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The Mauricio Gastón Institute
for Latino Community Development
and Public Policy

Latinos in Chicopee | Massachusetts

by Daniel W. Vasquez, Research Associate

The Mauricio Gastón Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston conducts research on and for the Latino population. A goal is to generate the kind of information and analysis necessary to develop sound public policy, and to improve Latino participation in the policy making process. In an effort to present vital information about Latinos to diverse audiences, the Gastón Institute has produced a series of basic demographic profiles for the states and selected cities of New England, based on the United States Census 2000.

Census 2000 data include changes in the way people were counted. The most significant change is to allow persons to select more than one race, creating a new multiracial category of “two or more races,” but meaning people may not be included in the race with which they most identify. There was, however, no way to choose more than one ethnicity; one must choose either Latino or not. Throughout this profile, numbers reflect Latinos of all races, or non-Latinos by race, with persons of two or more races counted separately. All categorizations are based solely on self-identification. All of this complicates comparisons between 1990 and 2000 data. However, the concepts are similar enough to make trends and patterns clear.

In Chicopee, the general population changes from 1990 to 2000 were similar to national and state trends. The population of people of color — African Americans, Asians, Latinos, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders — grew at a higher rate than did the population of non-Hispanic Whites, which actually shrank (see table 1). The total population of Chicopee decreased by 3.5%, but its composition changed substantially. Latinos had a larger numerical growth than any other group, increasing by 2,740 or 133.7%. Latinos now represent 8.8% of the population, an increase of 5.1 percentage points and the largest gain of any group. Chicopee has the 17th largest population of Latinos in Massachusetts and the 33rd largest in the New England states. As a percentage of the total population, the Latino population in Chicopee ranks 17th in the state.

Table 1

Chicopee - Growth by Ethnicity							
	2000		1990		Growth		Change in Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Hispanic or Latino	4,790	8.8	2,050	3.6	2,740	133.7	5.1
White	47,478	86.9	53,193	93.9	-5,715	-10.7	-7.1
Black or African American	1,078	2.0	963	1.7	115	11.9	0.3
American Indian and Alaska Native	69	0.1	67	0.1	2	3.0	0.0
Asian ^a	473	0.9	319	0.6	201	63.0	0.4
Pacific Islander ^a	47	0.1					
Some other race	36	0.1	40	0.1	-4	-10.0	0.0
Two or more races ^b	682	1.2					
Total	54,653		56,632		-1,979	-3.5	

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

Note: Growth figures will not balance due to the new multiracial category.

^a 'Asian and Pacific Islander' was split for the 2000 census. Growth and changes reflect combined total.

^b There was no equivalent category in the 1990 census.

Table 2

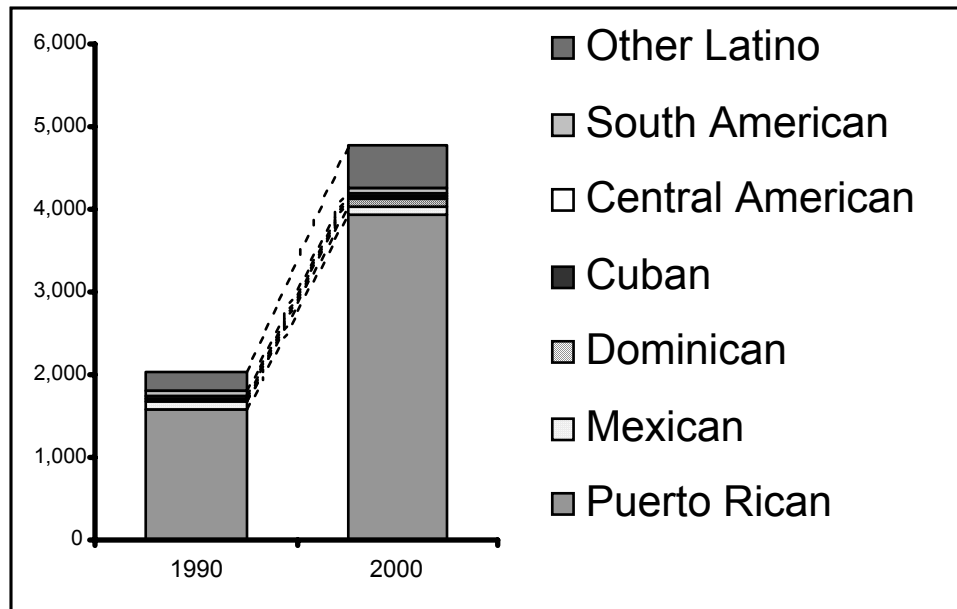
Chicopee - National Origin of Latinos						
	2000		1990 ^a		Growth	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	4,790		2,025		2,765	136.5
Mexican	93	1.9	103	5.1	-10	-9.7
Puerto Rican	3,932	82.1	1,565	77.3	2,367	151.2
Cuban	32	0.7	19	0.9	13	68.4
Dominican Republic	97	2.0	24	1.2	73	304.2
Other Central American	26	0.5	21	1.0	5	23.8
Other South American	79	1.6	79	3.9	0	0.0
Other Hispanic or Latino	531	11.1	214	10.6	317	148.1

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(b).

