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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Framingham

by Phillip Granberry, Ph.D., and
Vishakha Agarwal, Ph.D.

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THE MAURICIO GASTON INSTITUTE
FOR LATINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Introduction

This report provides a descriptive snapshot of selected economic, social, educational, and demographic indicators pertaining to Latinos in Framingham. It reflects a commitment by UMass Boston's Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy to provide periodic updates on the growing Latino population in Massachusetts. The report on Framingham is part of a larger series that covers cities and towns with a population of at least 35,000 residents in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a significant Latino population. Each report analyzes data from the American Community Survey (ACS) conducted annually by the U.S. Census Bureau. We obtained the data from the Census Bureau in tabular form, and we transformed these data into figures presented in this report.

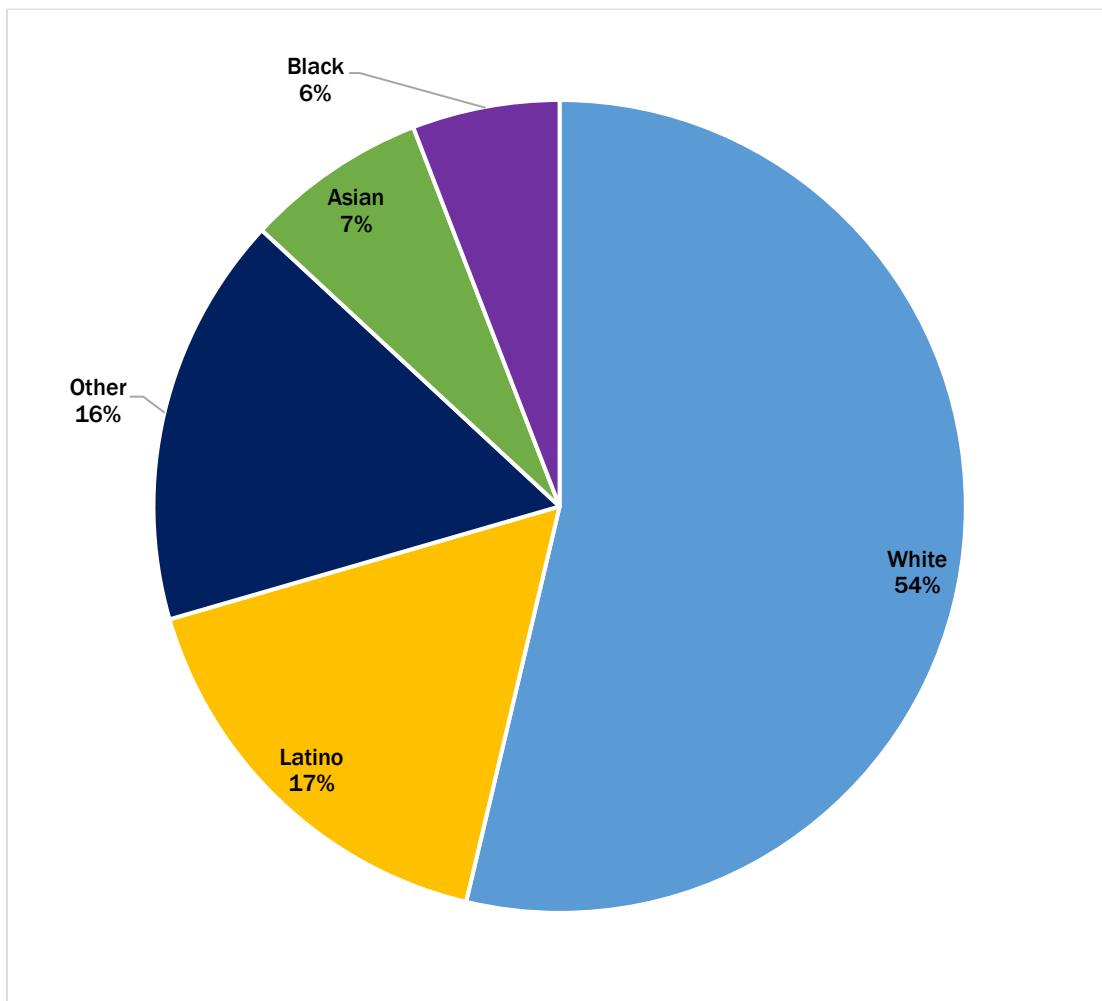
The Census Bureau identifies Latinos through a question that asks respondents to choose either "Hispanic or Latino" or "Not Hispanic or Latino." Separately, it asks respondents to identify a race. This report uses the term "Latino" to include all those who selected "Hispanic or Latino" on the Census or ACS form, regardless of racial designation. The report compares Latinos, thus defined, to Non-Latino Whites, Blacks, and Asians, based on individuals' racial identification. The number of ethno-racial groups included in a particular analysis may vary each ethno-racial group is included in the analysis only when the observed sample size is large enough to produce reliable population estimates.

