

University of Massachusetts Boston

ScholarWorks at UMass Boston

Gastón Institute Publications

Gastón Institute for Latino Community
Development and Public Policy Publications

11-1998

Latinos in Massachusetts: An Update

Andrés Torres

Lisa Chavez

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs



Part of the [Chicana/o Studies Commons](#), [Demography, Population, and Ecology Commons](#), and the [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Torres, Andrés and Chavez, Lisa, "Latinos in Massachusetts: An Update" (1998). *Gastón Institute Publications*. 104.

https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/104

This Research Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy Publications at ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gastón Institute Publications by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. For more information, please contact scholarworks@umb.edu.



The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy

Latinos in Massachusetts: *An Update*

By Andrés Torres and Lisa Chavez

*A Report Prepared for
The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino
Community Development and Public Policy
University of Massachusetts Boston
November 1998*

Table of Contents

List of Tables
Introduction
Population: 1995 and Projected
Age and Schooling
Occupation and Employment
Income and Poverty
Notes for a Dialogue
End Notes

Copyright © 1998, The Mauricio Gastón
Institute for Latino Community
Development and Public Policy.

All rights reserved. No part of this
material may be reproduced in any form
without permission in writing from the
publisher, except by a reviewer who
wishes to quote brief passages in a
magazine or newspaper.

The Mauricio Gastón Institute,
University of Massachusetts Boston, 100
Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA
02125-3393, USA

Series Editor, Leslie Bowen. Design by
James Sterling

Table of Contents

Title Page

Introduction

Population: 1995 and Projected

Age and Schooling

Occupation and Employment

Income and Poverty

Notes for a Dialogue

End Notes

About the Authors

List of Tables

Table 1 Massachusetts Population by Race and Ethnicity for 1990 and 1995

Table 2 Comparison of Latino Population in the United States and Massachusetts: 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2010

Table 3 Latinos as a Percent of Total Population for 1990 and 1995 by Selected Cities

Table 4a Percent of Total Population That Is Minority for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts

Table 4b Percent of Total Population That Is Latino for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts

Table 4c Percent of Total Population That Is Black for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts

Table 4d Percent of Total Population That Is Asian/American Indian for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts

Table 5a Median Age by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

Table 5b Latino Population by Age for 1990 and 1995

Table 6 Total School Enrollment (K-12) by Race and Ethnicity for 1990 and 1995

Table 7 Latinos as a Percent of Total School Enrollment for 1990 and 1995 by Selected Cities

Table 8 Years of School Completed by Race and Ethnicity for Age 25 and over, 1995

Table 9 Years of School Completed by Race and Ethnicity for Age 16-24, 1995

Table 10 Occupation by Race and Ethnicity for Employed Persons Age 16-64, 1995

Table 11 Percent Employed, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity for Age 16-64

Table 12 Percent Employed, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity for Age 16-64 in Poverty, 1995

Table 13 Families and Children in Poverty by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

Table 14 Per Capita Income by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

Latinos in Massachusetts: A Mid-decade Profile

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Introduction

This research report updates the socioeconomic picture of Latinos in Massachusetts. According to estimates contained in this report, the Latino population in Massachusetts experienced vigorous growth during the first half of the 1990s. Not since the 1990 census has there been a broad profile of this rapidly growing segment of the state's population.¹ This information should assist the general public in understanding some of the basic issues affecting the Hispanic community. It should also be useful to the many individuals and organizations who are concerned about the future of this community and responsible for informed decision-making: elected officials, policy makers, researchers, community-based programs, advocacy groups, community and labor organizers, the business sector, and the media.

The areas covered include statistics on population, age, education, employment, income, and poverty. Additional data on housing, health, criminal justice, social welfare, and other aspects of the Latino experience will be available in future reports.²

Table 1: Latino Population by Race and Ethnicity

From 1990 to 1995, the Latino community increased from 287,561 to 344,068, a 19.7% rate of expansion. By mid-decade, Hispanics constituted 5.6% of the total population of Massachusetts.

This trend paralleled similar expansion among other minority groups. The number of Blacks grew from 279,156 to 340,852. The representation of Asian Americans and Native Americans, as a combined group, also increased, from 151,726 to 182,481. The growth rates for the two groups were 22.1% and 20.3%.³

Viewed from the perspective of population share, the white population is still the largest group, at 85.9%. Latinos and Blacks are virtually identical in their proportion of the total population, at 5.6% each. Asians and Native Americans combined make up 3% of the total.

