

The movement of Puerto Ricans to the United States can be traced back to the immediate years following the conquest of the Island by that Country, that is, since the beginning of the present century. The data collected for 1910 indicate that during that year there were already 1513 persons of Puerto Rican birth living on the Mainland. Since that year this number has increased slowly at first up to the year 1940 and very rapidly afterwards.

A look at Table 1 indicates that from 1910 to 1940 the population of Puerto Rican birth increased from 1513 to 69,967 respectively, while from 1940 to 1960 it increased from 69,967 to 617,056. This represents an increase of 452.4 percent in the first period and of 778.3 percent in the second period.

If to these numbers is added the persons of Puerto Rican parentage, which for 1960 amounted to 275,457, we obtain that the total number of persons of Puerto Rican origin residing in the United States during the year 1960 was 892,513 persons. This represents around 37 percent of the 1960 population enumerated on the Island.

The intensity of this migratory movement has varied through the years comprising the period under study, and it has been affected by the occurrence of certain economic and technological events.

During the period of 1910-1940, the decade of the twenties had the highest migration with a movement of some 40,000 Puerto Ricans to the United States. This decade was followed by one in which this migratory movement was considerably reduced.

---

<sup>1</sup>This group includes persons born elsewhere in the United States with one or both parents of Puerto Rican birth.

TABLE 1. GROWTH OF THE PUERTO RICAN POPULATION  
IN THE UNITED STATES  
1910-1960

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Born in Puerto Rico</u>	<u>Born in the United States</u>
1910	-	1,513	-
1920	-	11,811	-
1930	-	52,774	-
1940	-	69,967	-
1950	301,375	226,110	75,265
1960	892,513	617,056	275,457

Sources: 1) 1950 United States Census of Population, Special Report, P.E. No. 30, Puerto Ricans in Continental United States.

2) United States Census of Population, 1960, PC(2)-1D, Puerto Ricans in the United States.

After the Second World War there was a remarkable increase in the migration whose causes are ascribed to the improvement of air transportation, the reduction of the price of fares and the abundance of employment opportunities in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

During the lustrum of 1945-49 approximately 135,000 persons migrated from the Island while 430,000 did the same thing during the decade 1950-60. Table 2 indicates that the years 1952 and 1953 have experienced the greatest migration with an outflow of 60,000 and 70,000 respectively. During the period of 1957-1964, the emigration stream was reduced considerably and for the years 1961 and 1963 the net balance was one of immigration. From 1965 to 1969, however, it is observed again that there is an increase in the emigration except for the year 1968 in which there was a net balance of immigration.

The pattern of migratory movement just described seems to have been conditioned and affected by the rises and falls of the employment opportunities in the United States. Different studies undertaken on this matter point out the fact that the employment opportunities in the United States act as a "pull," while the poor economic conditions on the Island serve as a "push" to the movement. That is the force that drives the Puerto Rican out of his land is the desire to improve their level of living by attaining better jobs and salaries.<sup>2</sup>

The implications of this movement both to the country of origin and to the country of destination has long been studied and discussed.<sup>3</sup> However, the

<sup>1</sup> José L. Vázquez, Las Causas y Efectos de la Emigración Puertorriquena, unpublished paper, University of Puerto Rico, School of Medicine, October 1968, pp. 7-9.

<sup>2</sup> José L. Vázquez, op.cit., 1968, pp. 19-21 and A.J. Jaffe, People, Jobs and Economic Development, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1959.

<sup>3</sup> Clarence Senior, The Puerto Ricans, Strangers-The Neighbors, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1965; José L. Vázquez, "La Emigración Puertorriquena c Solucion o Problema?", Revista de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Vol. VII, diciembre 1963 and Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Point, The MIT Press, 1972.

changes that have occurred in the composition and structure of those migrants during the years nor a comparison of them with the population that stays on the Island has been carried out exhaustively. It is the purpose of this paper to try to fulfill both of these purposes so that the quality of the Puerto Rican migrant can be evaluated.<sup>1</sup>

We will try to analyse the composition of the Puerto Rican migrants in 1950 and 1960 as far as the available data will permit us. The analysis will comprise some demographic as well as socio-economic characteristics. It will include mainly the population of Puerto Rican birth living in the United States. However, reference will be made sometimes to the population of Puerto Rican parentage.<sup>2</sup>

#### Sex and Age of the Migrant Population

The available data indicates that before the year 1950 there was an excess of females over males among the migrant population. Of the 226,110 persons that have migrated to the United States, 118,000 were females while 109,000 were males, resulting this in a sex ratio of .9233. In 1960, however, this sex ratio increased to .9927 indicating that there has been an excess of males over females during the preceding decade.<sup>3</sup>

This fact suggests that with respect to sex, migration has not been as selective as in other international migrations, since males and females are moving to the States in more or less equal proportions with a slight predominance

<sup>1</sup>It is a common belief in Puerto Rico that the migrants to the United States are on the average of a lower socio-economic level than the staying population.

