



Latino Philadelphia at a Glance

Puerto Ricans

Population: 91,527 estimated by the Census 2000

As of 2000, Philadelphia had the 3rd largest Puerto Rican population outside of Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican population continues to grow from within and through continued migration from Puerto Rico.

Where they are living: Presently, the greatest concentration of Puerto Ricans live in North Philadelphia along the 5th and 2nd Street corridor running from Girard Avenue to Roosevelt Boulevard. There are also enclaves of Puerto Rican communities in the Spring Garden and East Poplar neighborhoods, South Philadelphia between Washington and Snyder Avenues and Front and 18th Streets, lower Northeast Philadelphia in Frankford and Juniata Park. Puerto Ricans, Philadelphia's largest Latino population are distributed throughout the city and area suburbs. There is also a sizable Puerto Rican community in Camden, New Jersey.

Philadelphia history: Puerto Rico and Philadelphia were linked primarily through trade in the 18th and 19th century. Puerto Rican pro-independence exiles and organizers, merchants, cigar makers, trades people, laborers, students, and others lived in Philadelphia between the late 1800s and early 1900s. During World War II, more Puerto Rican men and women, most of who were recruited through a government work program, arrived in the area to work on farms, factories and homes. Between 1950 and 1970, the Puerto Rican community grows dramatically to over 60,000, working in factories and other areas and creating the neighborhoods, businesses, and organization recognized as the Puerto Rican/Latino community today. Since 1970, Puerto Ricans have arrived in Philadelphia from Puerto Rico, New York, and other cities with Puerto Rican communities. Throughout their history in Philadelphia, many Puerto Ricans have practiced circular migration, spending periods of time living in Philadelphia and on the Island.

Mexicans

Population: 6,220 estimated by the Census 2000

The Mexican population is experiencing rapid growth in Philadelphia and in 2003 is estimated to have surpassed 12,000.

Where they are living: The most visible and largest concentration of Mexicans in the city is in South Philadelphia between Washington and Oregon Avenues and Front and 18th Streets. Mexicans are also creating small enclaves in North Philadelphia including Kensington and Olney, Northeast Philadelphia, West Philadelphia and Southwest Philadelphia. Mexicans are also establishing communities in suburbs and neighboring towns.

Philadelphia history: Small numbers of Mexicans are among the Spanish-speaking people documented in Philadelphia during the 19th century. In the 1910s and 20s, small numbers of Mexicans arrive in the area from Mexico and Texas to work in agriculture, construction and on railroads. They plant the seeds of a small Mexican group who joins the area's already existing Puerto Rican and Spanish community. During World War II, Mexican men are recruited to the area to work primarily on railroads. Small numbers of Mexicans remain in the area. During the 1970s, a small group of Mexican men and women settle in Philadelphia and establish careers and

businesses. Another small wave of Mexican immigrants arrive in Philadelphia from Mexico in the area in the early 1990's, performing service work, opening small businesses and starting North and South Philadelphia enclaves. After 1998, Mexican men and women from Mexico, New York and surrounding areas begin moving and settling in Philadelphia further expanding their communities.

Dominicans

Population: 4,337 estimated by the Census 2000

As of 2000, Philadelphia had the 14th largest Dominican population in the United States. The Dominican population continues to grow with the migration and documented and undocumented immigration of many Dominican nationals.

Where they are living: Dominicans are settling largely in North Philadelphia amongst the Puerto Rican community. There are also small numbers of Dominicans settling in West Philadelphia and the Northeast.

Philadelphia history: Prior to 1990, there were very small numbers of Dominicans living in Philadelphia. After 1990, the Dominican community experiences rapid growth as large numbers of Dominicans move to Philadelphia from New York seeking work, affordable housing, and safer neighborhoods. Dominicans create an enclave during the 1990s and open bodegas, travel agencies, money houses and other businesses in North Philadelphia and other parts of the city. The community continues to grow as relatives from the Dominican Republic move to reunite with family members in Philadelphia and others come seeking economic opportunities, higher education.

Cubans

Population: 2,730 estimated by the Census 2000

The Cuban population is growing slowly in comparison to other Latino groups in Philadelphia. As of 2000, Philadelphia had the 50th largest Cuban population in the United States.

Where they are living: Cubans are living in North and North East Philadelphia. Many Cubans settled in the Olney and adjacent areas but have since dispersed throughout the city and neighboring suburbs.

