

## Hispanic Fertility and the Future Population of the United States

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The fertility of the Hispanic population of the United States is substantially higher than that of the remainder of the U.S. population, and has been rising in recent years. As of 2003, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of U.S. Hispanics stood at 2.8, nearly a full child higher than the TFR of the remainder of the population (1.9). The high level of fertility among U.S. Hispanics has been largely responsible for maintaining the overall total fertility rate of the U.S. population as a whole in the neighborhood of replacement fertility. Recent data from the American Community Survey and the Current Population Survey indicate that the fertility of foreign-born Hispanics in the U.S. population is around a full child higher than that of Hispanics born in the United States.

According to all recent projections of the U.S. population produced by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Hispanic share of the population is anticipated to rise substantially. How much and in what manner can be debated. If U.S. Hispanic fertility were to remain at its current level the Hispanic share of the population would rise from 13 percent in 2000 to over a quarter in 2050, and the level of US fertility as a whole would increase above replacement. However, a rise in the share of the Hispanic population born in the U.S. is foreseeable, barring spectacular increases in levels of Hispanic immigration. If Hispanic fertility declines as the native-born share of the U.S. Hispanic population increases, the Hispanic share of the U.S. population would still exhibit a considerable rise, but to a lesser extent, and the overall fertility level of the population would decline below replacement.

The proposed analysis shall examine the impact of Hispanic fertility on the future growth and composition of the U.S. population through projections under alternative fertility assumptions. In particular, the constant Hispanic TFR scenario shall be contrasted with the scenario in which fertility declines by one child in a generation, and an intermediate scenario in which long-term convergence to the level of the remainder of the population takes place. A final scenario, in which both Hispanic fertility and that of other race/ethnic segments of the US population drops immediately to replacement shall be used to determine what increase in the Hispanic contingent of the US population is virtually inevitable, as the result of population momentum.