<sup>2</sup>For an analysis of this population see: Nathan Kantrowitz, "Social Mobility of Puerto Ricans: Education, Occupation, and Income Changes Among Children of Migrants, New York, 1950-1960," The International Migration Review, Vol. II, Spring 1968.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 United States Census of Population: Puerto Ricans in Continental United States, p. 11 and U.S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population: 1960, Puerto Ricans in the United States, p.2.

TABLE 2. NET EMIGRATION OF PUERTO RICANS TO THE UNITED STATES

<u>Period or year</u>	<u>Number*</u>	<u>Annual average</u>	<u>Annual rate (in percent)**</u>
1900-1909	2,000	200	0.0
1910-1919	11,000	1,100	0.1
1920-1929	42,000	4,200	0.3
1930-1939	18,000	1,800	0.1
1940-1944	16,000	3,200	0.2
1945-1949	135,000	27,000	1.2
1950-1954	237,000	47,400	2.2
1955-1959	193,000	38,600	1.7
1960-1964	22,000	4,400	0.2
1945	13,000	13,000	0.6
1946	40,000	40,000	1.9
1947	25,000	25,000	1.2
1948	33,000	33,000	1.5
1949	26,000	26,000	1.2
1950	35,000	35,000	1.6
1951	53,000	53,000	2.4
1952	59,000	59,000	2.7
1953	69,000	69,000	3.2
1954	22,000	22,000	1.0
1955	45,000	45,000	2.0
1956	52,000	52,000	2.3
1957	38,000	38,000	1.7

TABLE 2 continued

<u>Period or year</u>	<u>Number*</u>	<u>Annual average</u>	<u>Annual rate (in percent)**</u>
1958	28,000	28,000	1.2
1959	30,000	30,000	1.3
1960	16,000	16,000	0.7
1961	+2,000	2,000	+0.1 —
1962	12,000	12,000	0.5
1963	+6,000	5,000	+0.2 —
1964	1,000	1,000	0.0
1965	17,000	17,000	0.6
1966	29,000	29,000	1.1
1967	27,000	27,000	1.0
1968	+24,000 —	+24,000	
1969	43,000	43,000	

\*A positive sign means a net balance of immigration.

\*\*Annual average of emigration expressed as a percent of the average population for the period or year.

Sources: 1910-1939; A.J. Jaffe, People, Jobs and Economic Development, p. 65.  
1940-1969; Official figures published by the Planning Board of Puerto Rico.

of males over females during the last years.

As it was mentioned earlier, the decade of the 50's was characterized by having the greatest amount of migration to the United States. This resulted in a more than doubling of the enumerated Puerto Rican population residing in the States for 1960 as compared with that of 1950. These migrants were highly concentrated on the ages of greatest productivity, that is 15-39 as can be seen on Table 3. This group represented 69.7 percent of the total migrants during the decade. The median age of the whole group of migrants was 24 years which is lower than the median age of 28 years reported for the population of Puerto Rican birth enumerated in the 1960 Census. This difference can be explained by the fact that the population enumerated on 1960 included migrants who were the survivors of the 1950 migrants and this tended to increase the median age in favor of the enumerated population for 1960.

The structure of the population of Puerto Rican parentage in the United States is, as can be expected, quite different from that of Puerto Rican birth in both 1950 and 1960. Being the children of the second group they tended to be concentrated on the first age groups. An analysis of the relative distribution by age of this population for 1950 reveals that around 68 percent of it was on the ages 0-14. This percent increased considerably during the following decade and in 1960 it was around 81 percent. This increase has to be expected because of the great amount of migration of persons on the productive and reproductive ages mentioned earlier which logically affected the fertility rate of the Puerto Rican population (Table 4). Its effect on the median age of this group was to reduce it from 8.8 in 1950 to 5.9 in 1960.

Certainly that this difference between the age structure of the population of Puerto Rican birth and that of Puerto Rican parentage is reflected on the age structure of the total population of Puerto Rican origin as classified by the census. Here we find an increase in the proportion of population in the

TABLE 3. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION BY RACE AND SEX,  
1950-60\*

<u>Age</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
0-4	1.74	1.92	1.50
5-9	9.04	8.86	9.20
10-14	7.23	6.74	7.80
15-19	14.48	14.43	14.50
20-24	20.46	22.47	18.10
25-29	17.08	17.64	16.40
30-34	13.21	11.84	14.80
35-39	4.85	4.86	4.80
40-44	4.08	4.20	3.90
45-49	4.70	4.08	5.40
50-54	2.21	1.84	2.60
55+	.91	1.10	0.60
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Median age = 24

14  
22  
18  
12  
5  
71

14  
18  
16  
15  
63  
5  
68

\*Data based in an adaptation by age and sex of the formula  $M = P_1 - P_0 - D + B$

Source: Jose L. Vazquez, The Demographic Evolution of Puerto Rico (unpublished Doctoral Dissertation), The University of Chicago, 1964, p. 125.

youngest ages which resulted in a decrease of the median age for that group from 24.3 to 21.4.