	1990		1995		Percent Change April–June 1995
	Number of Persons	Percent of Population	Number of Persons	Percent of Population	
Non-Latino White	5,297,982	88.1	5,270,301	85.9	-0.5
Non-Latino Black	279,156	4.6	340,852	5.6	22.1
Asian and American Indian	151,726	2.5	182,481	3.0	20.3
Latino	287,561	4.8	344,068	5.6	19.7
Total	6,016,425	100.0	6,137,702	100.0	2.0

SOURCE: Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER).

NOTE: Based on "Population Estimates for Massachusetts Cities and Towns for 1995," a set of estimates developed by MISER.

Latinos are treated as a homogeneous group throughout this study. However, readers should understand that this community is made up of a number of different national-origin groups with roots in various parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. Bound together by a common language of origin, Spanish, and by many common cultural traditions, Latinos are forging a new identity within the context of the American experience. Another important dimension of Hispanic identity is its multiracial aspect, reflecting African, European, and indigenous (Native American) heritage.⁴

The 1990 census is the most recent source of reliable data on the breakdown by country of origin of the Hispanic population in Massachusetts. In 1990, the largest Latino-origin group were Puerto Ricans, who accounted for 53% of the Hispanic population of the state. Dominicans were estimated to make up 11%, Mexicans and Cubans 4% and 3%, respectively, of the total.

Despite the lack of data since 1990 on these Hispanic subpopulations, there has been considerable anecdotal information and journalistic

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 2: Comparison of Latino Population in the U.S. and Massachusetts

Given existing demographic patterns (age structure, family size, and immigration rates) and current rates of growth, the Hispanic population is expected to increase from 344,068 in 1995 to 566,731 in 2010, and represent 8.4% of the estimated statewide population.

reporting suggesting a gradual shift in composition of the overall Hispanic population. In particular, Dominicans, Mexicans, and various Central American groups appear to have been increasing their presence in Massachusetts since the early 1990s. The 2000 census should provide enough information to ascertain the exact country-origin distribution among Latinos in the state. Such analysis, however, is outside the scope of this work.

Table 2: Comparison of Latino Population in the United States and Massachusetts: 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2010

	United States			Massachusetts		
	Number of Persons	Number of Latinos	Percent of Population	Number of Persons	Number of Latinos	Percent of Population
1990	248,718,000	22,354,000	9.0	6,016,425	287,561	4.8
1995	262,755,000	26,994,000	10.3	6,137,702	344,068	5.6
Projected 2000 ^a	274,634,000	31,366,000	11.4	6,388,885	410,637	6.4
Projected 2010 ^a	297,716,000	41,139,000	13.8	6,720,604	566,731	8.4

Source: National population data from U.S. Bureau of the Census. Statistical Abstract of the United States: 996 (116th edition) Washington, D.C., 1996, Table 9. (Massachusetts figures from MISER).

^a National population and projection data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996 (116th edition), Washington, DC, 1996, Table 9 (Projections taken from the "middle series"). Projected figures for Massachusetts total state population are from MISER's "Projection of the Population: Massachusetts Cities and Towns: 2000 and 2010." (University of Massachusetts Amherst). Latinos were approximately 39 percent of the 1995 estimated nonwhite population and were assumed to constitute the same proportion of the projected nonwhite population in 2000 (1,034,350) and 2010 (1,427,534).

Table 3: Latinos as a Percent of Total Population for 1990 and 1995 by Selected Cities

There are nine Massachusetts cities in which Latinos make up at least 10% of the population. Almost three quarters of Hispanics statewide (73% or 251,037 persons) live in the 15 cities with the greatest Latino populations. Boston has the highest number of Latinos (71,162), but in several other cities Latinos form a greater share of the total population. Of all the cities described in the table, Lawrence has the largest proportion of Hispanics, estimated to be 48.4% in 1995. This is up from the 1990 figure of 41.6%. Six cities have seen at least a 25% rise in Latino population during the five-year period: Chelsea, Lynn, Waltham, Somerville, Worcester, and Lowell.