^a 1990 figures for nationality are from sample data only and differ from population counts.¹

Figure 1

Chicopee - Growth and Change of the Latino Population



Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

All Latino national-origin groups grew significantly between 1990¹ and 2000. The largest group in Chicopee is Puerto Rican, at 82.1%, followed by “Other” Latinos and Dominicans. Behind Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, “Other” Latinos were the fastest-growing population, growing by 148.1%, a trend seen across the U.S. (see table 2 and figure 1). A person is counted as “Other” if they write in “Spanish” or give an answer that can’t be assigned to a particular nationality (such as “Latino”), or if they identify more than one origin, or leave the answer blank. Future scholarly studies may better describe the composition of this category. The detailed breakdown of Central and South Americans is available at the Census Bureau’s American Fact Finder service, online at: factfinder.census.gov.

Table 3

Chicopee - Households by Tenure							
Latino Headed Households	2000		1990		Growth		Change in Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total Households	1,403		589		814	138.2	
Owners	219	15.6	136	23.1	83	61.0	-7.5
Renters	1,184	84.4	453	76.9	731	161.4	

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

Latino-headed households are much more likely to rent than to own their home, 84.4% versus 15.6%, and there has been a 7.5% decrease in home ownership since 1990 (see table 3). This is much lower than state average of 61.7%. Although there has been a small growth in the proportion of non-family households, it is still true that most Latinos, 75.8%, live in family households (see table 4). Married couples with children represent 16.4% of Latino-headed households, less than the Massachusetts average of 23.3%. Families made up of a single female with children account for 41.4% of Latino

households, which is substantially greater than the state average of 7.5%, and an increase from its 1990 level.

Table 4

Chicopee - Family Structure						
	2000		1990		Growth Percent	Change in Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Latino Headed Households						
Families:	1,063	75.8	467	79.3	127.6	-3.5
with related children ^a :						
Married Couple, with children	230	16.4	144	24.4	59.7	-8.1
Female Head, with children	581	41.4	205	34.8	183.4	6.6
Male Head, with children	62	4.4	12	2.0	416.7	2.4
without related children:						
Married Couple, no children	121	8.6	73	12.4	65.8	-3.8
Single, no children	69	4.9	33	5.6	109.1	-0.7
Non-Family Household	340	24.2	122	20.7	178.7	3.5
Total Households	1,403		589		138.2	

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

^a Own or related children under 18 only.

Data Sources:

All available at American Fact Finder [online service]: <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

U.S. Census Bureau:

2000: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1) 100% Data.

1990(a): 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1 (STF1) 100% Data.

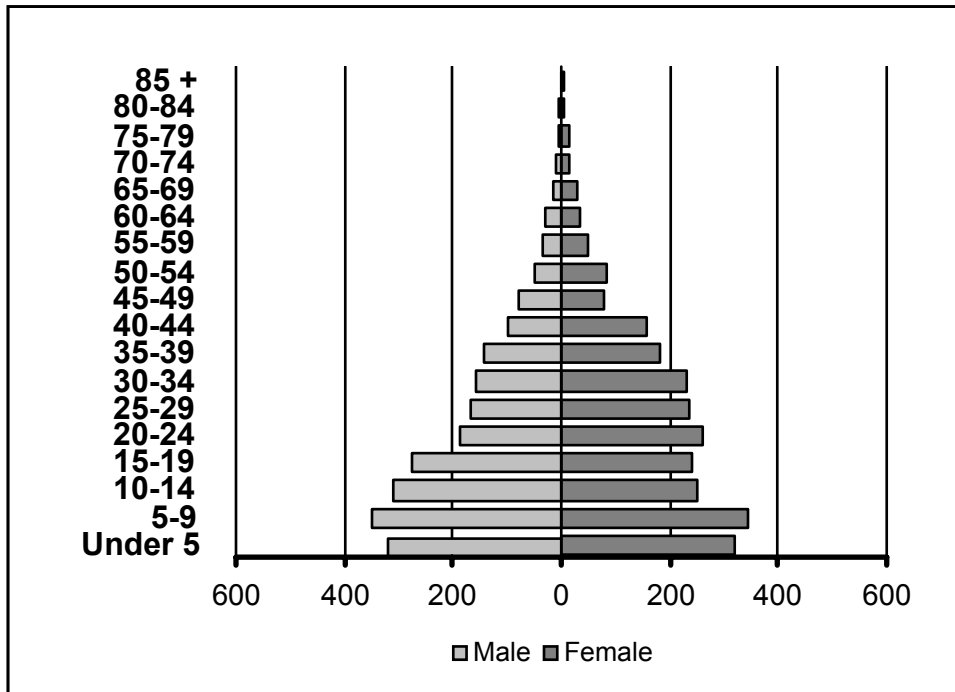
1990(b): 1990 Census Summary Tape File 3 (STF3) Sample Data.

1992: 1990 Census of Population: General Population Characteristics. Washington DC: GPO.