The Gastón Institute strives to be responsive to the needs of the Latino and policy communities through the research we undertake. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or requests for specific information about Framingham.

Framingham Overview

With a total population of 72,362 according to the 2020 Decennial Census, Framingham is home to an estimated 12,171 Latinos. They represent about one sixth (17%) of the city's population, a smaller share than for Whites (54%) but greater than for Asians and Blacks, 7% and 6% respectively (Figure 1). In addition, 6,604 foreign-born Brazilians live in Framingham, and the Census classifies Brazilians in the "Other" category.

Figure 1: Population Percentages by Ethno-Racial Group in Framingham

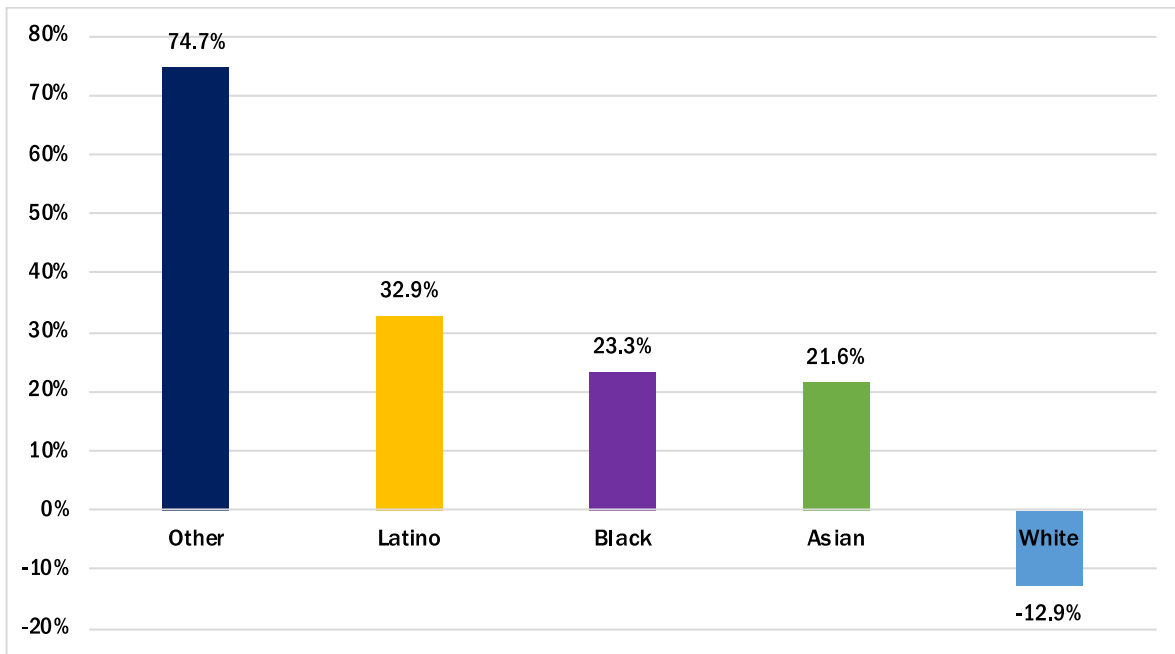


Source: 2020 U.S. Census

A striking feature of Framingham is its recent population change. From 2010 to 2020, Latinos (33%), Blacks (23%), and Asians (22%) experienced population growth in

the city, while Whites experienced a 13% population decline (Figure 2). The growth of the Latino population in Framingham has been slower than that of Latinos statewide, who experienced an increase of 41% during this period.

