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Georgia's Growing Hispanic Population

The Hispanic population in the state of Georgia has grown rapidly in the last 15 years. The 2000 Census reports that there were 435,000 Hispanics in the state as of 2000. Many Hispanics moved to the state in search of good economic opportunities. In addition, it is estimated that about half of the total number of Hispanics in the state are undocumented immigrants. A forthcoming FRC report "The Demographics of Georgia IV: Hispanic Immigration Economic Policy Issues," by Felix Rioja, Neven Valev, and Amanda Wilsker analyzes the economic implications of the increasing Hispanic population, both legal and undocumented. Some of their findings are reported here.

Table 1 presents data that shows the increase in Hispanic population in Georgia and an estimate of the number of undocumented Hispanic immigrants in Georgia. The table also presents some statistics regarding the accompanying increase in economic importance of this demographic group in Georgia. The purchasing power of the Hispanic community increased by 661 percent from 1990 to 2003, the third highest growth in the country for this demographic group, and there has been an increase in top ranking businesses owned by Hispanics.

Table 1. Hispanic Population in Georgia and Business Characteristics

Hispanic population in Georgia (2000 census)	435,000
Percent increase in Georgia's Hispanic population 1990-2000	312%
Percent increase in Georgia's Hispanic population 2000-2002	19%
Estimate of the number of undocumented immigrants in Georgia	200,000-250,000
Percent increase in Georgia's Hispanic purchasing power 1990-2003	661%
Number of Georgia businesses in the top 500 National Hispanic Businesses	11
Number of Atlanta's top 25 minority-owned firms owned by Hispanics	10

Source: Rioja, Valev, and Wilsker, FRC Report #122.

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