For comparative purposes, the tables in this report give information on other racial/ethnic groups as well as Latinos, specifically, Whites, Blacks and Asians. It is not within the domain of this study to analyze conditions affecting non-Hispanics, but this information is included as an aid in assessing Latino population patterns within a broader context. All data are based on the Current Population Survey (CPS) and other governmental sources.

Population: 1995 and Projected

From 1990 to 1995, estimates suggest the Hispanic population in Massachusetts grew by almost 20%, from 287,561 to 344,068. By mid-decade, Hispanics were estimated to be 5.6% of the state's population. Blacks and Asians were estimated to represent 5.6% and 3.0%, respectively, of the total count.⁵

Estimates predict that by the year 2010, the state's Latino population will grow to 566,731, accounting for 8.4% of the state's total population.

Hispanics find themselves concentrated in about 15 cities. Three of every four Hispanics live in these 15 urban centers.

Table 3: Latinos as a Percent of Total Population for 1990 and 1995 by Selected Cities					
	1990		1995		Percent Change April 1990–July 1995
	Number of Persons	Percent of Population	Number of Persons	Percent of Population	
Statewide	287,561	4.8	344,068	5.6	19.7
Selected Cities					
Lawrence	29,235	41.6	33,772	48.4	15.5
Chelsea	9,018	31.4	12,135	38.6	34.6
Holyoke	13,573	31.1	15,529	36.8	14.4
Springfield	26,529	16.9	30,861	19.8	16.3
Lynn	7,432	9.1	10,296	12.6	38.5
Worcester	16,258	9.6	20,955	12.2	28.9
Boston	61,963	10.8	71,162	12.2	14.8
Lowell	10,499	10.1	13,080	12.2	24.6
Framingham	5,291	8.1	6,461	10.0	22.1
Leominster	3,161	8.3	3,766	9.0	19.1
Somerville	4,784	6.3	6,368	8.0	33.1
Cambridge	6,506	6.8	7,766	7.8	19.4
Brockton	5,860	6.3	6,957	7.6	18.7
New Bedford	6,653	6.7	7,496	7.6	12.7
Waltham	3,239	5.6	4,433	7.3	36.9

SOURCE: Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 4a: Percent of Total Population That Is Minority

Between 1990 and 1995, the minority population's share of the total Massachusetts population grew from 11.9% to 14.1%. Focusing on the 10 largest urban centers presents a different picture than the situation statewide. By 1995, 31.4% of urban Massachusetts (looking at just the 10 most populous cities) was minority. In the 15 largest cities 30.4% of the population was made up of minority groups.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 4a: Percent of Total Population That Is Minority for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts						
Rank by Population in 1990	1990			1995		
	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total of Population	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total Population
Statewide	6,016,425	718,443	11.9	6,137,702.0	867,401	14.1
1 Boston	574,283	233,141	40.6	582,491	258,758	44.4
2 Worcester	169,759	28,106	16.6	171,226	36,664	21.4
3 Springfield	156,983	56,941	36.3	155,778	64,422	41.4
4 Lowell	103,436	24,049	23.2	107,531	30,270	28.2
5 New Bedford	99,922	11,678	11.7	99,088	15,523	15.7
6 Cambridge	95,802	29,988	28.2	99,772	32,398	32.5
7 Brockton	92,788	19,111	20.6	91,325	35,736	28.2
8 Fall River	92,703	3,775	4.1	92,560	5,180	5.6
9 Quincy	84,985	7,785	9.2	84,201	10,419	12.4
10 Newton	82,585	7,104	8.6	82,837	10,405	12.6
Total for Top 10 Cities	1,553,249	418,678	27	1,566,809	489,775	31.3
11 Lynn	81,245	15,920	19.6	81,932	21,449	26.2
12 Somerville	76,210	11,689	15.3	79,415	14,688	18.5
13 Lawrence	70,207	31,636	45.1	69,712	36,702	52.6
14 Framingham	64,972	9,425	14.5	64,573	11,896	18.4
15 Waltham	57,878	6,946	12.0	60,576	9,445	15.6
Total for Top 15 Cities	1,903,761	494,294	26.0	1,923,017	583,955	30.4

Table 4b-4d: Percent of Total Population That Is Latino, Black, and Asian/American Indian

According to estimates for 1995, in the top 10 most populous cities of Massachusetts, Latinos are 10.4%, Blacks are 15.3% and Asian/Native Americans are 5.5% of the total population. Looking at the top 15 most populated cities, the percentages are 11.7% for Latinos, 13.5% for Blacks, and 5.2% for Asian/Native Americans.