Figure 2: Population Change by Ethno-Racial Group from 2010 to 2020



Source: 2010 & 2020 U.S. Census

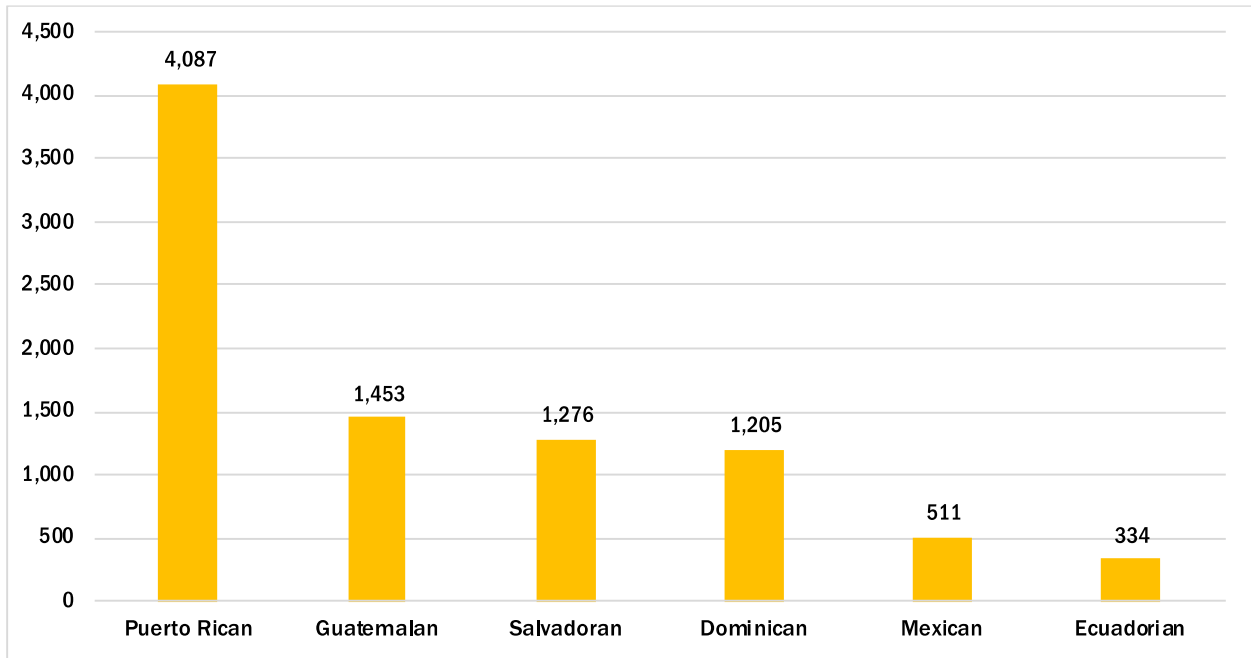
The remainder of this profile uses 2016-2020 American Community Survey data in order to analyze the demographic and economic characteristics presented in this profile.

Framingham has long been a destination for international migrants, and today it has a greater share of foreign-born (28%) than the Commonwealth as a whole (17%). This is especially the case among Latinos. In Framingham, 42% of their population are foreign born, which is higher than the Latino statewide share (32%).

When examining the origin of Latinos in the Framingham, it is important to note that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens; they are not included in foreign-born estimates in the preceding paragraph. In addition, Brazilians are not identified as Latino by the Census Bureau. Figure 3 reports the five largest Latino populations in Framingham: Puerto Ricans (4,087) are the largest population followed by Guatemalans (1,453), Salvadorans (1,276), Dominicans (1,205), and Mexicans (511). The five largest Latino

populations in Massachusetts statewide, in order of size, are Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Salvadorans, Mexicans, and Guatemalans.

