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Latinos in Cambridge, Massachusetts

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The Mauricio Gastón Institute
for Latino Community Development
and Public Policy

Latinos in Cambridge | 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 Cambridge, 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 Cambridge increased by 5.8%, but its composition changed substantially. Behind Asians, Latinos had a larger numerical growth than any other group, increasing by 949 or 14.6%, although Asians and “some other race” had a higher percent increase. Latinos now represent 7.4% of the population, an increase of 0.6 percentage points. Cambridge has the 11th largest population of Latinos in Massachusetts and the 24th largest in the New England states. As a percentage of the total population, the Latino population in Cambridge ranks 21st in the state.

Table 1

Cambridge - Growth by Ethnicity								
	2000		1990		Growth		Change in Percent	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Hispanic or Latino	7,455	7.4	6,506	6.8	949	14.6	0.6	
White	65,425	64.6	68,550	71.6	-3,125	-4.6	-7.0	
Black or African American	11,627	11.5	12,178	12.7	-551	-4.5	-1.2	
American Indian and Alaska Native	213	0.2	237	0.2	-24	-10.1	0.0	
Asian ^a	11,984	11.8	7,981	8.3	4,074	51.0	3.6	
Pacific Islander ^a	71	0.1						
Some other race	713	0.7	350	0.4	363	103.7	0.3	
Two or more races ^b	3,867	3.8						
Total	101,355		95,802		5,553	5.8		

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.

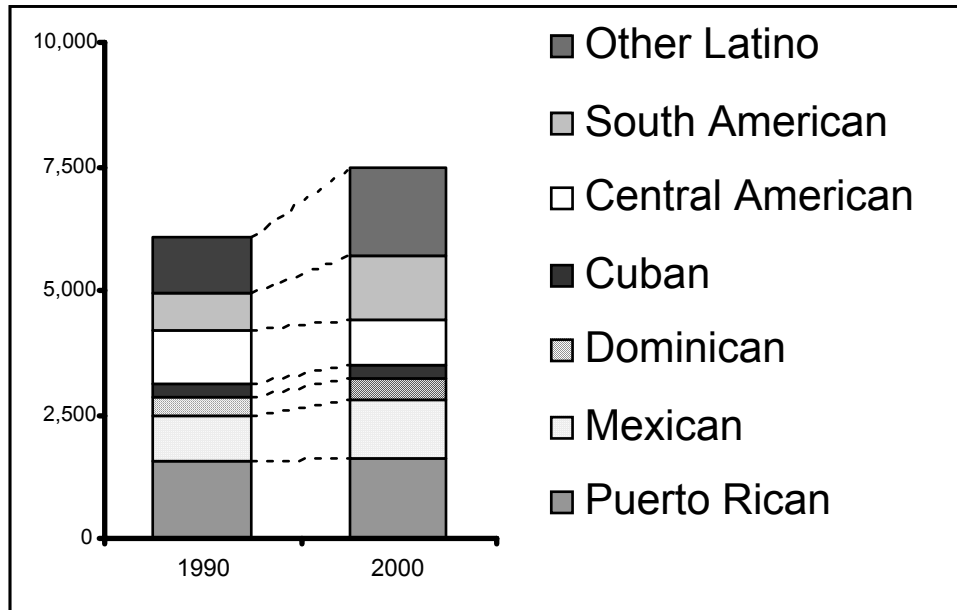
Table 2

Cambridge - National Origin of Latinos						
	2000		1990 ^a		Growth	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	7,455		6,093		1,362	22.4
Mexican	1,175	15.8	904	14.8	271	30.0
Puerto Rican	1,637	22.0	1,554	25.5	83	5.3
Cuban	270	3.6	268	4.4	2	0.7
Dominican Republic	424	5.7	397	6.5	27	6.8
Salvadoran	567	7.6	699	11.5	-132	-18.9
Other Central American	361	4.8	385	6.3	-24	-6.2
Colombian	378	5.1	215	3.5	163	75.8
Other South American	873	11.7	511	8.4	362	70.8
Other Hispanic or Latino	1,770	23.7	1,160	19.0	610	52.6

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

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

Figure 1
Cambridge - 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 Cambridge is "Other" Latino, at 23.7%, followed by Puerto Ricans and Mexicans. Behind Colombians and "Other" South Americans, "Other" Latinos were the fastest-growing population, growing by 52.6%, 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