How this migrant population<sup>1</sup> compares to the population remaining on the Island in terms of sex and age? With regard to sex it is observed that the sex ratio for the Island for 1950 was 101 men per 100 women while for 1960 it was 98 per 100 respectively. This corroborates what was said at the beginning; that the Puerto Rican migration before 1950 had a slight predominance of females while during the 1950's males exceeded females.

As compared to the population remaining on the Island it can be seen that while more than 50 percent of the migrant population is concentrated on the middle years of the scale, more than 40 percent of the population remaining on the Island is concentrated in the initial years of the scale.

Thus the age structure of the population that stays on the Island is very different from the migrant population in the United States. This difference has remained from 1950 to 1960. However, it can be observed over that period a slight tendency toward a similarity in the percent of persons in the age group 0-14. This can be attributed to the fact that as the population in the reproductive ages increases because of a greater migration in these age groups, they would give rise to more births. This increase in births and thus in the younger age groups, seems to be proportionately greater than the increase in the number of persons in the middle age groups (Table 4). It can be observed from Table 5 also, how the mass migration during the decade affected the age distribution of the population on the Island. There was a decrease in the group 15-44 that also affected the group 0-14 which did not have any increase at all.

*It can be seen from the table that the increase in the number of persons in the younger age groups is proportionately greater than the increase in the number of persons in the middle age groups.*

---

<sup>1</sup>  
The term "migrant population" will be used from here on to refer to the population of Puerto Rican birth residing in the United States.

TABLE 4. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION OF PUERTO RICAN ORIGIN  
BY AGE, 1950 and 1960\*

Age	1950			1960		
	Total	Born in Puerto Rico	Puerto Rican Parentage	Total	Born in Puerto Rico	Puerto Rican Parentage
<5	12.05	3.77	36.92	16.25	3.27	45.30
5-9	9.13	6.50	17.05	12.33	6.61	25.11
10-14	8.57	6.85	13.75	10.09	9.67	11.05
15-19	9.20	7.94	12.98	8.49	10.08	4.93
20-24	12.83	14.32	8.35	9.91	12.78	3.49
25-29)	20.44	25.19	6.17	19.28	26.04	6.34
30-34)		47.45			48.90	
35-39)	14.40	18.31	2.67	11.88	16.22	2.17
40-44)						
45-49)	7.83	10.07	1.08	7.44	8.87	1.03
50-54)						
55-59)	3.35	4.25	.63	3.42	4.77	0.39
60-64)						
65-69	1.13	1.46	.12	0.86	1.22	0.07
70-74	0.52	.65	.10	0.55	0.77	0.06
75+	0.51	.63	.12	0.50	0.70	0.06
Median Age	24.3	29.2	8.8	21.4	27.9	5.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 United States Census of Population; Puerto Ricans in Continental United States. Special Report PE No. 30, p. 11.  
1960 United States Census of Population, Puerto Ricans in the United States PC(2) 1D.

\*Percentage in each group of the total migrant population for each year.

TABLE 5. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PUERTO RICAN POPULATION AND THE PUERTO RICANS LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES BY LARGE AGE GROUPS, 1950 and 1960

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Puerto Ricans in U.S.</u>		<u>Population in P.R.</u>	
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
0-14	17	19	43	43
15-44	66	64	42	39
45+	17	17	15	18

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, op.cit., Special Reports PE No. 30, p. 11 and PC(2)1D.                     , 1960 United States Census of Population, Census for Puerto Rico, PC(1)53D, p. 231.

*of Puerto Ricans only*

This change observed in both populations over the period is a result of the effects that the migration that occurred during the decade had on both populations. The data available in Table 6 shows that in the age groups 15 to 39 were concentrated 80 percent of the emigrants to the Mainland. This strengthens the hypothesis that emigration to the United States has been clearly selective in terms of age.