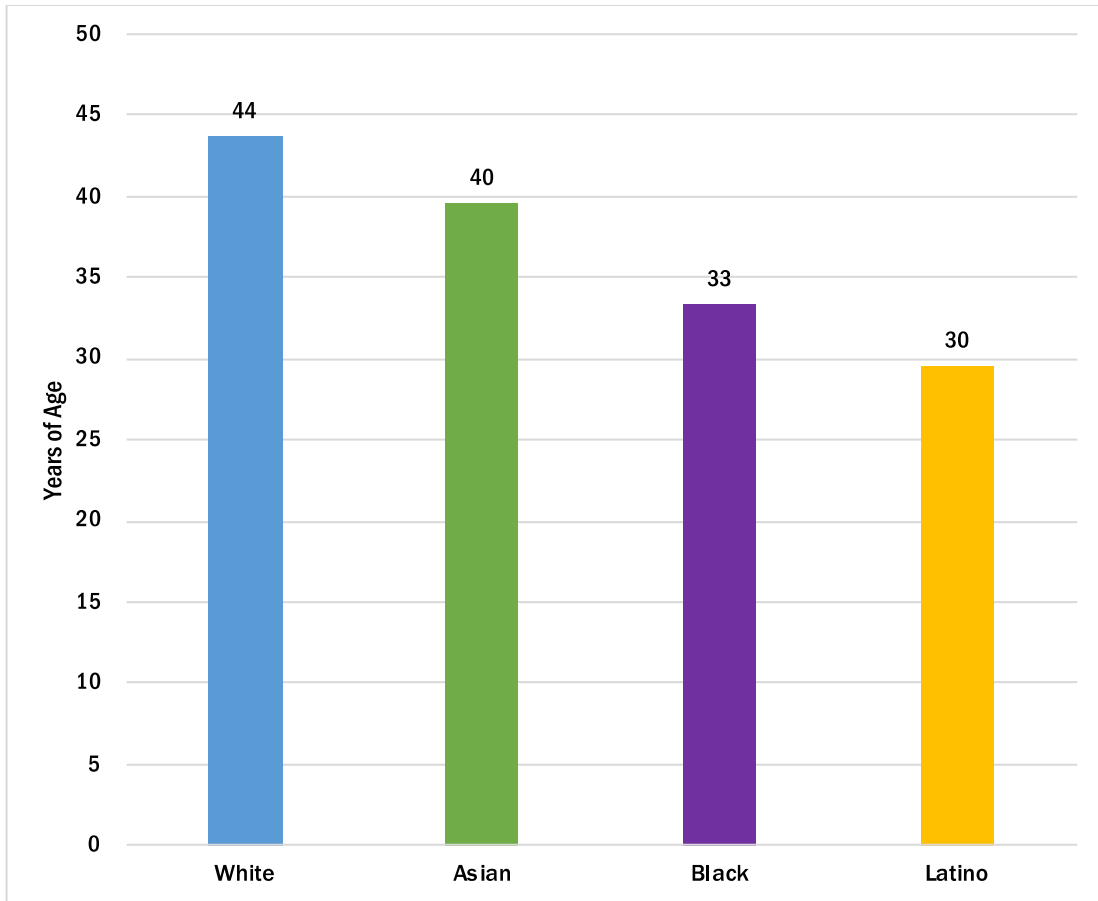
Figure 3: Origin of the Top Latino Populations



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

MEDIAN AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

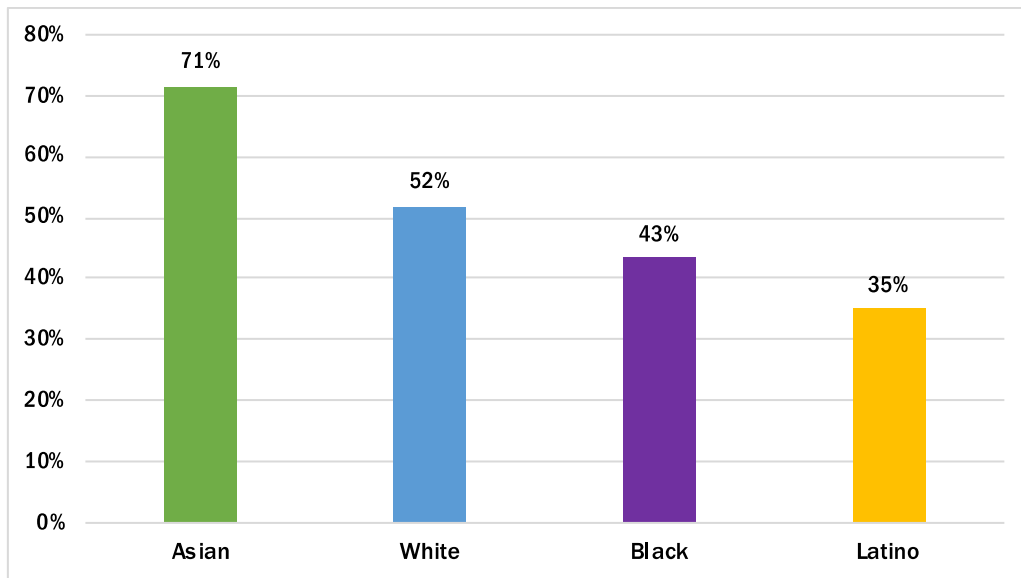
Figure 4: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

Framingham’s Latino population, with a median age of 30 years, is slightly older than the statewide Latino median age of 29 years. However, as shown in Figure 4, Latinos are the youngest of the ethno-racial groups in Framingham, most dramatically when compared to Whites (44 years) and Asians (40 years).

