

**PROFILE OF THE  
HISPANIC/LATINO  
POPULATION IN MONROE  
COUNTY  
1970-1990**

**37 South Washington Street  
Rochester, NY 14608-2091**

**111 Pine St.  
Albany, NY 12207**

October, 2000



*Research to drive informed decisions.  
Expertise to create effective solutions.*

# **PROFILE OF THE HISPANIC/LATINO POPULATION IN MONROE COUNTY 1970-1990**

Prepared for:  
**United Way of Greater Rochester**

Donald E. Pryor, Project Director

37 South Washington Street  
Rochester, NY 14608-2091  
(716) 325-6360

111 Pine St.  
Albany, NY 12207

[www.cgr.org](http://www.cgr.org)

October, 2000

© Copyright CGR Inc. All Rights Reserved

---

# PROFILE OF THE HISPANIC/LATINO POPULATION IN MONROE COUNTY 1970-1990

October, 2000

## SUMMARY

The United Way is in the process of conducting a Hispanic Community Assessment: Assets and Opportunities project. As part of the project, CGR was asked to analyze selected Census trend data for Monroe County's Hispanic/Latino population. Characteristics analyzed include education, employment, income, age, and others.

The total Hispanic/Latino population grew substantially in Monroe County between 1970 (5,792 individuals of Puerto Rican descent) and 1990 (26,450 of all Hispanic descent), and is estimated to have grown further in 1999 to 34,551. The highest proportion of growth was in the suburbs, with an increase of 78% between 1980 and 1990, but the greatest growth in number of Hispanic/Latino individuals was in the city. The majority of Hispanic/Latino individuals in Monroe County are of Puerto Rican descent.

The Hispanic/Latino population is disproportionately younger than the population as a whole. In addition, Hispanic families are more likely to be headed by a female with children under age 18 (35% in 1990) compared to the population as a whole (11%).

The proportion of the Hispanic/Latino population with a college degree rose from 3% in 1970 to 12% in 1990. Conversely, the proportion of the Hispanic/Latino adult population with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education dropped from 62% in 1970 to 23% in 1990.

The Hispanic/Latino population has shifted in occupational choice, with the proportion working as "machine operators, assemblers, or inspectors" dropping from 46% to 16% between 1970 and 1990, for example. Occupational categories that saw increases over that 20 year period include an increase from 0.3% to 7% in sales, 3% to 7% in executive and managerial occupations, and from 5% to 11% in

---

professional specialty occupations. Hispanic unemployment rates remain more than twice as high than the rates in the total population.

Hispanics lag behind the total population in income levels. In 1990, 35% of Hispanics in Monroe County had household incomes of less than \$10,000 compared to 13% of the total population. Per capita income among Hispanics was \$7,696 in 1990, compared to \$16,162 among the total population.

Hispanics had higher poverty rates in every age category, compared to the total population. Most dramatically, while 19% of children under 5 years of age lived in poverty among the total population in 1990, the rate was 58% among the Hispanic/Latino population.

Language continued to be a barrier for the Hispanic/Latino population, with 21% of Hispanics indicating that they “do not speak English very well” in 1980, with an increase to 34% in 1990.

The Hispanic/Latino population was more likely in 1990 to lack access to a vehicle (38%) compared to the total population (13%), and was less likely to own their home (31% versus 65%).

The Hispanic/Latino population is a fast growing segment of the population in Monroe County, and in the city of Rochester in particular. Between 1970 and 1990 the Hispanic population gained ground in education and occupational status, but faces increasing challenges with high poverty rates, low home-ownership rates, and single-parent households.

## Contributing Staff

Sarah Boyce Fasick, MSPH  
Primary Author and Data Analyst

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Census Data Analysis</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Total Population .....	1
City/Suburban Concentrations.....	2
Origin of Hispanic/Latino Population .....	3
Racial Distribution.....	4
Gender .....	4
Age.....	4
Location in City of Rochester.....	5
Family Structure.....	6
Marital Status.....	7
Education .....	7
Employment .....	8
Income .....	9
Language .....	11
Housing Characteristics .....	12
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>13</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to CGR's summer interns, Jonathan Witmer and Michael Wilson, for their help in constructing the data tables.