TABLE 6. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PUERTO RICAN POPULATION AND THE PUERTO RICAN EMIGRANTS BY LARGE AGE GROUPS

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Emigrants 1950-60</u>	<u>Population 1960</u>
0-14	18	43
15-39	70	35
40+	<u>12</u>	<u>22</u>
Total	100	100

Source: Jose L. Vazquez, op.cit., 1968, p. 12

### Education

\*If one uses as an index of the level of education the median years of school completed, it can be observed that for 1950 and 1960 the population 25 years or more of Puerto Rican birth in the United States had a median of 7.6 and 7.9 respectively. Considering that the migrant population enumerated in 1960 included also the survivors of the 1950 migrant group, this tendency in the median years of school completed during that period would have been affected in several manners depending on the improvements in education undergone by the group already

living there in 1950 and on the level of education of the population that migrated during the decade.

There is no data available to determine the extent of the improvements in education of the population of Puerto Rican birth enumerated in 1950, from that year to 1960, which we believe was mainly due to the influence of the younger groups. However, the influence of the group that migrated during the decade should not be overlooked. If this population would have had a lower level of education, this fact would have tended to decrease the median from one year to the other, while if they have had a higher level of education this would have tended to increase it.

A look at Table 14 will serve to strengthen the point just mentioned. On it one can observe that there has been an increase in the percent of persons in all groups starting with and <sup>including</sup> ~~excluding~~ the one with one or more years of high school completed. This fact might be explained by either of two reasons. It can be due to an increasing selectivity of the migrants during the period under consideration or to a return migration to the Island of the less educated persons decreasing in this manner the proportion in these groups for the Puerto Rican migrants of the first generation. Several studies on return migration to Puerto Rico indicate that the return migrants have a higher median years of education than the population that stays on the Mainland.<sup>1</sup> This eliminates the second hypothesis presented.

---

1

Eva E. Sendis, "Characteristics of Puerto Rican Migrants to and from the United States," International Migration Review, Vol. IV, Spring, 1970, pp. 22-43; and Jose Hernandez Alvarez, Return Migration to Puerto Rico, Institute for International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1967.

✕Another factor that might have affected this tendency is the differential mortality of the population. The elimination of the persons in the oldest age groups more rapidly than the persons in other age groups probably would have contributed to an increase in the median since it would remove the less educated group.

To what extent the slight increase observed in the median over the period is due to any of the factors mentioned is something that can not be determined because of lack of data on any of these variables. But we venture to say that most of it can be attributed to the migration during the fifties of a group of persons better educated than the ones already living there.

If we consider that there has been a general tendency since the beginning for the Puerto Rican migrants to be a selective group, at least in regard to education<sup>1</sup> and if one also considers the improvements obtained on the social and economic conditions of the Island during the last 20 years, the hypothesis presented above seems quite acceptable.

Just to strengthen the point of the existence of a tendency toward selectivity of migrants, we would take a look at the median years of school completed for the migrant and the inhabitants of the Island for both 1950 and 1960. For 1950 the median was 3.7 years for the inhabitants of the Island and 7.6 for the migrant population, while for 1960 the indexes were 4.6 and 7.9

---

1

Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, op.cit., Second Edition, 1970, pp. 113-114 and Jose L. Vazquez, op.cit., 1968.

respectively. This shows a clear selectivity in terms of education.

The relative distribution by school of years completed is different in both groups (Table 7). While among the inhabitants of the Island 65 and 58 percent had less than 5 years of school completed for 1950 and 1960 respectively, the percentages for the migrant population were 30 and 29. It can be observed in the data in Table 7 that the migrant population has a greater concentration of persons on the middle of the educational ladder while the inhabitants of Puerto Rico are more concentrated on one of the extremes of the ladder: that of less education. In both groups, there is a movement over the decade toward a greater concentration on the higher groups of the scale: that is, the movement is toward an increase in the number of years completed and a decrease in the percent of persons with less education.

An interesting point observed on Table 7 is that while for 1950 the migrant population shows an educational superiority over the inhabitants of the Island in all the groups of the educational ladder except the first two, this pattern is somewhat changed in 1960. For this year it is observed a greater concentration in the groups with higher education for the population residing on the Island. The increase observed in the groups with higher education is also greater for the inhabitants of the Island than for the migrants.

Thus, while it is true for 1960 what Sandis says,<sup>1</sup> "that the migrants are less likely than the nonmigrants to have either very little or very much schooling," *compared with relatively population* this is not so true for the migrants to the Mainland before 1950. This suggests that the migrant population during the 50's was even more concentrated in the middle of the educational ladder than the previous migrants have been in comparison with the inhabitants of the Island. In other words, there has been

<sup>1</sup>Eva E. Sandis, "Puerto Rican Migrants to and from the United States," The International Migration Review, Vol. IV, Spring 1970, p. 30.