Figure 5: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group (ages 15 and older)



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

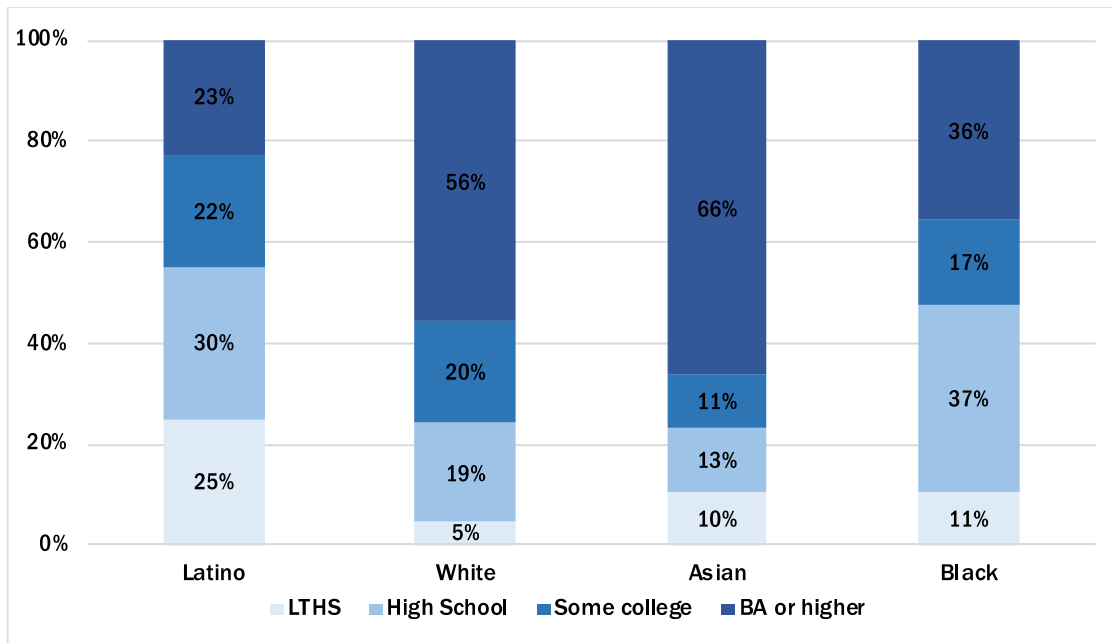
The marriage rate in Massachusetts for persons 15 and over is 48%, while in Framingham it is 52%. As shown in Figure 5, the marriage rate among Latinos is 35%, which is the lowest for all ethno-racial groups in the city. However, the Latino marriage rate in Framingham is slightly higher than the statewide Latino rate of 33%.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Framingham has a relatively high level of educational attainment, with 50% of residents age 25 or older having at least a Bachelor's degree compared to 45% statewide. Latinos have the lowest share of their population with at least a Bachelor's degree: 23%, compared to 36% for Blacks, 56% for Whites, and 66% for Asians. The statewide share for Latinos with at least a Bachelor's degree is 21%. At the other end of the educational scale, Figure 6 also shows that Latinos have the highest share of their adult population

lacking a high school diploma: 25%, compared to 11% for Blacks, 10% for Asians, and 5% for Whites. The statewide share for Latinos lacking a high school diploma is 28%.

