



GOBIERNO DE PUERTO RICO

Junta de Planificación
Oficina del Gobernador

PUERTO RICO DEMOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

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Little is more extraordinary than the decision to migrate ... the accumulation of emotions and thoughts which finally leads a family to say farewell to a community where it has lived for centuries, to abandon old ties and familiar landmarks, and to sail across dark seas to a strange land ... there were probably as many reasons for coming to America as there were people who came ... yet it can be said that three large forces – religious persecution, political oppression and economic hardship – provided the chief motives for the mass migrations to our shores. They were responding, in their own way, to the pledge of the declaration of independence: the promise of “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

JOHN F. KENNEDY, A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS (NEW YORK, HARPER AND ROW, 1964)

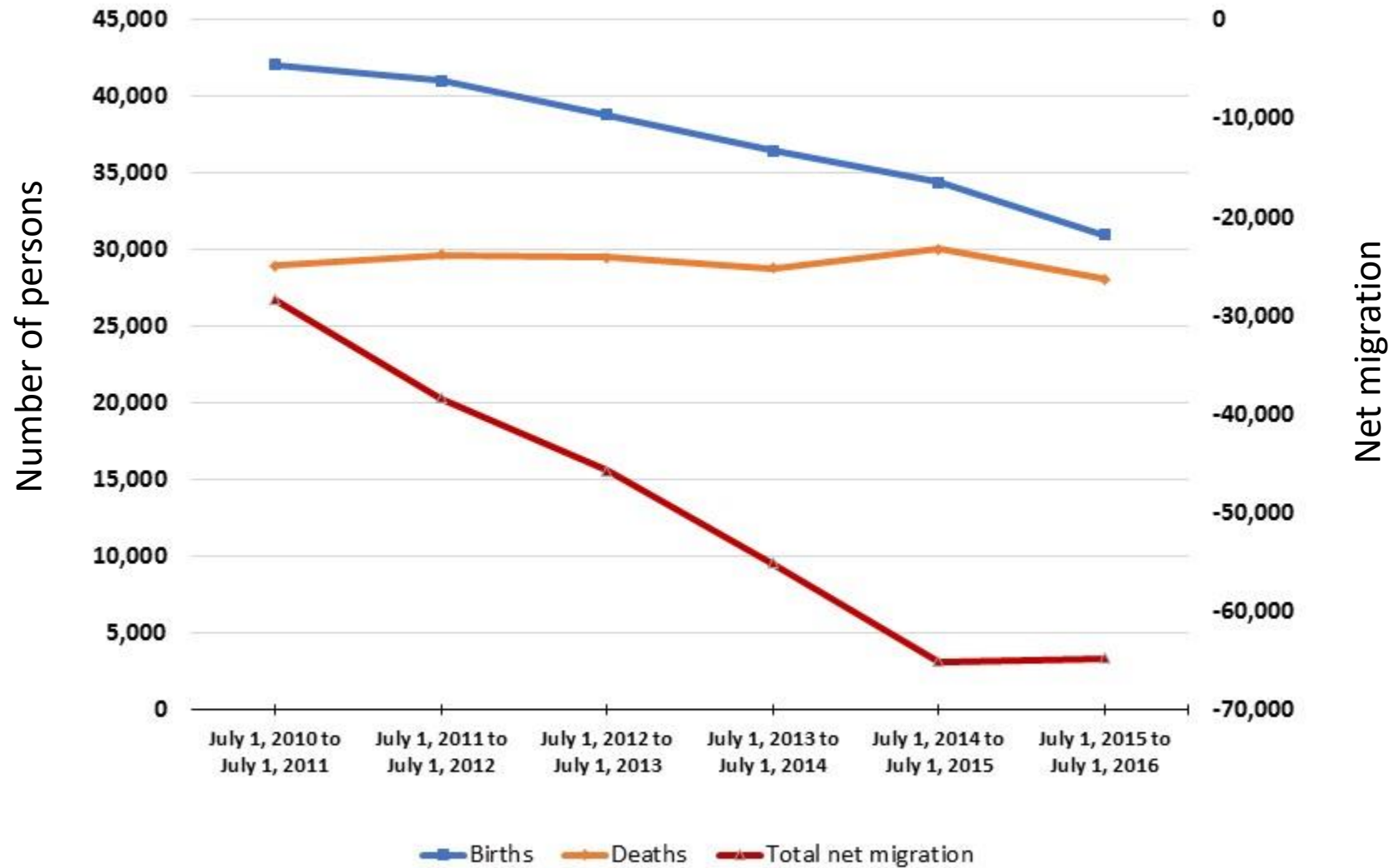


- Between 1899 and 2000 the population in Puerto Rico increased by 2.9 million people.
- In the past decade (2000 to 2010) population decline was registered in the amount of 82,821 persons.
- Population decline in Puerto Rico has become aggravated in the past six years (6) , decreasing in the amount of 267,427 people between 2010 and 2016, per Census Estimations.