For all three groups, Boston is the highest ranking city in terms of absolute population. Other cities that rank in the top 10 for all three groups are: Worcester, Springfield, Cambridge, and Lynn.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 4b: Percent of Total Population That Is Latino for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts						
Rank by Population in 1990	1990			1995		
	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total of Population	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total Population
Statewide	6,016,425	287,561	4.8	6,137,702	344,068	5.6
1 Boston	574,283	61,963	10.8	582,491	71,162	12.2
2 Worcester	169,759	16,258	9.6	171,226	20,955	12.2
3 Springfield	156,983	26,529	16.9	155,778	30,861	19.8
4 Lowell	103,439	10,499	10.1	107,531	13,080	12.2
5 New Bedford	99,922	6,653	6.7	99,088	7,496	7.6
6 Cambridge	95,802	6,506	6.8	99,772	7,766	7.8
7 Brockton	92,788	5,860	6.3	91,325	6,957	7.6
8 Fall River	92,703	1,577	1.7	92,560	1,873	2.0
9 Quincy	84,985	1,197	1.4	84,201	1,343	1.6
10 Newton	82,585	1,639	2.0	82,837	1,812	2.2
Total for Top 10 Citi	1,553,249	138,681	8.9	1,566,809	163,305	10.4
11 Lynn	81,245	7,432	9.1	81,932	10,296	12.6
12 Somerville	76,210	4,784	6.3	79,415	6,398	8.0
13 Lawrence	70,207	29,235	41.6	69,712	33,772	48.4
14 Framingham	64,972	5,291	8.1	64,573	6,461	10.0
15 Waltham	57,878	3,239	5.6	60,576	4,433	7.3
Total for Top 15 Citi	1,903,761	188,662	9.9	1,923,017	224,635	11.7

Table 4c: Percent of Total Population That Is Black for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts

Rank by Population in 1990	1990			1995		
	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total of Population	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total Population
Statewide	6,016,425	287,561	4.8	6,137,702	344,068	5.6
1 Boston	574,283	139,692	24.3	582,491	151,980	26.1
2 Worcester	169,759	6,781	4	171,226	8,698	5.1
3 Springfield	156,983	28,608	18.2	155,778	31,043	19.9
4 Lowell	103,439	2,097	2	107,531	2,495	2.3
5 New Bedford	99,922	4,182	4.2	99,088	7,161	7.2
6 Cambridge	95,802	12,240	12.8	99,772	15,411	15.4
7 Brockton	92,788	11,406	12.3	91,325	16,498	18.1
8 Fall River	92,703	902	1	92,560	1,394	1.5
9 Quincy	84,985	897	1.1	84,201	1,277	1.5
10 Newton	82,585	1,644	2	82,837	4,539	5.5
Total for Top 10 Citi	1,553,249	208,449	13.4	1,566,809	240,496	15.3
11 Lynn	81,245	5,452	6.7	81,932	6,540	8
12 Somerville	76,210	3,998	5.2	79,415	4,992	6.3
13 Lawrence	70,207	1,204	1.7	69,712	1,389	2
14 Framingham	64,972	2,169	3.3	64,573	3,260	5
15 Waltham	57,878	1,622	2.8	60,576	2,592	4.3
Total for Top 15 Citi	1,903,761	222,894	11.7	1,923,017	259,269	13.5

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 4d: Percent of Total Population That Is Asian/American Indian for 1990 and 1995, by Top 15 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts

Rank by Population in 1990	1990			1995		
	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total of Population	Number of Persons	Number of Minorities	as % of Total Population
Statewide	6,016,425	151,726	2.5	6,137,702	182,481	3.0
1 Boston	574,283	31,486	5.5	582,491	35,616	6.1
2 Worcester	169,759	5,067	3.0	171,226	7,011	4.1
3 Springfield	156,983	1,804	1.1	155,778	2,518	1.6
4 Lowell	103,439	11,453	11.1	107,531	14,695	13.7
5 New Bedford	99,922	843	0.8	99,088	866	0.9
6 Cambridge	95,802	8,242	8.6	99,772	9,221	9.2
7 Brockton	92,788	1,845	2.0	91,325	2,281	2.5
8 Fall River	92,703	1,296	1.4	92,560	1,913	2.1
9 Quincy	84,985	5,691	6.7	84,201	7,799	9.3
10 Newton	82,585	3,821	4.6	82,837	4,054	4.9
Total for Top 10 Citi	1,553,249	71,548	4.6	1,566,809	85,974	5.5
11 Lynn	81,245	3,036	3.7	81,932	4,613	5.6
12 Somerville	76,210	2,907	3.8	79,415	3,328	4.2
13 Lawrence	70,207	1,197	1.7	69,712	1,541	2.2
14 Framingham	64,972	1,965	3.0	64,573	2,175	3.4
15 Waltham	57,878	2,085	3.6	60,576	2,420	4.0
Total for Top 15 Citi	1,903,761	82,738	4.3	1,923,017	100,051	5.2

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Boston has the largest number of Latinos: 71,162 persons in 1995. Lawrence is the city with the highest proportion: 48.4%. The four fastest-growing “Latino” cities—each increasing by more than 33% between 1990 and 1995—are: Lynn, Waltham, Chelsea, and Somerville. Worcester and Lowell have experienced a growth rate in Hispanic population of about 25%.

The combined population of the state’s racial/ethnic minorities grew from 11.9% in 1990 to 14.1% in 1995. Focusing on urban centers changes this picture significantly. In the top 10 most populous cities of Massachusetts, minorities are 31.3% of the total population. Broadening this comparison to count the top 15 most populous centers, the minority population amounts to 30.4% of the total.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 5a: Median Age by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

Latino	22
White	36
Black	26
Asian	29
Other	27

NOTE: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997
CPS data

Table 5a: Median Age by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

Latinos have the lowest median age, 22, of all racial/ethnic groups in the state.

Table 5b: Latino Population by Age for 1990 and 1995

	1990		1995	
	Number of Persons	Percent of Population	Number of	Percent of Population
Under 15 years old	92,886	32.3	104,918	30.5
15-24	60,765	21.1	67,003	19.5
25-34	58,887	20.5	70,412	20.5
35-44	35,403	12.3	48,304	14
45-54	18,717	6.5	26,784	7.8
55-64	10,590	3.7	13,183	3.8
65+	10,313	3.6	13,464	3.9
Total	287,561	100	344,068	100

Source: Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER).

Table 5b: Latino Population by Age for 1990 and 1995

There has been a slight decline in the proportion of the Latino population that is age 15 and under, falling from 32.3% in 1990 to 30.5% in 1995. All other age cohorts increased or remained constant.

Table 6: Total School Enrollment (K-12) by Race and Ethnicity

The number of Latino students enrolled in schools rose significantly in the first half of the 1990s, from 63,632 to 81,977. This growth rate of 28.8% was the highest of all racial/ethnic groups. Asian Americans and Blacks also increased their shares significantly, by 26% and 16.8%, respectively.

As noted earlier (in table 1), the Hispanic share of overall population in Massachusetts in 1995 was 5.6%. In comparison, Hispanics made up 9.2% of all students enrolled in the public school system statewide.

Age and Schooling

Hispanics are the youngest group, with a median age of 22. Because Hispanics are a relatively youthful population, trends in school enrollment outpace changes in other areas affecting the overall Latino population. This accounts for the strong growth in Latino student enrollment, 28.8% from 1990 to 1995. Hispanics face a severe disparity in educational attainment compared with other racial/ethnic groups. Among all individuals between the ages of 16 and 24, Hispanics have the highest percentage of nonenrollment (21.9%) and the lowest proportion of high school completion (44.8%).

Table 6: Total School Enrollment (K-12) by Race and Ethnicity for 1990 and 1995

	1990		1995		% Change in student Enrollment in K-12
	Number of Students Enrolled in K-12	% of Total Enrolled in K-12	Number of Students Enrolled in K-12	% of Total Enrolled in K-12	
Non-Latino White	661,975	81.0	701,924	78.5	6.0
Non-Latino Black	62,917	7.7	73,502	8.2	16.8
Asian & American Indian	28,722	3.5	36,199	4.1	26.0
Latino	63,632	7.8	81,977	9.2	28.8
Total	817,246	100.0	893,602	100.0	9.3

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 7: Latinos as a Percent of Total School Enrollment by Selected Cities