TABLE 7. YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED FOR PERSONS AGED 25 YEARS OR MORE FOR PUERTO RICAN MIGRANTS AND FOR THE POPULATION REMAINING ON THE ISLAND

<u>Years of School Completed</u>	<u>Migrants</u>		<u>Remaining</u>	<u>Population</u>
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
0	8.3	8.1	31.6	23.1
Elementary: 1-4	21.3	21.3	33.4	31.7
5-8	46.7	40.5	23.2	22.9
High School: 1-3	11.7	15.7	4.7	7.2
4	7.9	9.7	3.6	7.5
College: 1-3	2.5	2.9	1.6	4.0
4	1.7	1.8	1.9	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, *op.cit.*, Special Report PE No. 30 and PC(2) 1D. \_\_\_\_\_, Census for Puerto Rico, PC(1), 53C, p. 120.

a tendency from 1950 to 1960 toward a less concentration in the middle groups of the educational ladder and a greater dispersion into the groups with higher education for the population of Puerto Rican birth living in the States which might be attributed to an outflow to the Mainland during the decade of a group of migrants with higher levels of education than the Puerto Ricans already living there before 1950.

Another point illustrated on the Table is that of a greater increase in the proportion of persons in the higher educational groups for the inhabitants of the Island than for the migrant population. This might suggest that the rate of selectivity is not operating at the same rate that the improvements in the education of the Island or that the higher education of return migrants<sup>1</sup> to Puerto Rico which started gaining impetus in 1957 might have been hiding the real increase that has occurred in the proportion of persons with higher education among migrants.

A comparison by sex between the migrants and the inhabitants of the Island shows that there has been a greater improvement in the education of both sexes among the residents than among the migrants. This might suggest that the selectivity with respect to education operates more or less equally in both sexes (Table 7).

TABLE 8. MEDIAN YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED FOR THE POPULATION 25 YEARS OR MORE BY SEX OF PUERTO RICAN BIRTH AND LIVING IN PUERTO RICO, 1950 and 1960

	<u>Puerto Ricand in U.S.</u>		<u>Population of P.R.</u>	
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
25 years and more				
Males	7.7	7.9	4.1	4.8
Females	7.0	7.1	3.3	4.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, Puerto Ricans in the United States and \_\_\_\_\_ Census for Puerto Rico PC (1), 53C, p. 120.

<sup>1</sup>

Jose Hernandez Alvarez, Return Migration to Puerto Rico, University of California, Berkeley, 1969.

Income

With regard to income the population of Puerto Rican birth living on the Mainland has succeeded in obtaining one of the major things which motivated them to move to that Country: a much higher income.

An analysis of the median personal income reveals a substantial increase from 1950 to 1960 (Table 9). For both years they had a much higher income than the population living in Puerto Rico, in spite of the fact that the median personal income for Puerto Rico has almost tripled during that period.

This does not necessarily mean that they are better off economically than they were back on their Island. The economic conditions of an individual are like many other things in life, relative concepts. The relation that has to be established here is between the migrant population and its population of origin and destination. In terms of this relation with regard to income I have my suspicion that the migrant population is not much more better off than it was in its Country. Nor is this increase in their income from 1950 to 1960 so relevant since the rest of the population has also increased their earnings and the living expenses have also increased.

TABLE 9. MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME FOR PUERTO RICAN MIGRANTS LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES AND FOR PUERTO RICAN INHABITANTS, 1949 and 1959

	<u>1949</u>	<u>1959</u>
Puerto Rican Migrants in the U.S.	1664	2513
Puerto Rico Inhabitants	378	819

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, op.cit., Special Report PE No. 30 and PC(2) 1D.

It would be interesting to see how the migrant population have shifted from one category to another within the income scale from 1950 to 1960. This would help us to have a better idea on where has been the increase with respect to income and of its possibilities for more improvement. Unfortunately, the

available data is not consistent from one year to another. Neither is it possible to make analysis by sex because of lack of data.

### Occupation

\* A look at Table 10 reveals an increase in the percent of male migrants in the labor force from 1950 to 1960, whereas the opposite tendency is observed in females. While in 1950, 74 per 100 males were in the labor force, for 1960 there were 81 per 100 males. The numbers for females are 39 and 36 per 100 respectively.

\* A possible explanation for this difference between the two sexes in the tendency observed during the period might lie on the effects that the return migration to Puerto Rico might have had on the sex structure of the population. According to Hernandez,<sup>1</sup> the return migrants during 1955 to 1960 were primarily young adults with an excess of females in the order of 20 percent. This might account for the decrease in the female labor participation in the Mainland.

\* A further analysis of the relative distribution of the population in the labor force with respect to the total population by age and sex shows a decrease in the age groups 14-24 and 25-44 for females. This serves to confirm that there has been a loss of the female working population in the young and adult ages. (Table 11).