Notes:

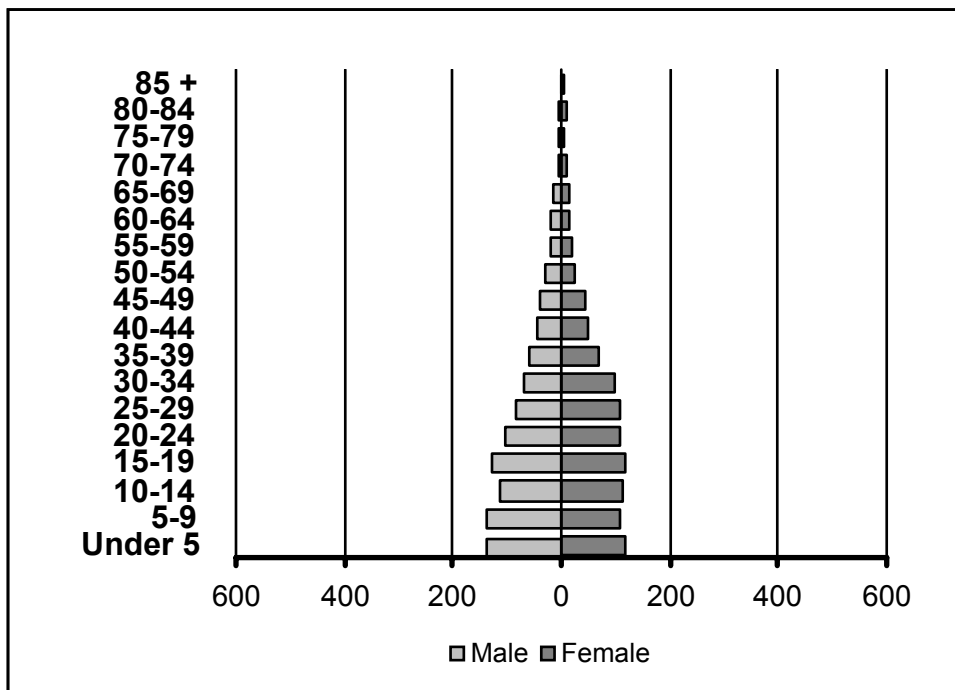
¹ Sample data from 1990 are based on the “Long Form” files. About one person or household in six receives the Long Form Census. The estimates from there do not match the enumerations in the 100% or “Short Form” data. For example there is a 4.5% difference in the total number of Latinos in Massachusetts. There are sources of error in any census or survey, however the estimates here are accurate enough to note trends and patterns.

Figure 2
Chicopee - Age Profile 2000



Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

Figure 3
Chicopee - Age Profile 1990



Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

The age composition of Latinos in Chicopee has changed. There has been an increase among all age groups, but especially among those in the middle years. Even though there are many more children, the overall Latino population is maturing (see figures 2 and 3).

While the Latino population in Chicopee and in the rest of the country remains relatively young, it is even younger than it was in 1990. In 2000, 50.6% of Latinos were younger than 20, just slightly higher than the 47.8% in 1990 (see table 5). The Latino median age of 19.7 is much younger than the overall Massachusetts median age of 36.5. Women still tend to be older than men, but the gap closed during the 1990s. In addition to becoming relatively older, both Latinos and Latinas became less concentrated in the 20-29 age group (see tables 6 and 7).

Table 5

Chicopee - Latinos by Age					
	2000		1990		Growth Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 10 years	1,341	28.0	506	24.7	165.0
10-19	1,083	22.6	473	23.1	129.0
20-29	852	17.8	409	20.0	108.3
30-39	711	14.8	294	14.3	141.8
40-49	414	8.6	175	8.5	136.6
50-59	216	4.5	90	4.4	140.0
60-69	110	2.3	59	2.9	86.4
70 and over	63	1.3	44	2.1	43.2
Total	4,790		2,050		133.7
Median Age	19.7		21.2		

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

Table 6

Chicopee - Latino Males by Age					
	2000		1990		Growth Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 10 years	673	30.0	280	27.4	140.4
10-19	588	26.2	245	24.0	140.0
20-29	353	15.8	191	18.7	84.8
30-39	299	13.3	127	12.4	135.4
40-49	177	7.9	83	8.1	113.3
50-59	84	3.7	46	4.5	82.6
60-69	44	2.0	33	3.2	33.3
70 and over	23	1.0	17	1.7	35.3
Total	2,241		1,022		119.3
Median Age	17.2		19.5		

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

Table 7

Chicopee - Latina Females by Age			
	2000	1990	Growth

	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Under 10 years	668	26.2	226	22.0	195.6
10-19	495	19.4	228	22.2	117.1
20-29	499	19.6	218	21.2	128.9
30-39	412	16.2	167	16.2	146.7
40-49	237	9.3	92	8.9	157.6
50-59	132	5.2	44	4.3	200.0
60-69	66	2.6	26	2.5	153.8
70 and over	40	1.6	27	2.6	48.1
Total	2,549		1,028		148.0
Median Age	22.4		23.0		

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.