Philadelphia history: Cuba and Philadelphia were linked through extensive trade in the 18th and 19th century. Cuban pro-independence exiles and organizers, merchants, cigar makers, trades people, students, and others lived in Philadelphia between the late 1800s and early 1900s. Before 1959, small numbers of Cubans lived and studied in the Philadelphia area. After the Cuban Revolution, many Cuban exiles arrived in Philadelphia between the years of 1959 and 1965. Some connected with family and friends already in Philadelphia and others relocated from Florida. Many from this wave of Cubans have created social and cultural groups that are still active in promoting solidarity and Cuban culture. Small numbers of Cuban refugees have come into the city since the 1980s.

Colombians

Population: 2,414 estimated by the Census 2000

This population is increasing as some Colombians look to Philadelphia as a destination to seek opportunities and other to flee increasing violence and terrorism.

Where they are living: The largest Colombian enclaves are in and around Olney and in the Northeast section of the in the city. There are also Colombian households dispersed throughout the city and surrounding suburbs.

Philadelphia history: Little is known about the Colombian presence in the city before the last century. However, Colombians have been coming to Philadelphia for studies since at least the 1920s. The first sizable number of Colombians to settle in Philadelphia occurred in the 1960s when many Colombian women and men came seeking work in Philadelphia as a result of changes in the 1965 Immigration Act. This early group established families and intermarried with other Philadelphians. A second wave of Colombians arrived in Philadelphia from New York and Colombia in the 1970s and 1980s and has since established enclaves in Olney and Feltonville. In the last ten years, Colombians have come to join family members in Philadelphia, seek educational and economic opportunities, and to escape the ongoing violence created through civil strife and terrorism.

Other Latino Populations in Brief

Central Americans

Populations: 518 Guatemalans; 501 Costa Ricans; 544 Nicaraguans; 466 Hondurans; 378 Panamanians; 337 Salvadorans estimated by the Census 2000. Guatemalans; Costa Ricans, Nicaraguans, Hondurans, Panamanians, and Salvadorans respectively make up the city's 7th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 14th and 15th largest Latino populations.

Where they are living: People from Central American countries are living throughout the city and suburbs. In Philadelphia, many are living amongst existing Latino communities in North and South Philadelphia. For example, a number of recently arrived Salvadorans and Hondurans are settling amongst the Puerto Rican and Mexican community in the Spring Garden area. Olney, Feltonville, Logan, Spring Garden, the Northeast, and West and Southwest Philadelphia are also home for many. Some members of these communities may be difficult to identify because they are often assumed to be Mexicans by outside observers.

Philadelphia History: Central Americans were reported among Philadelphia's "Spanish American" colony in 1910. Small numbers of Guatemalans and other Central Americans were known to have come to Philadelphia after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. The number of Central American immigrants in the area remained relatively small until the political conflicts, civil war, oppressive governments and U.S. interventions in the countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua in the late 1970s and 1980s created unbearable circumstances for many who fled their countries, some who have settled in Philadelphia. Small numbers of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from these countries have continued to settle in the area. Since the 1990s, numbers of Guatemalans, Salvadorians, Nicaraguan, Costa Ricans, Hondurans, and Panamanians have come to Philadelphia as part of the current wave of immigration seeking temporary and permanent opportunities, and reunifying with families in Philadelphia.

South Americans

Populations: 531 Argentineans; 471 Peruvians; 420 Ecuadorians; 409 Venezuelans; 182 Chileans; 55 Bolivians; 86 Uruguayans; 38 Paraguayans estimated by the Census 2000.

Argentineans, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Venezuelans, Chileans, Bolivians, Uruguayans, and Paraguayans respectively make up the city's 6th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th largest Latino populations.

Where they are living: People from South American countries are living throughout the city and suburbs. In Philadelphia, numbers of South Americans are living in Center City, West Philadelphia, and amongst established Latino communities in North and South Philadelphia. For example, small numbers of recent Ecuadorian, Argentinean, Uruguayan arrivals have moved near other Spanish speaking communities in South Philadelphia and Olney in the north. The Northeast and Southwest Philadelphia are also home for many.

Philadelphia History: South American revolutionaries, merchants and scholars are known to have visited Philadelphia in the 18th and 19th centuries. Some were also reported among Philadelphia's "Spanish American" colony in 1910. Small numbers of Argentineans, Colombians, Peruvians, Chileans, Bolivians, Venezuelans, Paraguayans, and Uruguayans were known to have come to Philadelphia after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Small numbers of mainly Colombians, Argentineans, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, and Venezuelans settled in the area in the 1970s and 1980s. Since the 1990s, globalization, economic restructuring and crises, and political instability in South American countries have contributed to the increasing number of South Americans seeking various opportunities and reunifying with families in Philadelphia.