In 1995, the 10 cities with the highest Latino student population were Boston, Lawrence, Springfield, Worcester, Holyoke, Lowell, Lynn, Chelsea, Brockton, and New Bedford. The five cities with the highest proportion of Hispanic students were Lawrence, Holyoke, Chelsea, Springfield and Worcester. The fastest growth in Latino student enrollment between 1990 and 1995 took place in Somerville, Lynn, Chelsea, Framingham, and Lowell.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 7: Latinos as a Percent of Total School Enrollment for 1990 and 1995 by Selected Cities					
	1990		1995		% Change in student Enrollment in K-12
	Number of Students Enrolled in K-12	% of Total Enrolled in K-12	Number of Students Enrolled in K-12	% of Total Enrolled in K-12	
Statewide	63,632	7.8	81,977	9.2	28.8
Selected Cities					
Lawrence	7,430	70.9	8,408	77.1	13.2
Holyoke	4,571	62.9	5,179	69.7	13.3
Chelsea	1,933	55.0	2,817	63.6	45.7
Springfield	7,368	32.3	8,247	37.7	11.9
Worcester	4,486	21.5	5,867	25.8	30.8
Boston	12,691	21.0	15,599	24.6	22.9
Lynn	1,719	15.0	2,947	22.6	71.4
Lowell	2,326	17.6	3,245	21.8	39.5
Framingham	803	11.5	1,126	15.4	40.2
Waltham	617	11.6	806	15.3	30.6
Cambridge	1,022	13.7	1,138	14.5	11.4
Leominster	644	13.2	799	14.2	24.1
Somerville	448	7.7	831	13.9	85.5
Brockton	1,713	12.0	2,025	13.8	18.2
New Bedford	1,435	10.5	1,863	13.1	29.8

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

Occupation and Employment

Hispanics are overrepresented in the lower paying occupations. Latinas are concentrated in service jobs, Latinos in manual labor positions. There are more females in management and professional occupations than males. Compared with other racial/ethnic groups, they have the lowest proportion of management and professional positions (12.3%).

Hispanic unemployment of 5.9% is the second highest among all the groups, below the jobless rate of 7.4% for Blacks. Compared with other groups, Hispanics have the highest proportion of those not in the labor force. Research on Hispanics nationwide indicates a variety of possible reasons for this problem: youthfulness, lack of skills and education, the high proportion of single-head-of-household status, job discrimination, unfriendly government labor policy, and other factors.

Table 8: Years of School Completed by Race and Ethnicity for Age 25 and over, 1995

	Latino	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total
Male						
12th grade or less (no diploma)	41.6	13	26.8	17.2	11.2	14.6
High school graduate	38.1	31.7	25.6	12.4	14.4	31.1
Some college, no bachelor's deg	10.5	19.4	26.3	8.8	20.1	19.2
Bachelor's degree	9.8	36	21.4	61.6	54.3	35.2
Female						
12th grade or less (no diploma)	41.4	12.5	25.4	30.7	20.4	14.4
High school graduate	29.5	35.3	31.2	15.9	42.2	34.5
Some college, no bachelor's deg	17.5	20.6	23.7	10.6	9.7	20.4
Bachelor's degree	11.6	31.6	19.7	42.8	27.7	30.6
Total						
12th grade or less (no diploma)	41.5	12.8	26	23.8	15.7	14.5
High school graduate	33.6	33.5	28.6	14.1	27.9	32.9
Some college, no bachelor's deg	14.2	20	24.9	9.7	15.1	19.8
Bachelor's degree	10.7	33.7	20.5	52.5	41.4	32.8

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

Tables 8 & 9: Years of School Completed by Race and Ethnicity

Among persons age 25 and over, Latinos trail all racial/ethnic groups in years of schooling completed. They also have the lowest proportion of adults with a college degree (10.7%). Comparing Hispanics by gender, we find that females have a higher rate of college education than males: 29.1% of Latinas have had some college or have completed a college degree, compared with 20.3% of Latino males.

Among all individuals between the ages of 16 and 24, Hispanics have the highest percentage of nonenrollment (21.9%) and the lowest proportion of high school completion (44.8%).