Figure 6: Educational Attainment by Ethno-Racial Group (ages 25 and older)

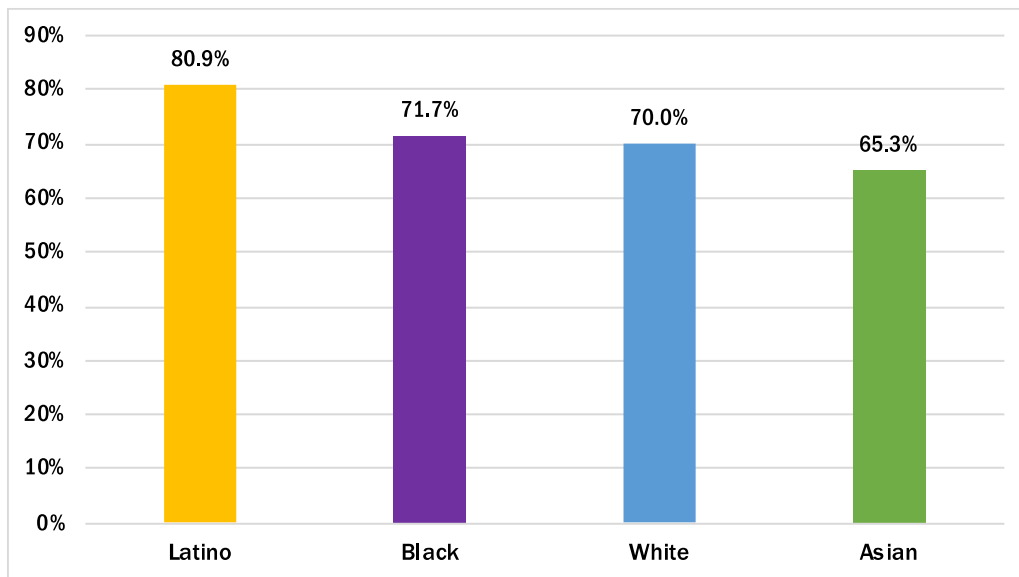


Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

The labor force participation rate in Framingham is 72%, which is higher than for the Commonwealth overall (67%). Likewise, Latinos in Framingham have a higher labor force participation rate (81%) than Latinos statewide (69%). As Figure 7 shows, Latinos' labor force participation in Framingham is higher than all other ethno-racial groups. Their lower educational attainment (Figure 6) does not appear to hinder their labor force participation.

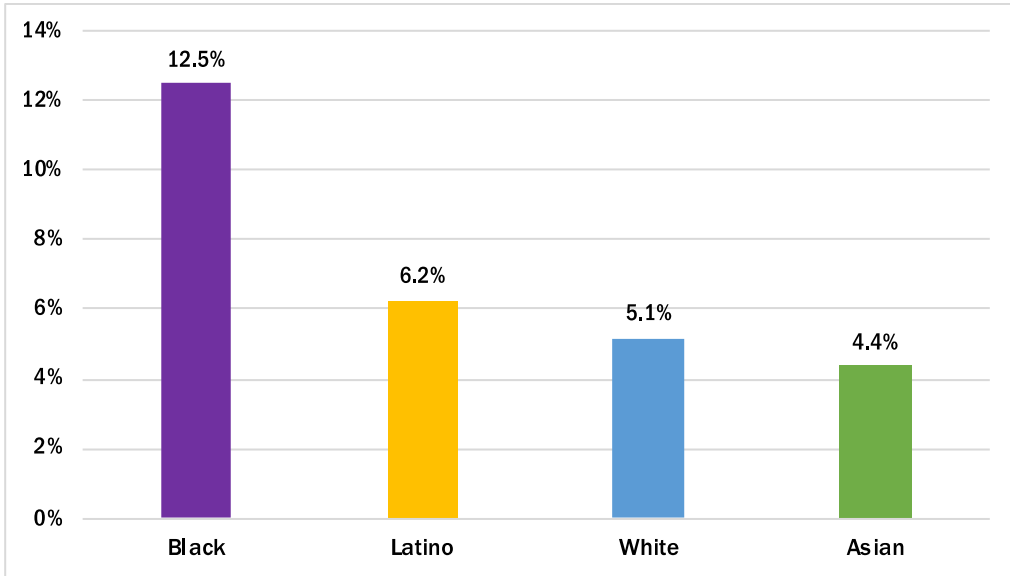
Figure 7: Labor Force Participation by Ethno-Racial Group (ages 16 and older)



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

The overall unemployment rate in Framingham during this period was 4.1%, compared to the statewide unemployment rate of 3.4%. The Latino unemployment rate in Framingham of 6.2% is the second highest of any ethno-racial group in the city. However, Latinos in Framingham who participate in the labor force fare better than Latinos statewide, who during this period experienced an 8.3% unemployment rate.