Cambridge - Households by Tenure							
Latino Headed Households	2000		1990		Growth		Change in Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total Households	2,221		1,884		337	17.9	
Owners	305	13.7	257	13.6	48	18.7	0.1
Renters	1,916	86.3	1,627	86.4	289	17.8	

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

Latino-headed households are much more likely to rent than to own their home, 86.3% versus 13.7%, although there has been a 0.1% increase in home ownership since 1990 (see table 3). Still, this is much lower than the 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, 57.1%, live in family households (see table 4). Married couples with children represent 18.3% of Latino-headed households, slightly less than the Massachusetts average of 23.3%. Families made up of a single female with children account for 16.1% of Latino households, which is greater than the state average of 7.5%, but less than it was in 1990.

Table 4

Cambridge - Family Structure						
Latino Headed Households	2000		1990		Growth Percent	Change in Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Families:	1,268	57.1	1,228	65.2	3.3	-8.1
with related children ^a :						
Married Couple, with children	407	18.3	426	22.6	-4.5	-4.3
Female Head, with children	358	16.1	337	17.9	6.2	-1.8
Male Head, with children	43	1.9	57	3.0	-24.6	-1.1
without related children:						
Married Couple, no children	311	14.0	290	15.4	7.2	-1.4
Single, no children	149	6.7	118	6.3	26.3	0.4
Non-Family Household	953	42.9	656	34.8	45.3	8.1
Total Households	2,221		1,884		17.9	

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.

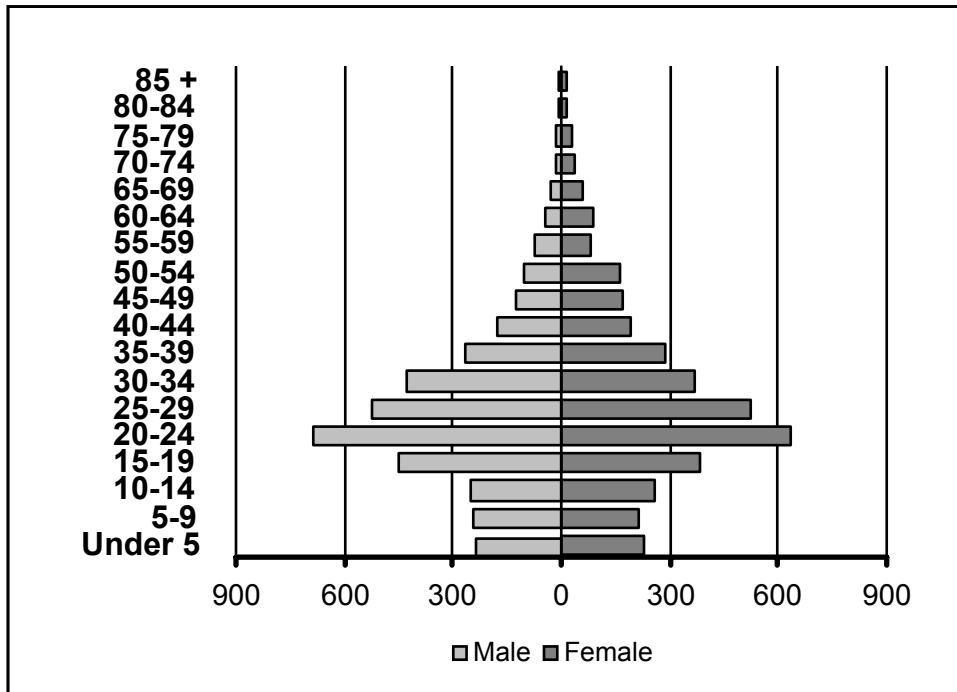
1990(b): 1990 Census Summary Tape File 3 (STF3) Sample Data.

