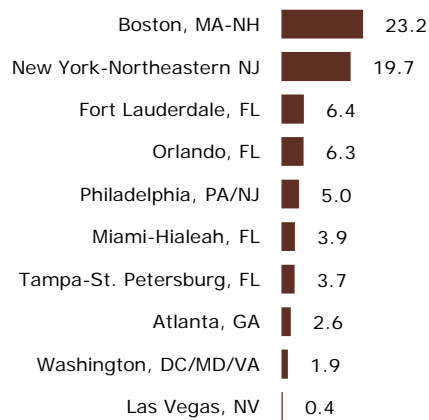
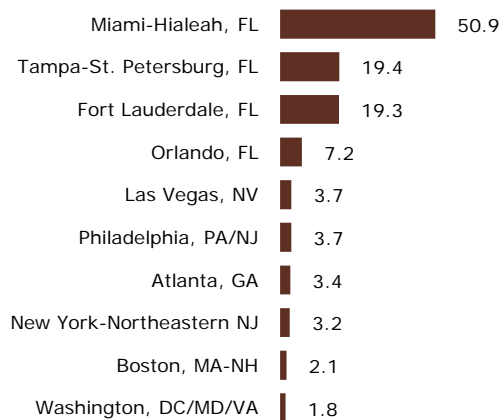
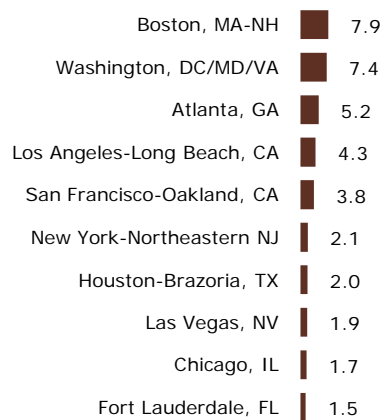
	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Salvadoran	Dominican	Guatemalan	Other
Metropolitan Statistical Area							
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	79.3	0.8	0.8	7.2	0.1	4.3	7.5
New York-Northeastern NJ	12.4	29.4	3.2	4.6	19.7	2.1	28.6
Houston-Brazoria, TX	78.8	1.1	0.8	7.1	0.2	2.0	10.0
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	88.6	1.1	0.4	2.4	0.0	1.3	6.1
Chicago, IL	79.2	9.4	1.2	0.6	0.3	1.7	7.5
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	84.6	1.9	0.5	4.9	0.2	1.0	7.1
Miami-Hialeah, FL	3.5	6.3	50.9	1.1	3.9	1.2	33.2
Phoenix, AZ	91.4	1.5	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.8	4.8
San Antonio, TX	91.3	1.5	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1	6.4
San Francisco-Oakland-Vallejo, CA	71.8	2.2	0.7	8.1	0.3	3.8	13.0
San Diego, CA	90.6	2.0	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.7	5.6
Washington, DC/MD/VA	13.3	7.8	1.8	33.7	1.9	7.4	34.0
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr-Mission, TX	96.8	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	2.3
El Paso, TX	95.7	1.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	2.2
Denver-Boulder, CO	80.1	1.5	0.7	1.7	0.1	1.1	14.7
Las Vegas, NV	77.9	2.5	3.7	4.9	0.4	1.9	8.7
Fresno, CA	95.3	0.5	0.1	1.0	0.1	0.3	2.6
Atlanta, GA	58.1	8.0	3.4	5.8	2.6	5.2	17.0
Orlando, FL	13.6	50.2	7.2	1.3	6.3	0.8	20.6
Austin, TX	81.2	2.8	1.0	1.4	0.2	1.5	12.0
San Jose, CA	85.1	1.4	0.6	2.3	0.0	0.8	9.8
Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood-Pompano Beach, FL	7.7	17.5	19.3	2.0	6.4	1.5	45.6
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	19.3	34.9	19.4	0.7	3.7	0.9	21.0
Bakersfield, CA	92.4	1.2	0.2	2.6	0.0	0.9	2.6
Albuquerque, NM	51.8	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.2	46.2
Philadelphia, PA/NJ	18.0	55.0	3.7	1.4	5.0	1.1	15.9
Boston, MA-NH	6.9	28.0	2.1	10.8	23.2	7.9	21.0
Sacramento, CA	85.7	2.3	0.7	2.2	0.0	0.9	8.3
Tucson, AZ	91.5	1.0	0.7	0.4	0.1	0.6	5.6
Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito, TX	97.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	2.4