## INTRODUCTION

As part of the United Way's Hispanic Community Assessment: Assets and Opportunities Project, CGR was asked to analyze selected Census data for Monroe County's Hispanic/Latino population. Characteristics of the Hispanic population living in Monroe County were analyzed using decennial Census data for the years 1970, 1980, and 1990. Characteristics analyzed include education, employment status, income distribution, city or suburban residence, and others.

Data from the 2000 Census will be available beginning in the summer of 2001. This report will be updated as soon as the relevant data are available. It should be noted that for all 1970 estimates included in this report, only those individuals of Puerto Rican descent were included in the Hispanic/Latino category by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Note that while summary tables and graphs are included in the body of this report, more detailed tables are included in the Appendix.

## CENSUS DATA ANALYSIS

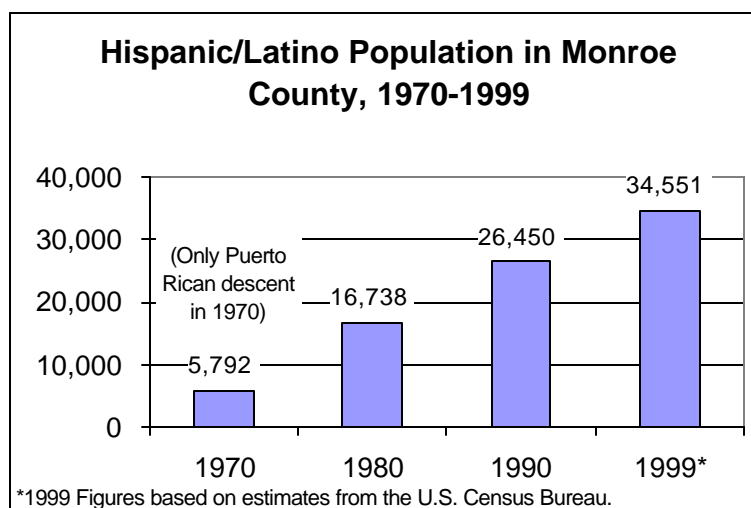
### Total Population

***The total Hispanic/Latino population in Monroe County grew from 5,792 in 1970 (Puerto Ricans only) to an estimated 34,551 in 1999.***

Between 1980 and 1990, the Hispanic/Latino population, including those of Puerto Rican, Mexican, and Cuban descent, increased in Monroe County from 16,738 in 1980 to 26,450 in 1990, an increase of 58% (See Appendix Table 1). Almost three-quarters of the Hispanic/Latino population is of Puerto Rican descent (73% in 1990). Most of the population increase in the Hispanic community can be attributed to the growth of the Puerto Rican subgroup (an increase of 63% between 1980 and 1990 and of 232% between 1970 and 1990).

While the Census 2000 estimates are not yet available, the Census Bureau reported that estimates for the Hispanic population in Monroe County for 1999 indicate a growth of 30.6% from 1990,

for a total of 34,551 Hispanic/Latino individuals. The Bureau did not report 1999 breakdowns for the city and suburbs.



## City/Suburban Concentrations

***Most Monroe County Hispanics live in the city of Rochester (76%), but the rate of growth between 1980 and 1990 was higher in the suburbs.***

The Hispanic/Latino population grew substantially between 1980 and 1990 in both the city of Rochester (52.5% increase) and in the suburbs (78.4% increase). While the rate of growth was higher in the suburbs, the overall numbers of Hispanics are higher in the city than in the suburbs, and most of the growth numerically took place in the city.

Though the number of Hispanics living in the suburbs of Monroe County increased to 6,395 in 1990 from 3,585 in 1980, the suburban growth contributed only 29% of the entire growth of the county's Hispanic population growth. The number of Puerto Rican individuals, in particular, increased from 1,252 to 2,846 in the suburbs between 1980 and 1990. Nonetheless, the Puerto Rican portion of the Hispanic population appears to be concentrated in the city; while 81.7% of the city's Hispanic population is of Puerto Rican origin, only 44.5% of the suburban Hispanic population is Puerto Rican.



## Origin of Hispanic/Latino Population

The proportion of the Hispanic/Latino population in Monroe County that is native born increased slightly between 1980 and 1990, from 86.8% to 87.9%. The percentage of Hispanics in the city who were native born increased somewhat, while the percentage in the suburbs decreased a very small amount, as shown in the table below.