POPULATION IN PUERTO RICO - 1899 – 2010



Annual Estimates of the components of population change



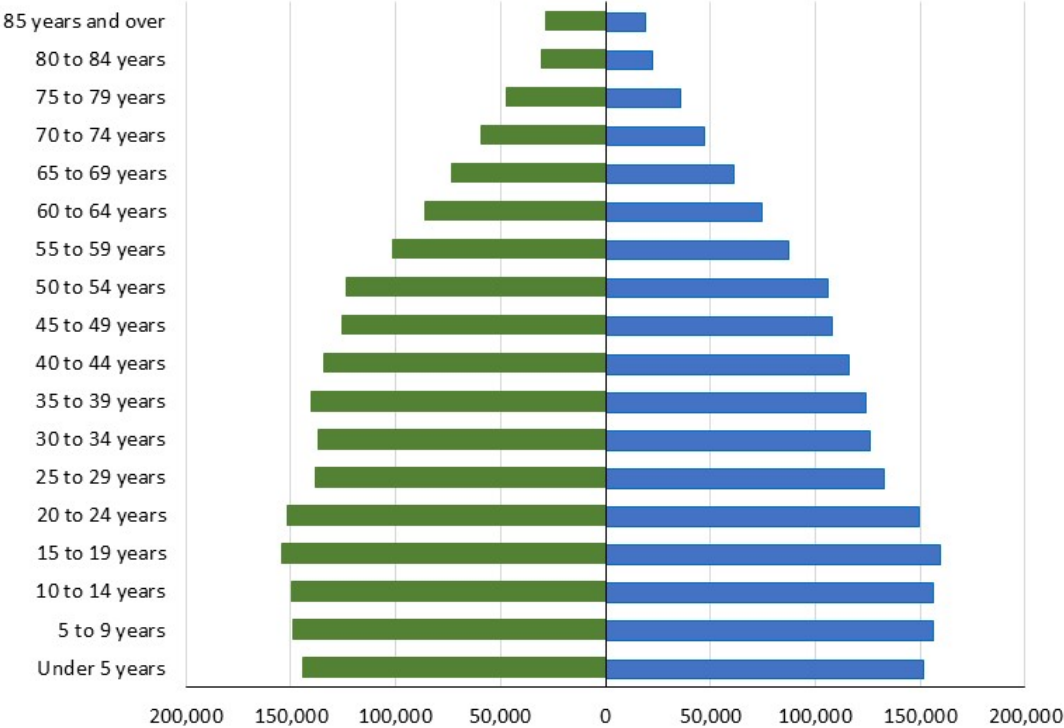
Source: US Census Bureau, Population division

The following is a review of notable findings on the variables related to each of the components of the population equation (births, deaths and migration).

- A decreasing tendency on the number of births.
- A progressive reduction on the base of age structure, by gender.
- A rise in the average age of the population.
- A progressive decrease in the number of persons in reproductive age.
- A lowering in the labor force.
- A progressive increment in the elder population.
- An increasing number of persons moving to the United States Mainland and to other destinations.