Note: "Other" includes all Hispanic country of origin sub-groups not shown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2009 ACS (1% IPUMS sample)

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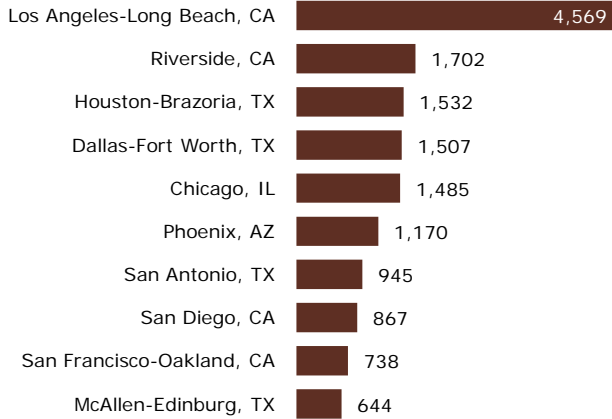
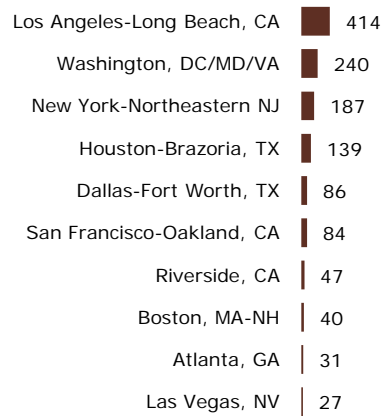
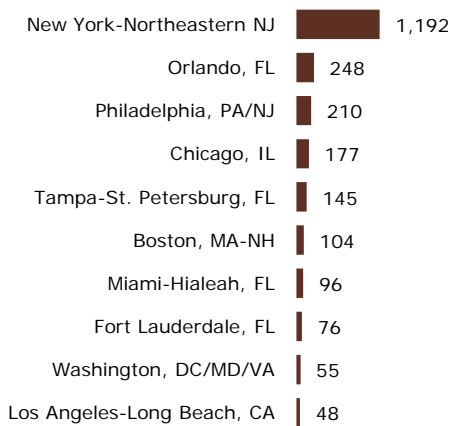
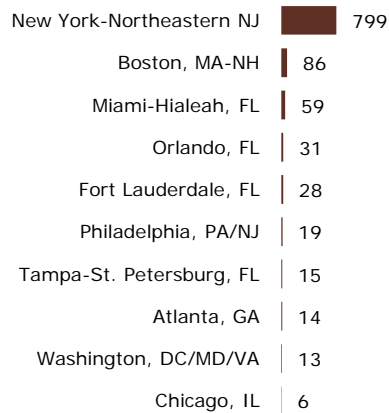
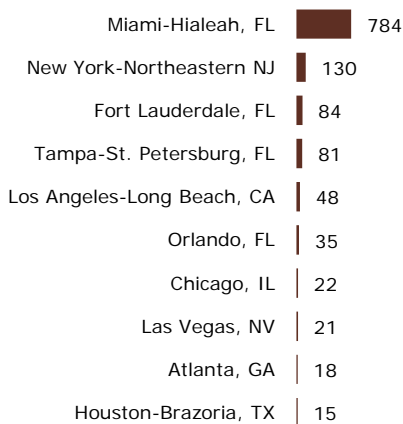
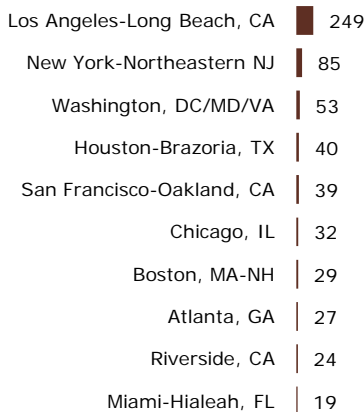
Appendix Figure 1

Share of Country-of-Origin Groups in a Metropolitan Statistical Area's Hispanic Population:*Top 10 metropolitan statistical areas for each origin group (%)***Mexican****Salvadoran****Puerto Rican****Dominican****Cuban****Guatemalan**

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2009 ACS (1% IPUMS sample)

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Appendix Figure 2

Hispanic Population of Country-of-Origin Groups by Metropolitan Statistical Area:*Top 10 metropolitan statistical areas for each origin group (thousands)***Mexican****Salvadoran****Puerto Rican****Dominican****Cuban****Guatemalan**

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2009 ACS (1% IPUMS sample)

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