\* In comparison with the inhabitants of the Island, the Puerto Rican population living in the United States is better off in terms of labor force participation. However, as opposed to the second group, they show a decrease in labor force participation over the period, greater for males than for females. This decrease is due to the heavy outflow to the Mainland that occurred during the decade and which was characterized by being concentrated mainly among young male adults.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jose Hernandez Alvarez, op.cit., 1967.

<sup>2</sup> Jose L. Vazques, op.cit., October, 1968.

TABLE 10. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PUERTO RICAN MIGRANTS AND INHABITANTS  
OF PUERTO RICO, 1950 and 1960

	<u>Migrants</u>		<u>Inhabitants of P.R.</u>	
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
A. Non Worker/Worker Ratio				
Persons 14 years old and over				
B. Percent in Labor Force				
Male	73.9	80.6	69.8	65.7
Female	38.8	36.3	21.2	20.0
C. Percent in Labor Force				
Percent Unemployed				
Male	15.2	9.6	5.4	5.6
Female	10.5	11.3	5.1	6.4
D. Persons Employed*				
Percent by Occupation				
Professionals	4.3	2.7	4.7	7.9
Farmers	.1	0.8	6.2	3.3
Managers	3.8	2.5	5.7	7.4
Clerical, Sales	8.3	10.7	10.0	14.3
Craftsmen	7.3	8.0	7.9	11.2
Operatives	48.8	51.5	16.5	18.3
Private Household Workers	1.0	.4	5.7	3.4
Service Workers	18.4	15.4	5.3	7.8
Farm Laborers	1.8	2.2	27.8	20.1
Other Farm Laborers	4.9	6.2	8.3	6.3

\*Excludes small percentage classified in category of occupation not reported.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, Op.cit., Special Report PE No. 30 and PC(2) 1D. \_\_\_\_\_, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, Part 53, Puerto Rico.

TABLE 11. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION IN THE LABOR FORCE OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX, 1950 and 1960\*

Age	1950		1960	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
14-24	.83	.87	.87	.83
25-44	.81	.91	.92	.90
45+	.87	.90	.91	.90

\*Percent of the total working population in each age group.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 Census of Population, op.cit., Special Report PE No. 30 and PC(2) 1D.

The distribution by occupation presented in Table 10 is quite different for the migrant group than for the inhabitants of the Island. While in the first group 49 percent in 1950 and 52 percent in 1960 are concentrated in the occupation classified as operatives, in the second group the percents were 17 and 11 respectively. In other words, there are substantially less white collar workers and skilled workers among the migrant population than among the inhabitants of the Island. On the other hand, there are much more workers on the semi-skilled occupations among migrants than among the residents of the Island. The group of unskilled workers is greater on the Island than among the migrants (Table 12).

\*In the same way as it is observed very marked differences in occupation among the two groups, it can be observed also a different tendency from 1950 to 1960 in each group. In the Puerto Rican population residing in the United States there is an increase in the percent of persons in the minor white collar, skilled and unskilled occupations and a decrease in the white collar and semi-skilled occupations.

It is clear that the changes in the labor force and in occupations occurring from 1950 to 1960 have been affected by the great outflow of Puerto Ricans to the Mainland that occurred during that period. This holds true also for all the other variables analyzed.

\*The overall picture with regard to occupation suggests that there has been an upward movement from semi-skilled to skilled and minor-white collar occupations in the migrant population. Probably that upward mobility was strengthened during the decade by the group of incoming migrants who were better off educationally and occupationally than their receiving fellow citizens, since they were coming from a land which has made great improvements in those aspects during the last years. It must not be overlooked, however, that the possibility exists that this occupational mobility might have been influenced by a bettering of the education of migrants while living on the Mainland.

\*The decrease observed on the percentage in the white collar occupation might also be the result of the effects that a heavy migration of people concentrated in the middle categories of the occupational ladder might have in a relative distribution. Also, the returning to the Island of a group of migrants better educated than the remaining ones can be affecting this occupational group.

The tendency observed on the inhabitants of the Island is toward an increase in all the groups of the occupational ladder except that of unskilled worker (farm labor and other labor).

This is to be expected since Puerto Rico is actually undergoing a change, which started around 20 years ago, from a predominantly agricultural country to an industrialized one. This has brought about subsequent changes in the spatial distribution, occupational and educational structure and all other related demographic and socio-economic variables.<sup>1</sup> This has resulted in a shifting away of the population from the farm labor occupations to the semi-skilled and skilled ones offered by the industries.

#### Child-Woman Ratio and Rate of Dependency

As a crude index of the fertility of migrants we would use the child-woman ratio. It can be observed that for the Puerto Rican in the United States there

<sup>1</sup>For a detailed analysis of the effects of emigration on the Puerto Rican labor force and the occupational mobility of migrants see: Stanley L. Freedlander, Labor Migration and Economic Growth, The M.I.T. Press, 1965. Chs. 4 & 5.