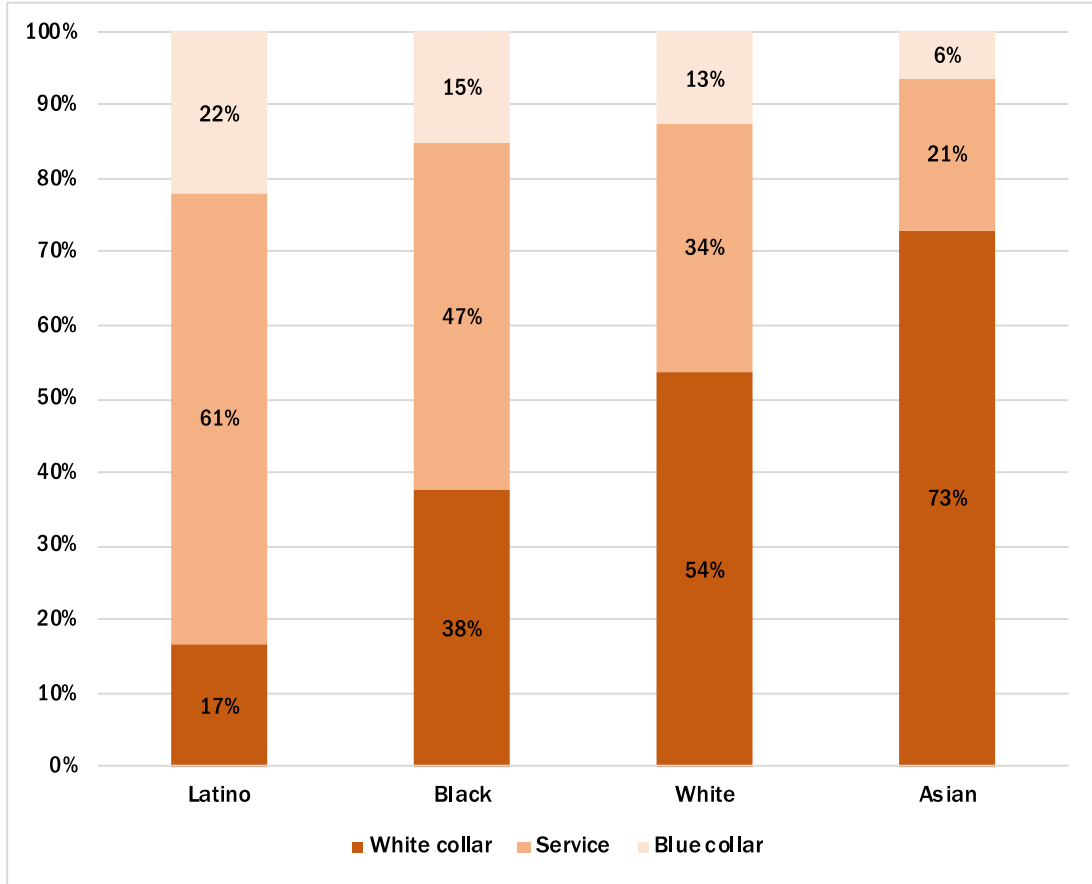
Figure 8: Unemployment Rates by Ethno-Racial Group (ages 16 and older)



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

Figure 9 highlights that Latinos work in traditionally low-wage jobs. Latinos are underrepresented in what are traditionally considered white-collar jobs with only 17% working in these management, business, science, and arts occupations. Correspondingly, they are overrepresented in the service sector (61% work in services and sales occupations) and in what are traditionally considered blue-collar jobs (22% work in natural resources, construction, maintenance, production, transportation, and material moving occupations). For Latinos across the state, this distribution is 28% white-collar, 47% service, and 25% blue-collar.

Figure 9: Population Employed by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group (ages 16 and older)

