



*Teaching
Genealogists AI™*
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Census Records for Puerto Rican Genealogy

Worksheet 5 — 1887 Statistical Census Analysis

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Organization: Puerto Rican Genealogy Group

Website: <https://puertoricangenealogy.org>

Purpose

The 1887 Spanish census does not list individual names. But its statistical data about your ancestor's community answers questions that no name-level record can. This worksheet guides you through a structured analysis of that data for a specific municipio.

Before you begin, open the 1887 census PDF:
https://censo.estadisticas.pr/sites/default/files/Decenal/INE_CensodePoblacionyVivienda_1887.pdf

Part 1 — Researcher and Source Information

Field	Entry
Researcher Name	
Date of Research	
Municipio Being Analyzed	
Ancestor Connected to This Municipio	
Relationship to Your Research	
Full Citation (PDF URL + access date)	

Part 2 — Population Data

Quick Reference: 1887 Puerto Rico Population Size Guide

Puerto Rico had 71 municipios in 1887. Island-wide total: 798,565 (average ~11,000 per municipio).

Population Range	Community Type	What It Means for Your Research
30,000+	Major urban center (San Juan, Ponce)	More robust records; higher name variation; migrants from many origins
15,000–30,000	Regional city (Mayagüez, Arecibo)	Good civil records; commercial economy
7,000–15,000	Established town	Typical municipal records; mixed economy
3,000–7,000	Small agricultural community (Rincón, Añasco)	Tight-knit; FAN club very reliable; coffee economy
Under 3,000	Very small / rural hamlet	Records may be incomplete; dense kinship networks

Barrio Pueblo = urban core of any municipio. All other barrios are rural. Note whether your ancestor lived in Barrio Pueblo or an outlying rural barrio — this affects record quality and community density.

Locate the statistics for your ancestor's municipio in the PDF.

Question	Data Found	Research Notes
Total population of municipio (1887)		
Total population of municipio (1877)		
Population change 1877–1887 (+ or –)		
Population of barrio (if listed)		
What does this size suggest about record survival?		
Does growth or decline suggest migration pressure?		

Part 3 — Racial and Social Composition

Category	Number / Percentage	Notes / Interpretation
White (<i>blanco</i>) population		
Colored / mixed (<i>pardo, mulato, negro</i>)		
Comparison to island average (59.5% white / 40.5% colored)		
Does this align with family oral history?		
What does the racial composition suggest about social dynamics?		

Part 4 — Occupation and Economic Conditions

Question	Data Found	Interpretation
Primary occupation(s) listed for this municipio		
Agricultural economy type (coffee / sugar / tobacco / mixed)		
Does this match what you expect for your ancestor's livelihood?		
Property or wealth indicators noted		
What does the economic profile suggest about		

Question	Data Found	Interpretation
your ancestor's social position?		

Part 5 — Literacy

Question	Data Found	Interpretation
Literacy rate for this municipio		
Island-wide literacy rate (for comparison)		
Is this municipio above or below average?		
What might unusual literacy levels suggest about your ancestor's family?		

Part 6 — Migration Signals

Question	Observation	Next Research Step
Any age-group imbalances suggesting out-migration?		
Population change that might explain family relocation?		
Does economic or agricultural profile suggest instability?		

Part 7 — Research Connections

Use your findings to plan next steps.

Insight from 1887 Data	How It Connects to Your Research	Next Record to Search

Part 8 — Citation

Record the full citation for this source in Evidence Explained style:

Instituto Nacional de Estadística (Spain). *Censo de la Población de España: Puerto Rico, 1887*. [Full PDF title and URL]. Accessed [date].

Your citation:

Additional Resources

- **1887 Census Portal Page:** <https://censo.estadisticas.pr/censo-decenal/Puerto-Rico/1887>
 - **Historical Population Trajectories:** <https://www.estadisticas.pr.gov/productos/la-poblacion-de-puerto-rico-y-su-trayectoria-historica>
 - **Example Name-Level Wealth Census (Lares, 1886–1887):** https://genealogiapr.com/wpfd_file/lares-censo-de-riqueza-1886-1887/
 - **Overview of Puerto Rico 1800s Census Records:** <https://genealogianuestra.com/2015/08/puerto-rico-census-from-the-1800s/>
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