Table 9: Years of School Completed by Race and Ethnicity for Age 16-24, 1995

	Latino	White	Black	Asian	Other
No diploma, not Enrolled	21.9	5.6	8.1	5.6	0.0
No diploma, Enrolled	33.3	29.5	32.4	22.2	30.0
High school graduate	44.8	64.9	59.5	72.2	70.0

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 10: Occupation by Race and Ethnicity for Employed Persons Age 16–64, 1995

	White	Black	Asian	Other	All Persons
Male					
Management and Professional Specialty	36.0	28.2	53.2	65.1	35.5
Technical, Sales, and Administrative Support	19.5	18.2	8.1	21.5	19.1
Service	9.8	19.5	5.0	7.9	10.3
Precision, Production, Craft, and Repair	17.8	11.1	9.6	0.0	17.4
Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers	15.5	23.0	21.7	5.5	16.3
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	1.5	0.0	2.4	0.0	1.4
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women					
Management and Professional Specialty	38.1	23.7	39.0	35.1	36.9
Technical, Sales, and Administrative Support	39.8	33.8	23.2	37.8	39.2
Service	15.0	30.5	4.3	0.0	16.0
Precision, Production, Craft, and Repair	1.8	0.0	7.6	7.7	1.8
Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers	5.1	11.9	26.0	19.4	6.1
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total					
Management and Professional Specialty	37.0	25.8	47.4	52.8	36.1
Technical, Sales, and Administrative Support	29.2	26.5	14.3	28.2	28.7
Service	24.6	12.3	25.3	4.7	13.0
Precision, Production, Craft, and Repair	10.2	5.2	8.8	3.2	10.0
Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers	10.5	17.1	23.5	11.2	11.5
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	0.8	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.8
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 10: Occupation by Race and Ethnicity for Employed Persons Age 16-64, 1995

Hispanic workers are concentrated in three broad occupational categories: (1) technical, sales, and administrative support (25.6%); (2) operators, fabricators and laborers (25%); and (3) services (24.6%).

Contrasting female and male Hispanics, we find that females have greater employment among management/professional jobs (15.2% for females vs. 9.8% for males) and that males are characterized by a higher proportion of blue-collar jobs. The two manual labor categories of precision-production-craft-repair and operators-fabricators-laborers represent 53.7% of jobs among Latino males but only 17.2% among Latina females. On the other hand, Hispanic women are more heavily concentrated in the service occupations (32.3%) than males (17.9%). These are also fairly low-income jobs.

Table 11: Percent Employed, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity for Age 16–64, 1995

	Latino	White	Black	Asian
Male				
Employed	57.7	79.4	56.1	70.3
Unemployed	8.9	4.4	11.4	3.2
Not in labor force	33.4	16.2	32.5	26.6
Female				
Employed	43.1	72.1	59.0	49.1
Unemployed	3.4	2.7	3.8	2.6
Not in labor force	53.5	25.3	37.2	48.4
Total				
Employed	49.9	75.7	57.6	59.7
Unemployed	5.9	3.5	7.4	2.9
Not in labor force	44.2	20.7	35.0	37.4

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Table 11: Percent Employed, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity for Age 16-64, 1995

and

Table 12: Percent Employed, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity for Age 16 to 64 in Poverty, 1995

The segment of Hispanics (ages 16 to 64) that is currently not in the labor force (44.2%) is the largest among all racial/ethnic groups. Of those who are in the labor force, Hispanics have the second highest unemployment rate (5.9%) after Blacks.

There are more females than males who are not in the labor force, 53.5% compared with 33.4%. This is true for all the racial/ethnic groups, although the percentages vary.

Among those Latinos age 16 to 64 who are living in poverty, 25% are employed. White workers, however, have the highest proportion of working poor, 37.5%.

Table 12: Percent Employed, by Gender and Race and Ethnicity for Age 16–64 in Poverty, 1995

	Latino	White	Black	Asian
Male				
Employed	26.9	36.7	18.9	27.1
Unemployed	4	10.2	26.1	8
Not in labor force	69.1	53.1	55.1	64.9
Female				
Employed	24	38.2	24.4	0
Unemployed	5.8	5.5	1.8	0
Not in labor force	70.2	56.4	73.8	100
Total				
Employed	25	37.5	21.7	15.4
Unemployed	5.2	7.6	13.8	4.6
Not in labor force	69.8	54.9	64.5	80

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

Table 13: Families and Children in Poverty by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

