



# Puerto Ricans at the Dawn of the New Millennium

*Center Puerto Rican Studies*

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## **Puerto Ricans at the Dawn of the New Millennium** Center Puerto Rican Studies

A new millennium, with new realities. The demographic and socioeconomic profile of Puerto Ricans has changed dramatically. In less than a decade, the Puerto Rican population living in the U.S. has surpassed those living in Puerto Rico. The migration wave of the past decade rivals the magnitude of the Great Migration of the 1950s. Even among Puerto Ricans on the mainland, the patterns of migration have changed significantly. With over a million Puerto Ricans crossing state lines over the past decade, a rate of mobility far exceeding that of the U.S. population as a whole, the traditional centers of Puerto Rican community in the US are changing. Florida is on its way to eclipsing New York State as the major stateside location of Puerto Ricans. At the same time, the Puerto Rican community has endured the effects of the Great Recession of 2008 in distinct ways. Economic hard times spurred migration to the mainland, as the recession brought unemployment and poverty to a great many Puerto Ricans. Yet, stateside, Puerto Ricans recovered faster and fared better overall than other ethnic groups. By 2011, Puerto Ricans workers had improved when compared to average earnings of non-Hispanic white workers. Puerto Rican women show the most significant gains in earnings during this period, in both absolute and relative terms. The depictions that emerge from this book are tales of resiliency amid declining opportunity and the enduring challenges faced by those still caught in the trough of the recession. The book is also a story about those who left the island for the mainland United States in search of economic opportunities and about the social contexts of the new communities throughout the United States in which they have settled.

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