*The great majority of Monroe County's Hispanic population is of Puerto Rican origin.*

### Place of Birth: Hispanic/Latino Population, 1980-1990

	Monroe County		City of Rochester		Suburbs	
	1990	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage
<b>Total</b>	24,731	100.0%	18,936	100.0%	5,795	100.0%
<b>Native</b>	21,749	87.9%	17,374	91.8%	4,375	75.5%
<b>Foreign-born</b>	2,982	12.1%	1,562	8.2%	1,420	24.5%

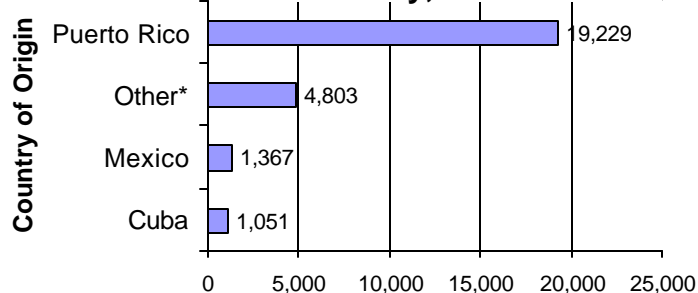
	1980		Count Percentage		Count Percentage	
	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage	Count Percentage
<b>Total</b>	16,538	100.0%	12,961	100.0%	3,577	100.0%
<b>Native</b>	14,348	86.8%	11,619	89.6%	2,729	76.3%
<b>Foreign-born</b>	2,190	13.2%	1,342	10.4%	848	23.7%

Sources: 1980 Census of Population and Housing, Table P-20; 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Table 28.

The Puerto Rican concentration is most pronounced in the city (81.7%), while it is less concentrated in the suburbs (Appendix Table 1). Hispanic persons of Mexican origin are more concentrated in the suburbs (58.0%) than the city, and Cubans are nearly equally split between the suburbs (50.6%) and the city.

The "Other" Hispanic origin category includes individuals of Dominican, Central American, and South American descent. No

### Origin of Hispanic/Latino Population, Monroe County, 1990



\*Includes Dominican, Central American, and South American descent.

individual country of origin in the other category is larger than the figures for Cuban, Mexican, or Puerto Rican descent.

## Racial Distribution

Racial make-up of the Hispanic/Latino population changed slightly between 1980 and 1990, as seen in the table below. In 1980, 42.3% of the Hispanic population self-reported themselves as White, while 6.6% reported their race as Black. In 1990, the proportion of Hispanics self-reporting their race as White decreased slightly to 40.1%, while the proportion of Blacks increased to 8.2%. Approximately half the population indicated they were of some race other than Black, White, Asian, or Native American in 1990; presumably some consider their Hispanic origin to be their racial identity.

### Hispanic Population in Monroe County by Race, 1990

Total	26,450	100.0%
White	10,605	40.1%
Black	2,165	8.2%
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	96	0.4%
Asian or Pacific Islander	246	0.9%
Other race	13,338	50.4%

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Table 8

### Hispanic Population in Monroe County by Race, 1980

Total	16,738	100.0%
White	7,083	42.3%
Black	1,112	6.6%
Other race	8,543	51.0%

Source: 1980 Census of Population and Housing, Table P-7

## Gender

The Hispanic/Latino population in 1990 has a slightly larger female concentration than male, which is consistent with all racial and ethnic categories (Appendix Table 2). In 1990 the Hispanic female population in Monroe County was 51.1%. In 1980, the Monroe County Hispanic community was nearly equally split between females (49.9%) and males, while in 1970, males made up more than half the Hispanic population (53.5%).

## Age

The age structure of the Hispanic population has shifted since 1970. Appendix Tables 3A-3D show that 32.6% of the Monroe

***Hispanic population age 55 and over increased from 3% to 8% of the population between 1970 and 1990.***

***The Hispanic population is disproportionately younger than the Monroe County population as a whole.***

County Puerto Rican community in 1970 was less than 10 years of age, and 78.9% was under the age of 35. At the other end of the age scale, the population age 55 and older comprised only 3.3% of the Puerto Rican community in 1970. In 1980, only 24.3% of the Monroe County Hispanic population was under the age of 10 and the portion of individuals 55 and older was 7.0%, or more than double that of 1970. By 1990 the proportion of the Hispanic population under 10 was virtually unchanged at 24.1%, while the proportion 55 and older increased to 8.5%.

