NYC’s Hispanic Population Is Growing

This group makes up 29% of the city’s population, with most of Dominican heritage, 2016 census data shows

By Melanie Grayce West and Mariana Alfaro
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On Wednesday, a street vendor sold shaved ice on the corner of Jerome Avenue and 170th Street in the Bronx, which had the greatest growth in Hispanics among the five boroughs, according to census data. Photo: Agaton Strom for The Wall Street Journal

In a city that is relentlessly shifting, here’s one constant: The Hispanic population is on the rise.

That’s according to new U.S. Census Bureau population estimates released Thursday.

The Bronx had the greatest growth in Hispanics among the five boroughs. Hispanics made up 56% of Bronx residents on July 1, 2016, compared with 53.6% on July 1, 2010.

In all, Hispanics make up 29% of the city’s population of slightly more than 8 million, according to the new 2016 data.

The growing number of Hispanics in the Bronx is a long-term trend dating back decades and attributed, in part, to an increase in the Dominican population through ongoing immigration and a rising birthrate, according to Laird W. Bergad, director of the Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies, a
Dominicans are the city’s largest Latino nationality.

“Some 10-to-15,000 Dominicans are arriving each year from the island and if you add that onto natural reproduction and fairly significant birthrates, we’re getting a growth of the Dominican population in the city,” Mr. Bergad said.

The epicenter of Dominican settlement in the northern Manhattan neighborhood of Washington Heights substantially has shifted to the Bronx, he noted. “The Bronx calls because it is a lower cost of living area,” he said.

The strong sense of Dominican identity is one thing that makes Dalia Peguero, 36 years old, feel comfortable in her new home. She moved from the Dominican Republic to the Bronx 8 months ago to reunite with her husband.

On Wednesday, she was one of 10 Dominican students in a 12-person English-as-a-second-language class at the Bronxworks offices on the Grand Concourse.

“You feel like family,” Ms. Peguero said of living in the Bronx. “They speak the same language. The only difference is the weather.”
Dalia Peguero was one of 10 Dominican students in a 12-person English-as-a-second-language class on Wednesday at the Bronxworks offices on the Grand Concourse in New York City. Photo: Agaton Strom for The Wall Street Journal

Ms. Peguero said she finds nearly everything she would get in the Dominican Republic in the Bronx—especially food. Even New York weather appeals to her, which is why she doesn’t see herself moving soon.

“There are many opportunities to grow here,” she said.

The census data also looked at age.

The median age in New York state went from 38 years in 2010 to 38.5 on July 1, 2016, according to the data. Sumter County, Fla., west of Orlando, Fla., had the highest median age of any U.S. county at 67.1 years.

Nationally, all race and ethnic groups grew during the year ending July 1, 2016, with the Hispanic population nationwide increasing by 2%.

Census demographers noted that New York had the largest black or African-American population of any U.S. state in 2016, with 3.8 million people.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/nycs-hispanic-population-is-growing-1498104060

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