TABLE 12. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED PUERTO RICAN MIGRANTS LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES AND INHABITANTS OF PUERTO RICO AGED 14 YEARS OR MORE, BY SKILL LEVEL, 1950 and 1960

Occupation According to Skill Level*	Puerto Rican Migrants		Inhabitants of Puerto Rico	
	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
White Collar (Professionals, Farmers, Managers)	8.2	4.0	16.6	18.6
Minor White Collar (Sales, Clerical)	8.3	10.7	10.0	14.3
Skilled (Craftsmen)	7.3	8.0	7.9	11.2
Semi-Skilled (Operatives, Service)	68.2	67.3	27.5	29.5
Unskilled (Farm Labor, Other Labor)	6.7	8.4	36.1	26.4

\*Excludes small percentage classified in category of occupation not reported.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, op.cit., Special Reports, PE No. 30 and PC(2) 1D. \_\_\_\_\_, 1950 and 1960 United States Census of Population, Part 53, Puerto Rico.

has been a considerable increase in this index while for the inhabitants of the Island there has been a slight decrease. 407.5 to 660.4

The migrant group during the fifties consisted mainly of young persons in the reproductive ages. So it can be expected once they are established in the Mainland that they contribute with a large share to the increase of the very young groups. This effect is reflected in the great increase that occurred in the population of Puerto Rican parentage from 1950 to 1960. This group was almost four times as great in 1960 as it was in 1950.

The effect that this migration had in the inhabitants of the Island was different. Here it contributed to the reduction of the fertility because, among other things, it reduced the marriage opportunities for women and because it separated many young women from their husbands.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jose L. Vazquez, op.cit., October, 1968.

An increase in the fertility of populations might also cause an increase in the rate of dependency. As it is known this rate measures how many persons in the ages younger than 15 years and older than 65 depend on the working population. Migration of old people to the Mainland has been insignificant, but the great increase that has occurred in the younger group because of this increased fertility has raised the rate of dependency for the Puerto Rican population in the United States.

The effect in the rate of dependency for the inhabitants of Puerto Rico has been different although it has moved the rate in the same direction. The migratory movement has taken away a high percentage of the persons in the productive ages, thus leaving the dependent population in the hands of a proportionally smaller group, causing in this way an increase in the dependency ratio.

#### Summary and Conclusions

Although technically speaking the movement of Puerto Ricans to the United States is not considered a form of international migration, from the viewpoint of society and humanity it should be treated as one. This movement represents, for the migrant population, a breakdown with all its cultural background and an entering into a completely different culture which most of the time is not at all willing to receive them. It was for this reason that we were moved to treat this movement as if it were a type of international migration.

The purpose pursued in this work was to analyze the structure of the population of Puerto Rican birth over time. The analysis was limited to the years 1950 and 1960 which were the years on which the United Census published some data on the Puerto Rican population in the United States. These data have the limitation that it did not make any distinction between the Puerto Rican population that was already living in the United States and the population that migrated during the period under analysis. So in interpreting the results we have been obliged to hypothesize considering the possible influence of both factors separately.

A second purpose of the work was to compare the population that has migrated with the population that remained on the Island.

It can be concluded from the analysis that from 1950 to 1960 there has been a tendency in the Puerto Rican population living in the United States to be more concentrated in the younger adult ages and to have more males than females. While the population that remains on the Island is much younger and has undergone a tendency toward an outnumber of females over males because of the migration that occurred during the decade.

As far as the levels of education are concerned the tendency for the migrant population has been from a concentration in the middle of the educational ladder to a movement in the higher educational groups. The inhabitants of the Island, however, have moved from the lowest educational groups also to higher educational groups but with more emphasis on the groups with college education.

This movement toward higher education has had favorable effect on the occupations of this migrant group. Here we see a movement from semi-skilled workers to skilled and minor white collar occupations. Of course, that this increase in education and occupation also had its effect on increasing the income. The population that remains on the Island, on the other hand, increased its percent on the white collar occupations probably as a result of its higher percent with college education.

What part of all these increases can be attributed to the population that migrated during the decade nor what has been the effect of return migration in the tendency observed is something that has not been determined.

At any rate, this analysis serves to confirm the findings in other works that the Puerto Rican migrants to the United States are a selective group with respect to the population that stays on the Island, and adds to it the fact that this selectivity seems to be increasing. This is of enormous importance for the economy of the Island because it would mean that it would continue to

invest its money in the education and health of a group of persons which when they are ready to produce will go to another land which will be the one to benefit from their abilities and knowledge.