While 14.6% of the Monroe County population is under 10 years of age, 24.1% of the Hispanic population is less than 10. This trend continues through the 25-34 age group, and then reverses, with the Hispanic population proportionately smaller than the total population in all age groups over 35. For example, among the total population 15.4% are aged 35 to 44, compared to 12.1% of Hispanics. At the oldest age breakdowns, 5.4% of the total population is aged 75 or older, compared to 1.7% of the Hispanic population.

## Location in City of Rochester

The Hispanic population in the City of Rochester in 1990 was concentrated in Planning Sectors 3, 8, 9, and 10 (See Appendix for Planning Sector map). Sector 9 had the highest number of Hispanics, at 6,134, while Sector 10 had a smaller number (4,645), but had the highest percentage of total sector residents (25.5%).

	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Total Hispanics</b>	<b>%</b>
Sector 9	32,827	6,134	18.7%
Sector 10	18,187	4,645	25.5%
Sector 3	29,654	2,688	9.1%
Sector 8	32,784	1,738	5.3%
Sector 6	23,082	774	3.4%
Sector 4	36,842	583	1.6%
Sector 2	18,179	538	3.0%
Sector 5	4,843	375	7.7%
Sector 7	16,963	371	2.2%
Sector 1	8,764	140	1.6%

\*Note: Details do not add to total population figures because sector estimates were based on tract-level data, not block-level data. Therefore, some sectors may be slightly over- or under-estimated.

Sectors 8, 9, and 10 are located in the North-Northeast area of the city. While the Hispanic population is somewhat concentrated in those selected Sectors, the population is represented in all sectors of the city, with more than 350 Hispanic persons residing in each of the Sectors except for Planning Sector 1.

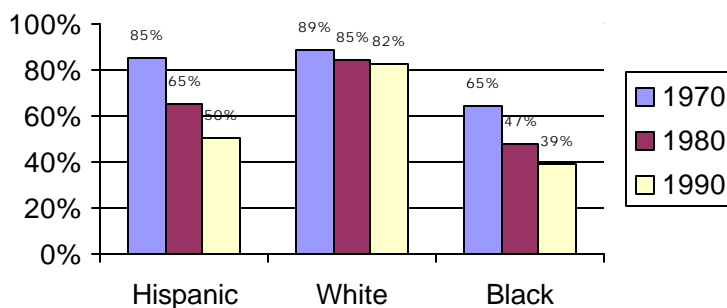
## Family Structure

***Hispanic families with a married couple dropped from 85% to 50% from 1970 to 1990.***

Family type over the last 30 years has changed substantially in the United States. All regions have experienced a decline in married couple families, and an increase in single-parent households, particularly female-headed households. The Rochester region is no exception. To examine the issue of family structure by race/ethnicity is of interest because of the substantial difference in experience among the various groups.

The chart below shows the percentage of families in Monroe County that are structured around a married couple, as a percentage of all families. The chart shows the percentages over time for white, black, and Hispanic/Latino families. While the percentage of all county families with a married couple declined from 88% to 77% between 1970 and 1990 (Tables 4A-4D), the drop in proportion of married couple families for Hispanics dropped dramatically from 85% to 50%. While the percentage of Hispanic families with a married couple were very similar to whites in 1970, by 1990 the two groups were very far apart. The black population started out with a lower percentage of married couple families in 1970, with about 65%. By 1990 this percentage had dropped to 39%. Meanwhile, female-headed households with own children under age 18 increased from 8% to 35% of all Hispanic families, compared with an increase from 5% to 11% of all families.

### Married Couple Families as a Percentage of All Families, by Race/Ethnicity



## Marital Status

Compared to the total population in Monroe County, the Hispanic population in 1990 was less likely to be married (38.5% versus 51.8%), and more likely to have never married (42.8% versus 30.9%), as shown in Appendix Tables 5A-5B. The proportion of the Hispanic population that was married in 1990 was lower than in 1980 by 8.9 percentage points, and the downward trend was more pronounced when compared to the total population (2.3 percentage points). In 1990, Hispanics in the suburbs were more likely to be married (52.8%) than their counterparts in the city (33.3%). This difference is also reflected in the total population.

