

Search:



[NYTimes.com](#) > [New York Region](#)

Census Numbers for Hispanic Subgroups Rise

By JANNY SCOTT

The United States Census Bureau, which had been accused of underestimating the size of many Hispanic groups in the United States as a result of a small change in the wording of a single question on the 2000 census, yesterday released significantly larger estimates of the numbers of Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorans, Guatemalans and many other groups.

In New York City, where more than half of all Dominicans in the United States live, the estimate of the number of Dominicans jumped to 532,793 from the 406,806 figure the bureau released in June 2001. The estimate of the Ecuadorean population in the city rose to 145,505 from 101,005; the estimate of the Colombian population increased to 107,311 from 77,154.

The new calculations do not change the overall count of Latinos. They simply offer new estimates of the relative size of specific subgroups.

The new estimate of the Salvadoran population nationally is 42.6 percent higher than the official count; there were also big percentage increases in the estimates of Hondurans, Nicaraguans, Bolivians, Peruvians, Venezuelans and others.

"I think the results now are closer to reasonably reflecting the size of different communities," said John R. Logan, a professor of sociology at the State University at Albany and director of the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research. "I do think these data will prove much more useful than what we had in the past."

Anthony Chavez, a former chairman of the Census Advisory Committee on the Hispanic Population, said, "The bureau, I think, has to get itself out of the 80's and 90's and realize it's got this large and growing Hispanic population, and it needs to really analyze the steps it's taking to count that population and whether it needs to do something differently."

The new estimates are part of a study that the bureau conducted at the request of Congress after planners, scholars and community groups raised questions about the counts of Hispanic groups.

ARTICLE TOOLS

- [E-Mail This Article](#)
- [Printer-Friendly Format](#)
- [Most E-Mailed Articles](#)
- [Reprints](#)

ARTICLE TOOLS SPONSORED BY

STARBUCKS.COM

TIMES NEWS TRACKER

Topics	Alerts
Hispanic-Americans	
Census	
Create Your Own Manage Alerts	

Real Estate

Sign up for E-Mail Alerts!

Receive the latest property listings in your inbox...

Sell or Rent Your Home

Post a property listing on NYTimes.com...

Find a Mover

Get instant quotes for full-service, self-service and last-minute moves...

Get Mortgage Quotes

Get instant mortgage quotes and calculate payments...

Advertisement

MARIJUANA FACT

Help your teen know
FACT from FICTION.

FACTS HERE

PARENTS. THE ANTI-DRUG.

Critics said the change in the wording of the census question on Hispanic ethnicity on the short form distributed to every resident had led to confusion.

The question asked whether the person answering was "Spanish/Hispanic/Latino." If the person was Puerto Rican, Cuban or Mexican or Mexican-American, he or she could then check one of three boxes. But if they belonged to any other Hispanic group, they were told to check "other Spanish, Hispanic/Latino" and write in the specific name of their group.

In 1990, that question had gone on to include more detailed instructions: "Print one group, for example: Argentinian, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard and so on." But the bureau had opted in the 1990's to eliminate the examples after finding a suspiciously large increase in the number of people who named one of those six groups.

When the census results were released in 2001, it became apparent that many Latinos had failed to identify themselves as belonging to any specific group. In New York City, the number identified simply as "other Hispanic" had risen by 247 percent since 1990. The counts of Dominicans, Colombians and others, meanwhile, were far below what other estimates had suggested.

Because of the doubts raised, the bureau went back and examined the more detailed answers given by Hispanics who responded to the census long form. Of the 5.7 million who had identified themselves as generally Hispanic with no particular national-origin group, 3.1 million had given a specific country of origin or ancestry when asked.

Using that information, the bureau came up with new estimates. But Arthur Cresce, a demographer in the population division of the Census Bureau, said yesterday that the new numbers do not replace the official Census 2000 totals for the groups because they are based in part on assumptions, not self-identification.

"Just because a person is born in a Hispanic country, they may have a number of different ethnicities," Mr. Cresce said. For example, a person born in Argentina might actually identify himself as Italian or German, he said.

Mr. Cresce said the bureau was testing different ways of asking about Hispanic ethnicity. He said it would be impossible to offer a separate check box for some 18 Hispanic subgroups. "There is only so much room on the form," he said.

RELATED ARTICLES

- [Hispanics Now Largest Minority, Census Shows](#) (January 22, 2003) \$
- [Census Missed 103,000 in City, Many in Hispanic Areas, Bureau Data Shows](#) (December 7, 2002) \$
- [Census Shows Increase in Number of Hispanics Who Own Their Homes](#) (April 24, 2002) \$
- [THE YEAR IN IDEAS: A TO Z.; Return to Segregation](#) (December 9, 2001) \$
- [South's Blacks Lag In Owning Homes](#) (August 23, 2001)

TOP NEW YORK REGION ARTICLES

- ▣ [Board Authorizes Jumps in Rent Up to 8.5 Percent](#)
- ▣ [Nudging Turns to Shoving in Albany Budget Fight](#)
- ▣ [Council Grudgingly Approves Raising Sales and Income Taxes](#)
- ▣ [Ridership Up, but Ferry Company Got 9/11 Aid](#)
- ▣ [A Mystery of Disputed Identity](#)

Advertiser Links

[Tiny, Wireless Video Camera Kit ONLY \\$79.99!](#)

Find more results for [Hispanic-Americans](#) and [Census](#) .



Expect the World every morning with Home Delivery of The New York Times Newspaper.

[Click Here for 50% off](#)