It will also be important for the migrant population itself because it means that they probably will be better off in their position with respect to their population of destiny.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Several studies done indicate that the socio-economic status of Puerto Ricans in the United States is much lower than that of the natives. See John J. Macisco, Jr., "Assimilation of the Puerto Ricans on the Mainland," The International Migration Review, Vol. II, Spring 1968.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Migration*331.977  
B434

Benitez, Carle Luis, The Labor Movement of Puerto Rico, Philadelphia 1950, M.B.A. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1950.

Berle, Beatrice Bishop, 80 Puerto Rican Families in New York City, Columbia University Press, 1958. ✓ 325.27  
B435

Cook, Robert C., "Puerto Rico's New Look," Population Bulletin, Vol. XI, April 1955, No. 2.

Dossick, Jesse John, Doctoral Research on Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans, New York, New York, New York University, 1967. ✓ 922  
D745

Fitzpatrick, Joseph P., "Intermarriage of Puerto Ricans in New York City," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 71 (4), pp. 395-406, Jan. 1966. ✓

\_\_\_\_\_, "Puerto Ricans in Perspective: The Meaning of Migration to the Mainland," The International Migration Review, Vol. II, Spring 1968.

Friedlander, Stanley, Labor Migration and Economic Growth, The M.I.T. Press, 1965.

Glazer, Nathan and Daniel P. Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Point, The M.I.T. Press, 1970.

Hernandez Alvarez, Jose, "The Movement and Settlement of Puerto Rican Migrants Within the United States, 1950-1960," The International Migration Review, Vol. II, Spring 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_, Return Migration to Puerto Rico, University of California, 1967. No

Jaffe, A.J., People, Jobs and Economic Development, The Free Press of Glencoe, Illinois, 1959.

Kantrowitz, Nathan, "Social Mobility of Puerto Ricans: Education, Occupation and Income Changes Among Children of Migrants, New York, 1950-1960," The International Migration Review, Vol. II, Spring 1968.

Koss, Joan Dee, Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia: Migration and Accomodation, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1965. 398.748  
POAM 1965.55

Macisco, John J., "Assimilation of Puerto Ricans on the Mainland: a Socio-Demographic Approach," The International Migration Review, Vol. II, Spring 1968.

Motley, Dena, "The Culture of Poverty in Puerto Rico and New York," Social Security Bulletin 30(9):18-23, Sept. 1967. ✓

Senior, Clarence, "Migrants, People not Problems," Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Department of Labor, Migration Division, New York.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Migration and Puerto Rico's Population Problem," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 285:130-136, Jan. 1953. ✓

\_\_\_\_\_, Patterns of Puerto Rican Dispersion in the Continental United States (Paper presented at the Population Association of America annual meeting, Charlottesville, Virginia, May 9, 1954.)

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Puerto Ricans in New York: A Progress Note," The International Migration Review, Vol. 'II, Spring 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_, The Puerto Ricans in Saint Croix, Rio Piedras, Social Research Science Center, University of Puerto Rico, 1947. ✓

\_\_\_\_\_, "Puerto Rican Migration, Spontaneous and Organized," Monthly Labor Review, U.S. Department of Labor, Dec. 1955.

\_\_\_\_\_, The Puerto Ricans, Strangers - Then Neighbors, Quadrangle Books, 1965.

Taeuber, Irene B., "Migration and Transformation: Spanish Surname Population and Puerto Ricans," Population Index, 32(1):3-34, Jan. 1966. 3/NO

Tannenbaum, Dora, Sara McCaulley and Daniel H. Carpenter, The Puerto Rican Migration, Hudson Guild Neighborhood House, 1955.

<sup>intl</sup> Tuner, Melvin Marvin, Social Class and Social Change in Puerto Rico, Princeton University Press, 1961. 5-1 T 834 14963T

U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 United States Census of Population, Puerto Ricans in Continental United States, Special Report PE No. 30.

\_\_\_\_\_, 1960 United States Census of Population, Puerto Ricans in the United States, PC(2)1D. NO

\_\_\_\_\_, 1950 United States Census of Population, Puerto Rico, P-B53.

\_\_\_\_\_, 1960 United States Census of Population, Puerto Rico, PC(1)53A, B, C and D.

Vázquez Calzada, Jose L., Las Causas y Efectos de la Emigración Puertorriquena, unpublished paper, University of Puerto Rico, School of Medicine, Oct. 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_, The Demographic Evolution of Puerto Rico, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1964. 3/NO

\_\_\_\_\_, El Desbalance entre Recursos y Población en Puerto Rico, unpublished paper, University of Puerto Rico, School of Medicine, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_, "La Emigración Puertorriquena, ¿Solución o Problema?," Revista de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Vol. VII, Dec. 1963.