## Education

***The proportion of the total Hispanic population in college rose from 0.3% in 1970 to 8.3% in 1990.***

Among the 24,731 persons of Hispanic origin estimated from the sample data,<sup>1</sup> 37.0% were in school in 1990, compared to 34.7% in 1970 (Tables 6A-6D). However, the proportion of the total

<sup>1</sup> While data on total population, race, sex, and age is tabulated from the full 100% Census survey, other information such as education, income, marital status, and other characteristics are estimated using the sample of the population who received and completed the “long form” Census survey. Therefore, while these sample numbers are weighted to reflect the full population, the figures do not exactly match the true 100% Census data.

Hispanic population in college rose between 1970 and 1990 from 19 (0.3%) to 5.7% in 1980, and 2,056 in 1990 (8.3%). In 1990, the percentage of whites enrolled in college was 8.6%, and for blacks was 6.3%.

The percentage of the Hispanic population in the suburbs who attended college in 1990 was more than twice that of those in the city (13.9% and 6.6%, respectively).

Among all Hispanics in Monroe County aged 25 and older, 3.2% had completed 4 or more years of college in 1970, compared to 10.0% in 1980 and 12.0% in 1990 (Tables 7A-7D). These figures are much lower than the overall percentage of whites who had finished four or more years of college (27.8% in 1990), but are comparable to the educational attainment of blacks (10.8% in 1990). The percentages are substantially lower in the city (about half) and are substantially higher in the suburbs. The percentage of Hispanic persons aged 25 and older in the suburbs with 4 or more years of college was approximately 30% in 1970, 1980, and 1990.

***The percentage of the Hispanic population with less than a 9th grade education has declined from 62% in 1970 to 23% in 1990. Only 7% of the total population in 1990 had less than a 9th grade education.***

More importantly, the percentage with less than a ninth grade education has declined dramatically over time from 62.0% of the Monroe County Hispanic population in 1970 to 23.1% of the population in 1990. While dramatic improvements in educational attainment have been made, the Hispanic population still lags behind the overall population. While 23.1% of the Hispanic population had less than a ninth grade education in 1990, 6.7% of the overall population had educational attainment at this level. Similarly, while 12.0% of Hispanics had a bachelor's degree or higher, 26.3% of the overall population had the same high level of education.

## Employment

The Hispanic labor force in Monroe County has grown from 2,054 in 1970 to 9,380 in 1990. The proportion of the county's Hispanic labor force that resides in the suburbs has grown from approximately 11% in 1970 to over 30% of the total Hispanic labor force in 1990 (Tables 8A-8D).

Occupations among the working Hispanic population aged 16 and older in Monroe County changed substantially between 1970 and 1990. In 1970, 45.6% of workers worked in the occupational

category “machine operators, assemblers, or inspectors” (Table 9). By 1990, only 15.9% of the working Hispanic population was in this occupational category. On the other hand, the proportion of the working Hispanic population increased from 0.3% to 7.2% in sales, from 4.7% to 11.4% in Professional specialty occupations, and from 3.4% to 7.2% in executive and managerial occupations between 1970 and 1990.

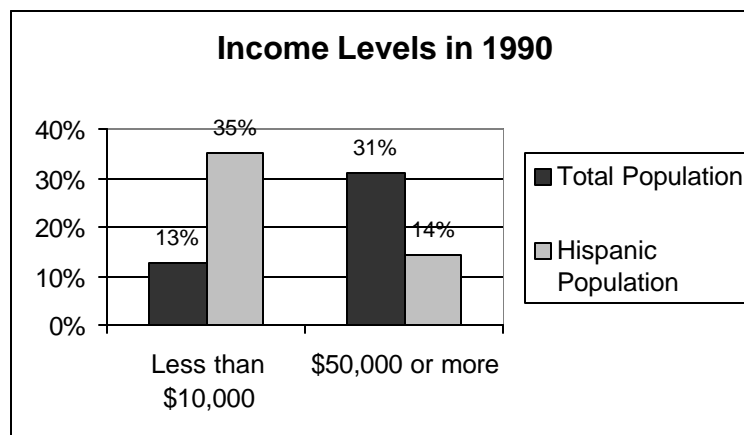
***The Monroe County Hispanic/Latino population has higher rates of unemployment than the overall population.***