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

Notes:

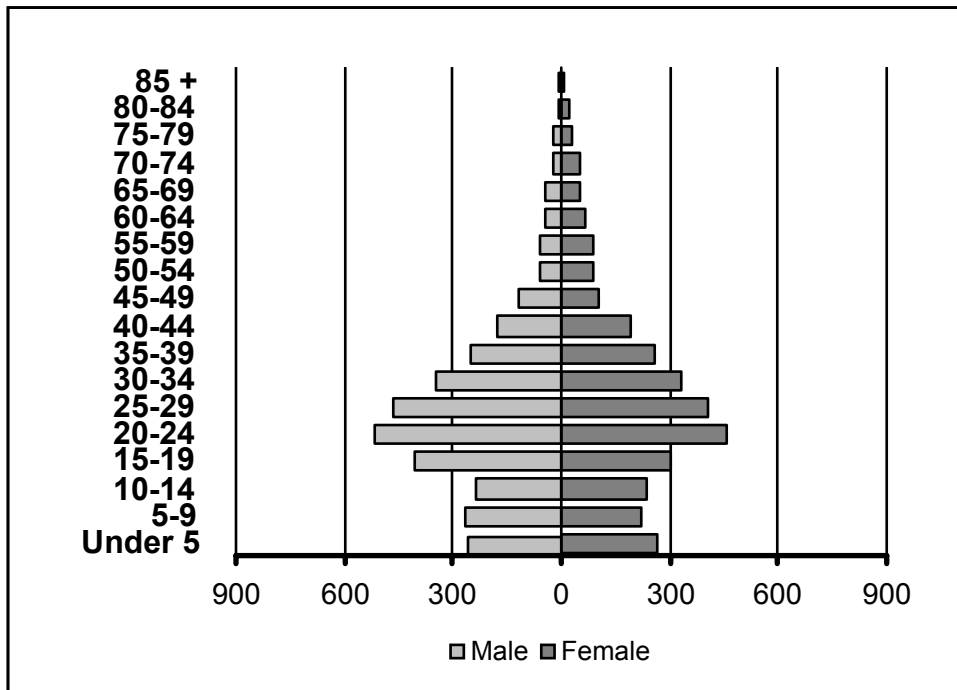
¹ Sample data from 1990 are based on the “Long Form” files. About one person or household in six receives the Long Form Census. The estimates from there do not match the enumerations in the 100% or “Short Form” data. For example there is a 4.5% difference in the total number of Latinos in Massachusetts.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

Figure 2
Cambridge - Age Profile 2000



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

Figure 3
Cambridge - Age Profile 1990



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

The age composition of Latinos in Cambridge 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 Cambridge and in the rest of the country remains relatively young, it is older than it was in 1990. In 2000, 30.6% of Latinos were younger than 20, just slightly fewer than the 33.9% in 1990 (see table 5). The Latino median age of 25.6 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

Cambridge - Latinos by Age					
	2000		1990		Growth
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Under 10 years	938	12.6	1,017	15.6	-7.8
10-19	1,340	18.0	1,189	18.3	12.7
20-29	2,368	31.8	1,853	28.5	27.8
30-39	1,356	18.2	1,190	18.3	13.9
40-49	669	9.0	589	9.1	13.6
50-59	424	5.7	288	4.4	47.2
60-69	224	3.0	208	3.2	7.7
70 and over	136	1.8	172	2.6	-20.9
Total	7,455		6,506		14.6
Median Age	25.6		25.4		

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

Table 6

Cambridge - Latino Males by Age					
	2000		1990		Growth
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Under 10 years	491	13.3	530	16.0	-7.4
10-19	701	19.0	646	19.5	8.5
20-29	1,210	32.7	984	29.7	23.0
30-39	693	18.7	601	18.1	15.3
40-49	303	8.2	294	8.9	3.1
50-59	177	4.8	115	3.5	53.9
60-69	78	2.1	86	2.6	-9.3
70 and over	44	1.2	57	1.7	-22.8
Total	3,697		3,313		11.6
Median Age	24.8		24.6		

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

Table 7

Cambridge - Latina Females by Age					
	2000		1990		Growth Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 10 years	447	11.9	487	15.3	-8.2
10-19	639	17.0	543	17.0	17.7
20-29	1,158	30.8	869	27.2	33.3
30-39	663	17.6	589	18.4	12.6
40-49	366	9.7	295	9.2	24.1
50-59	247	6.6	173	5.4	42.8
60-69	146	3.9	122	3.8	19.7
70 and over	92	2.4	115	3.6	-20.0
Total	3,758		3,193		17.7
Median Age	26.5		26.4		

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