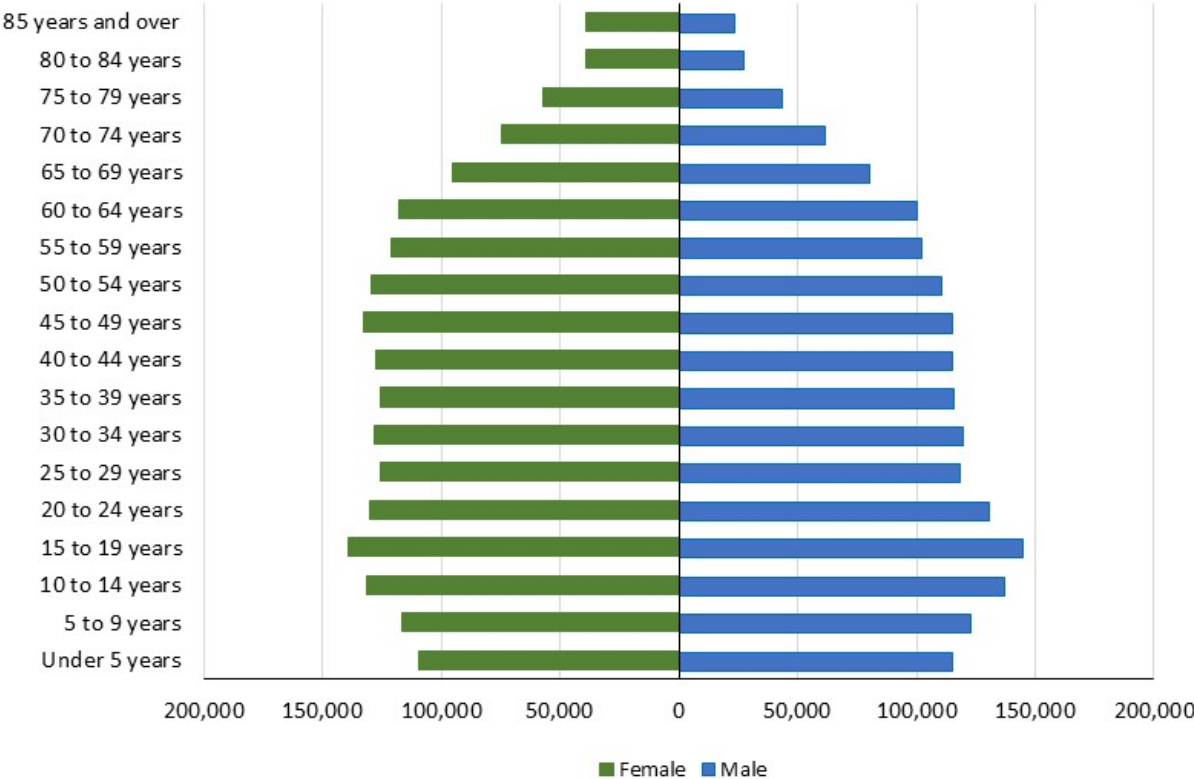
POPULATION STRUCTURE, BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER

Population Pyramid – Puerto Rico
Census 2000



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 decennial census

Population Pyramid – Puerto Rico
Census 2010



Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 decennial census



The demographic challenge must be understood as one of achieving balances

scarcity vs surplus

The effect on demographics is for some variables aligned, yet for others it is inverse

- **How much migration?**
- **How many births?**
- **What life expectancy?**

Policies adopted by nations pose contradictions and consequences.

Sometimes they are matter of individual decisions that cannot be easily controlled by government, while at other times it is a matter of collective scenarios that individuals cannot control.



- It must be taken into account that Puerto Ricans are US citizens by birth and therefore cannot be considered as immigrants.
- It is difficult to understand discriminatory treatment and opprobrium faced by immigrants from other nations, yet it is still more difficult to understand these types of motivation for emigration within the Nation and its territories, when it stands on equality and the promise for quality of life.

“It was not my plan to come to the mainland, it was never in my options,” says one who has relocated to Miami after Hurricane Maria.
By Sarah Ruiz-Grossman 10/16/2017

...Life on the island has become a daily struggle, forcing thousands to consider whether a better future lies ahead outside of its borders.

....It's hard to know the exact number of Puerto Ricans who have fled the island, or how many of those will eventually return, said Edwin Meléndez, economist and director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College in New York.

Puerto Rican news outlet El Nuevo Día estimates tens of thousands of residents have left, and The New York Times reported Florida alone has braced for as many as 100,000 arrivals.”