Rates of unemployment among the Monroe County Hispanic population have consistently been about twice the rate of the overall population. In 1970, 6.3% of the Hispanic population was unemployed, compared to 3.1% of the overall population. In 1990, 12.5% of the Hispanic population was unemployed, compared to 5.0% of the total population. Unemployment rates are consistently higher in the city of Rochester when compared to the suburbs. In 1990, the Hispanic unemployment rate in the city was 15.2%, compared to 6.8% in the suburbs.

## Income

Household income in the Hispanic population is strikingly lower than household income in the white population, but is similar to household income among black households (Tables 10A-10D). To look at trend information for income is difficult because the dollars are not adjusted for inflation. However, in 1970 65.1% of Hispanic households made less than \$10,000 in annual income, compared to 33.5% of the total population. In 1990, 34.9% of the Hispanic population had a household income of less than \$10,000, compared to 12.6% of the total population. At the high end of the income scale, 14.1% of the Hispanic population had a household income of \$50,000 or higher in 1990, compared to 31.0% of the total population.

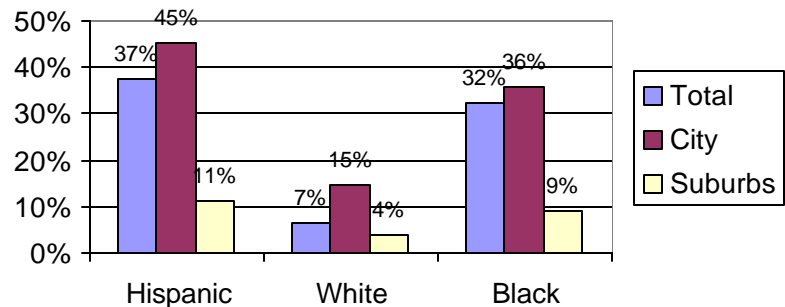
***Hispanics in Monroe County are more likely than whites or blacks to live in poverty.***



Overall per capita income in Monroe County was \$16,162 in 1990 (Table 11). Among Hispanics the average was \$7,696, among blacks it was \$9,177, and among whites, the per capita income was \$17,433. Among Hispanics in the City of Rochester, per capita income was even lower, at \$5,967.

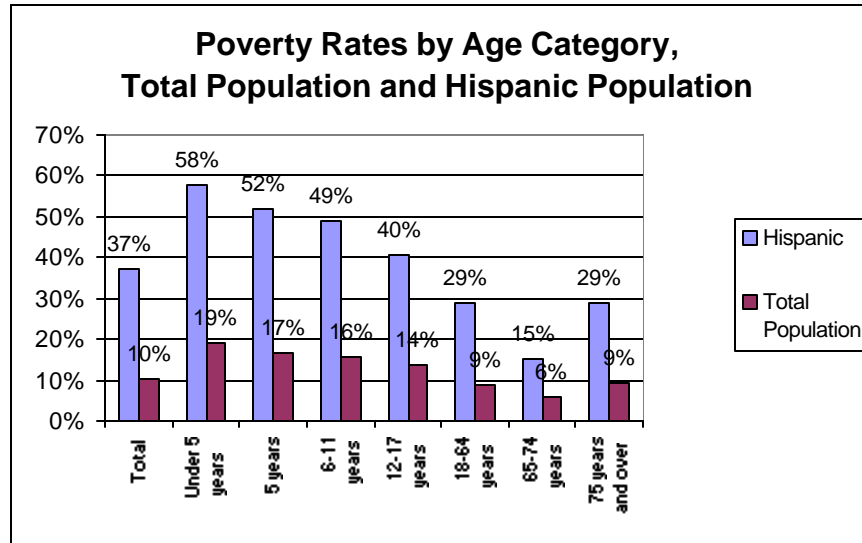
The 1990 Census data indicates that 37.4% of the Hispanic population in Monroe County was below the poverty level (Tables 12A-12D). This percentage was higher in the city of Rochester (45.2%) than in the suburbs (11.3%). This compares to an overall poverty level of 10.4% (23% in the city and 4% in the suburbs), to a rate of 6.5% among whites in the county, and a rate of 32.4% among blacks.

