

# Puerto Rico

## Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

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CONTINENT

### GEOGRAPHY

Area 9,104 sq.km. Greater Antilles, between Dominican Republic and the Virgin Islands.

Population	Ann.Gr.	Density
2000 3,868,602	+0.81%	425 per sq. km.
2010 4,158,727	+0.68%	457 per sq. km.
2025 4,477,962	+0.43%	492 per sq. km.

Puerto Ricans in USA now number 3 million.

Capital San Juan 2,550,000. Two-thirds of the population live in the metropolitan area. Urbanites 75%.

### PEOPLES

**Euro-American** 74.7%. Spanish-speaking 2.8 mill.; English-speaking 85,000.

**Afro-Caribbean** 25.2%. Mostly Spanish-speaking; a few French- and English-speaking.

**Asian** 0.1%. Chinese 2,000, Lebanese.

**Literacy** 90%. **Official languages** Spanish, English.

### ECONOMY

Mountainous and densely populated with few natural resources. A free market economy with manufacturing, trade and tourism the largest sources of income.

Nearly 88% of exports are to mainland USA. **Public debt** 62% of GNP. **Income/person** \$8,200 (26% of USA).

### POLITICS

A Spanish colony for 400 years. Conquered by USA in 1898.

### RELIGION

Religions	Population %	Adherents	Ann.Gr.
Christian	97.00	3,752,544	+0.8%
non-Religious/other	2.00	77,372	+1.9%
Other	0.70	27,080	+0.8%
Animist	0.10	3,869	+0.8%
Hindu	0.10	3,869	+0.8%
Jewish	0.10	3,869	+0.8%

Christians	Denom.	Adh. %	,000	Ann.Gr.
Protestant	45	15.92	616	+2.5%
Independent	54	13.20	511	+1.8%
Anglican	1	0.32	12	+0.7%
Catholic	1	74.96	2,900	+0.8%
Orthodox	1	0.03	1	+0.0%
Marginal	8	3.02	117	+1.2%

### Churches MegaBlocCong.MembersAdherents

Catholic	C	1,0751,650,000	2,900,000
Other Pentecostal [30]	I	1,915	229,814 370,000
Pentecostal Ch of God	P	720	100,000 160,000
Assemblies of God	P	280	56,000 100,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	260	31,524 78,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	328	25,778 75,000
Baptist Convention	P	105	35,000 70,000
Defenders of the Faith	I	180	17,500 35,000
Ch of God (Cleveland)	P	235	17,496 29,218
Latter-day Saints (Morm)	M	70	16,084 23,000
United Methodist	P	72	10,000 20,000
Christian & Miss Alliance	P	60	6,500 15,000
Boriquén Presbyt Synod	P	71	8,300 15,000
Ch of the Nazarene	P	40	2,994 5,000
Chr Chs / Chs of Christ	P	30	1,400 2,000
Other denoms [66]		1,568	139,716 259,819
<i>Doubly Affiliated</i>			<i>-247,429-433,000</i>
Total Christians [110]		7,009	2,100,677 3,724,037

Trans-bloc Groupings	pop.%	,000	Ann.Gr.
Evangelical	27.6	1,066	+2.3%
Charismatic	25.2	976	+2.1%
Pentecostal	20.0	772	+2.5%

Missionaries from Puerto Rico

**P,I,A** 200 in \* agencies and \* countries. USA 58, Costa Rica 9, Spain 8, Dominican Republic 8, Panama 8.

Missionaries to Puerto Rico

**P,I,A** 207 in \* agencies and \* countries. USA 133, Germany 3.

## • Challenges for Prayer

1 The unresolved issue of Puerto Rico's political future has divided the nation. Few want the status quo with its nominal autonomy, but foreign control. People are torn between total independence with all its risks and becoming a US state with its material benefits but cultural loss. Pray for a resolution to this long conflict and identity crisis which affects every level of society.

2 Puerto Rico is nominally Catholic, but Evangelicals have grown rapidly from 0.1% in 1900, 5.7% in 1960 and nearly 30% in 2000 - some estimate this may have risen to 50%. Over 90% are Pentecostal or Charismatic. There are numerous small indigenous networks of churches and independent congregations. There is also a large charismatic movement in the Catholic Church. There is a large amount of church activity (8 Christian TV channels, many local radio stations, etc.) but little impact has been made on the life of the nation which is basically a sick, dysfunctional society.

3 The Church has become part of the problem rather than the source of the solution with deep division, denominational rivalry, carnality, lack of vision for the needs of the nation and world. The high incidence of AIDS, rates of alcoholism, drug addiction, corruption, crime and poverty are some of the highest in the Americas. They cry out for Christians to get involved. Pray for humility, repentance, spiritual unity and burden for the lost among Christian leaders. Some leaders spend more time fighting one another than the enemy of souls.

4 The Church needs new vision:

- a) **Locally for effective discipling** rather than 'sheep stealing'. The 1997 DAWN saturation church planting conference was one catalytic beginning.
- b) **Globally for effective support** and nurture of missions vision. A new interest in missions is developing in churches after decades of negativism. Pray that this interest may lead to greater impact on the world's unreached. There is much interest in unreached cities in Spain. Over 200 Puerto Ricans serve in indigenous movements such as AMIES International and in international missions such as YWAM, OM and WBT. Pray for the effective training and support of new mission ventures. COMIBAM is bringing together interdenominational (and denominational) mission agencies for fellowship and cooperation for world evangelization.
- c) **For students.** ABU(IFES) has a growing work with groups on some campuses - pioneering work is needed for other campuses with an inadequate student witness.

5 Over-population and unemployment have forced over 3 million Puerto Ricans to emigrate to the USA. About half live in and around New York, where they form the lowest income group. Many live in Hispanic ghettos, where frustration has driven large numbers to violence, drugs and immorality. Pray for all specifically ministering to this community.