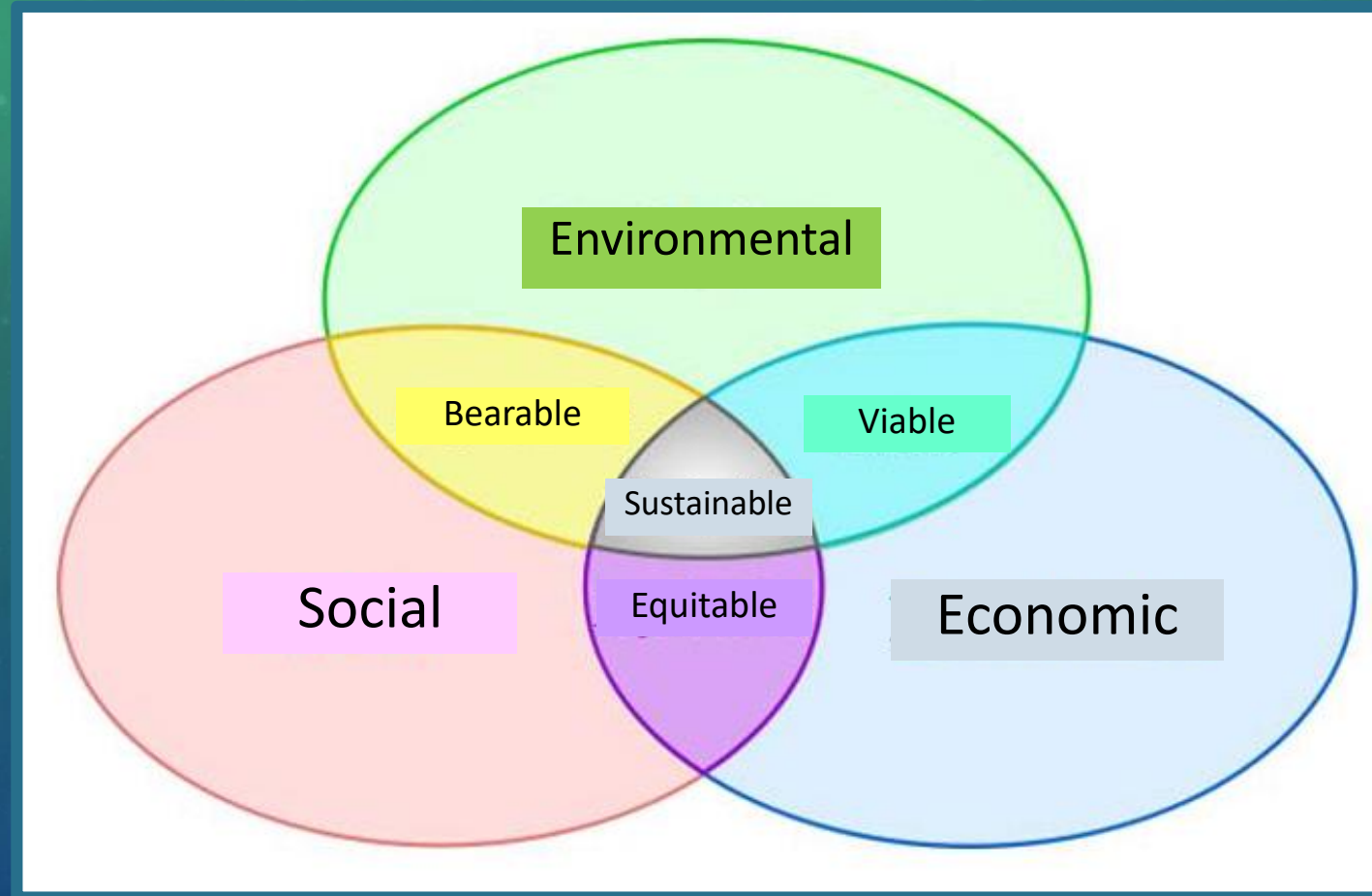


A Multisector Committee was designated by Puerto Rico Law Number 199, of December 16, 2010, as amended

The Committee includes (16 representatives from public and private entities)

Their charge is to prepare a **“Strategic Plan for the Integral and Comprehensive Development of the present and future Population in Puerto Rico**

The Committee working with the Demographic Challenge has aligned policy recommendations with the Principles for Sustainability adopted by the United Nations



PLAN FOR PUERTO RICO

- For a community to develop, prosper and be competitive in the present global environment, its people needs to be **educated and healthy**; has to **feel secure in its environment, cover basic necessities of housing, hygiene and nutrition** and shall **have access to opportunities of progress in conditions of equality**.
- Also, a fundamental aspect of public policy in the Plan for Puerto Rico considers primary attention to the most vulnerable sectors:
 - Children
 - Elders
 - Persons with limited resources
 - Women
 - Persons with disabilities



Puerto Rico is clear about its aspirations for equal opportunity and life quality as american citizens.

The desire to continue in a geography that offers adequate living conditions has been fundament to family decisions related to births as well as the motivation for moving to the mainland.



Scenarios for turning around migration in the late 1960's had different opportunities:

- A new economy was emerging with manufacturing companies moving to Puerto Rico and providing for employment and technology transfer.**
- Migratory policies for Cuban exile brought well prepared professionals looking for stability and horizons where to experience the American way of life in the context of their own language.**

While Hurricane María has exacerbated Puerto Rico's difficulties, it should be a temporary state.

Medium and long term objectives must envision opportunity to accelerate the route already traced in the "Plan for Puerto Rico" , that of a more competitive and equitable society.