**Percent of Monroe County Population in Poverty, by Race/Ethnicity and Location, 1989**



Hispanics had higher poverty rates at every age category compared to the total population. While 19% of children under 5 years of age lived in poverty among the total population in 1990, the rate was 58% among the Hispanic/Latino population.



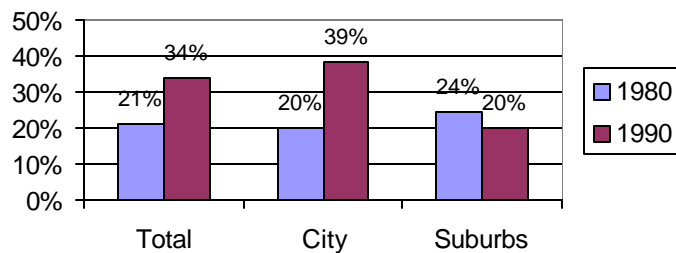


## Language

***Hispanics were less likely in 1990 to speak English well as compared to 1980.***

Among all Hispanics in Monroe County aged 5 and older, more than three-quarters in both 1980 and 1990 indicated that they speak a language other than English (they may or may not speak English also) (Table 13). However, the proportion that indicated that they “do not speak English very well” increased from 21% in 1980 to 34% in 1990. This increase was concentrated in the city; the proportion in the suburbs decreased over the ten-year period from 24% to 20%. In 1990, 3.7% of the total population indicated that they do not speak English very well.

**Percentage of Hispanic/Latino Population in Monroe County that Does "Not Speak English Very Well," 1980-1990**



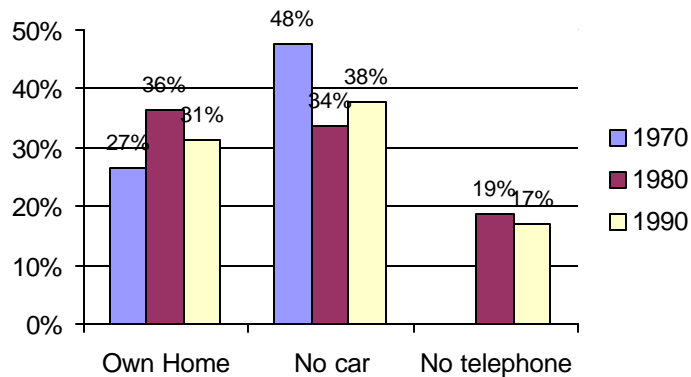
## Housing Characteristics

***Hispanic heads of household were less likely to own their homes (31.2% of housing units) compared to heads of households in all housing units (65.1%)***

In 1990, 31.2% of housing units occupied by persons with an Hispanic head of household were owner-occupied, while the remainder were rented. This compares to 65.1% in the total Monroe County population. In the suburbs, 60% of Hispanic households were owner-occupied, compared to 23% in the city of Rochester. Among the total population, 76.1% of housing units in the suburbs are owner occupied, compared to 44.0% in the city.

Among all Hispanic occupied housing units, 37.9% had no car available in 1990, compared to 33.6% in 1980 and 47.5% in 1970. The percentage of households in the total population with no car was much lower, at 12.7% in 1990. The percentage of Hispanic homes in the city with no car were much higher than those in the suburbs (47% versus 5%) (Tables 14A-B).

**Housing Characteristics of Hispanic Population in Monroe County**



***Hispanic housing units are three times as likely to lack access to a vehicle (38%) compared to the total population (13%).***

The percentage of homes with an Hispanic origin head of household that did not have a telephone decreased from 18.8% in 1980 to 16.9% in 1990. The percentages were somewhat higher in the city, and only 1.3% in the suburbs in 1990.

## CONCLUSION

The Hispanic/Latino population is a fast-growing segment of the population in Monroe County, and in the City of Rochester in particular. Between 1970 and 1990, the population gained ground in education and occupational status, but faces increasing challenges including single-parent households, high poverty rates, and low home-ownership rates. The 2000 Census data will provide a better picture of this population, and how it has fared in the economic boom of the last decade.