	Total	Number in Poverty	Percent in Poverty
Families			
Total	1,550,823	136,093	8.8
Latino	64,756	30,158	46.6
White	1,366,863	77,597	5.7
Black	81,938	21,641	26.4
Asian	32,274	6,026	18.7
Other	4,992	672	13.5
Children			
Total	1,488,947	232,232	15.6
Latino	120,189	65,775	54.7
White	1,186,108	103,989	8.8
Black	120,331	48,287	40.1
Asian	57,920	13,158	22.7
Other	4,398	1,023	23.3

Note: Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

Table 13: Families and Children in Poverty by Race and Ethnicity

Nearly half of Hispanic families (46.6%) live in poverty. This is the highest incidence of household poverty for any group in Massachusetts. Blacks have the next highest poverty rate (26.4%). From the perspective of child poverty, the situation is even more severe. More than half (54.7%) of Latino children live in poverty. In the Black community, 40.1% of children live in poverty; among Asians, 22.7%. Statewide, the rate of family poverty is 8.8% and child poverty is 15.6%.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Income and Poverty

Latinos have the lowest level of annual income of all the groups, \$7,510 per person. One out of every four poor Hispanics is employed.

Among Hispanic families, poverty is the foremost problem: 46.6% of Hispanic families live below the poverty line. This issue is even more troubling among children: 54.7% of Hispanic children live in poverty. These patterns are worse than those of any other racial/ethnic group.

Table 14: Per Capita Income by Race and Ethnicity

Latino average income per person is \$7,510, the lowest for any racial/ethnic group. The next lowest per capita income is \$11,659, for Blacks.

Table 14: Per Capita Income by Race and Ethnicity, 1995

Latino	\$7,510
White	\$21,643
Black	\$11,659
Asian	\$14,249
Other	\$17,957

Note: Based pm 1995 dollars.

Pooled sample from 1995, 1996, and 1997 CPS data.

Notes for a Dialogue

The objective of this report is to encourage public dialogue about the future of Hispanics in Massachusetts. At this moment, the future seems precarious, to say the least. As we proceed with this discourse, let us be mindful of the following points:

- 1) **Latino Invisibility.** Latinos in Massachusetts need to make their voices and opinions heard much more effectively than they have in the recent past. Despite the dramatic growth in population during this decade, few elected officials feel obligated to be responsive to the needs or concerns of Latinos. Much of the commonwealth's public policy is being carried out with virtual disregard for Latino interests. This syndrome of "Latino invisibility" needs to be addressed.
- 2) **Census 2000.** Active involvement in the 2000 census is a precondition for gathering the necessary information about the community's conditions and prospects. The Latino community needs to be integrated into the census process to ensure an accurate count. Researchers need to conduct appropriate data analysis and interpretation as soon as the census results are available.
- 3) **Policy Agenda.** Latinos in Massachusetts need a comprehensive policy agenda to orient the civic and political activities of the community. The findings contained in this update—especially those dealing with education, and income and poverty, especially child poverty—call for emergency measures. But there will be little change unless the community can reach consensus about priorities and means. Our institutions and organizations need to begin a consultation process internally to define a coherent policy agenda. The Mauricio Gastón Institute is committed to facilitating those consensus-building processes that the Latino community deems appropriate.

End Notes

1. Thanks to the following persons for assistance on this report: Leslie Bowen, Mary Jo Marion, Edwin Meléndez, Daphne Richardson, and James Sterling. Thanks also to the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) for providing the original data on which this report is based.
2. The terms "Latino" and "Hispanic" are used interchangeably in this report. The generic "Latino" will be used for convenience sake, instead of "Latino/a" which is a more accurate rendering of gender identification.
3. The estimates made by MISER do not distinguish between the two groups. The 1990 census reported that Asian Americans represented 93% of this combined figure.
4. There are several useful books for readers interested in general background literature on Latinos in the United States: Linda Chavez, *Out of the Barrio*; Antonia Darder and Rodolfo D. Torres, ed. *The Latino Studies Reader*; Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, ed. *The Latino/a Condition*; Geoffrey Fox, *Hispanic Nation*; Earl Shorris, *Latinos: Biography of a People*; Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition*. Information about the Latino community in Massachusetts can be obtained by requesting a publications list from the Gastón Institute. See also Carol Hardy-Fanta, *Latina Politics*, *Latino Politics*.
5. Note on methodology: These numbers are based on estimates prepared by MISER.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)