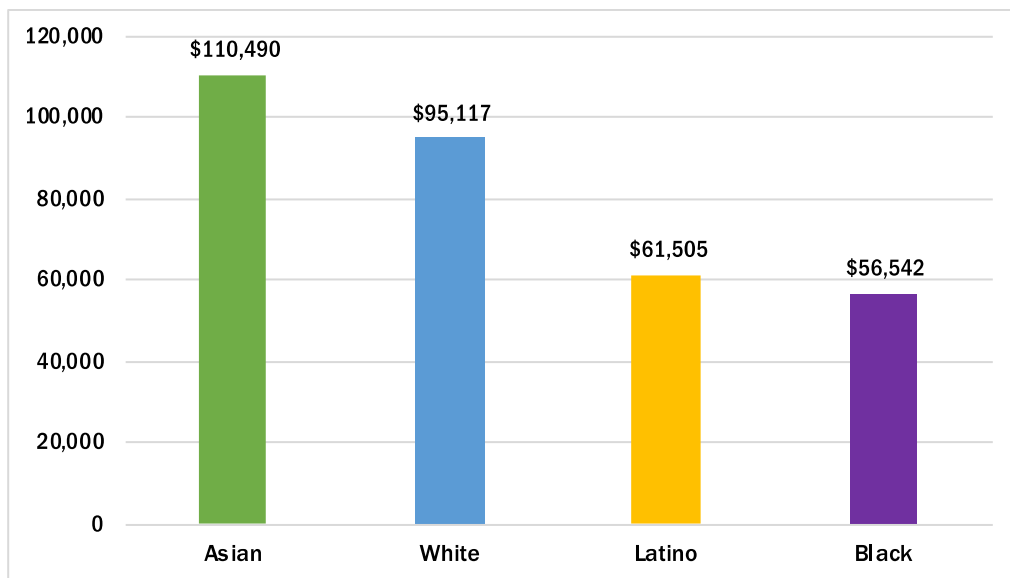


Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Framingham’s median household income is \$86,322, which is slightly higher than the statewide median income of \$84,385. Latinos (Figure 10) have the second lowest median household income (\$61,505) of any ethno-racial group in the city. However, Latinos in Framingham are more economically successful than Latinos in other parts of the Commonwealth, as the statewide Latino median household income is \$48,450.

Figure 10: Median Household Income by Ethno-Racial Group in 2020

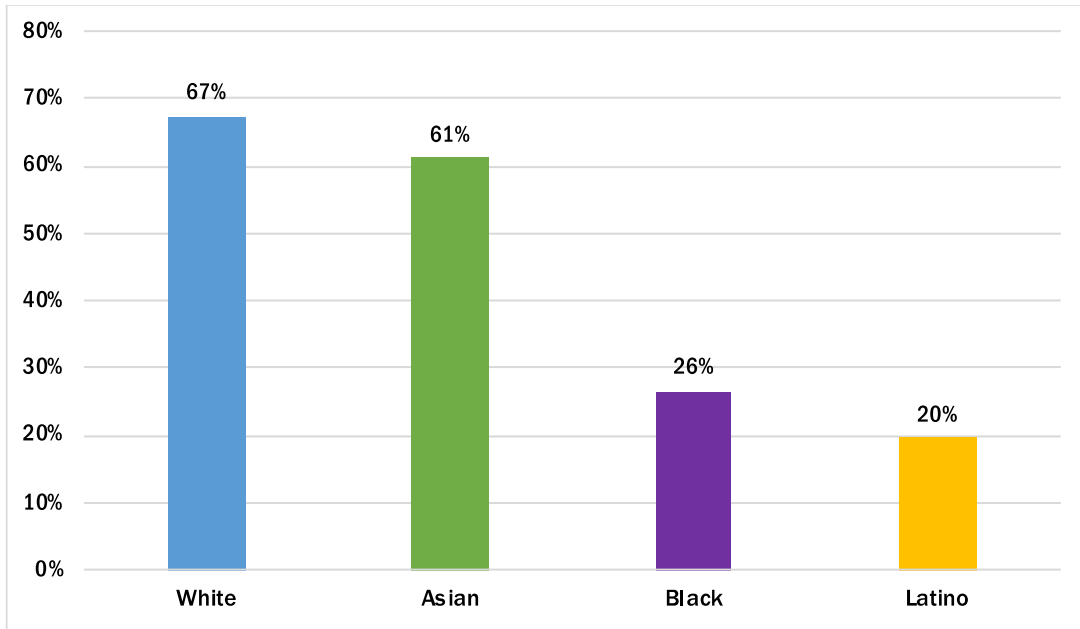


Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

HOUSING OCCUPANCY AND MEDICAL UNINSURANCE

The final measures of Latino participation in Framingham are intended to identify how well Latinos are being rewarded for their economic, social, and political participation. Framingham has a lower homeownership rate (56%) than the statewide rate (62%) as measured by occupied housing units. Latinos have the lowest homeownership level of any ethno-racial group in the city at 20% (Figure 11), which is smaller than the 28% of Latinos statewide who are homeowners.

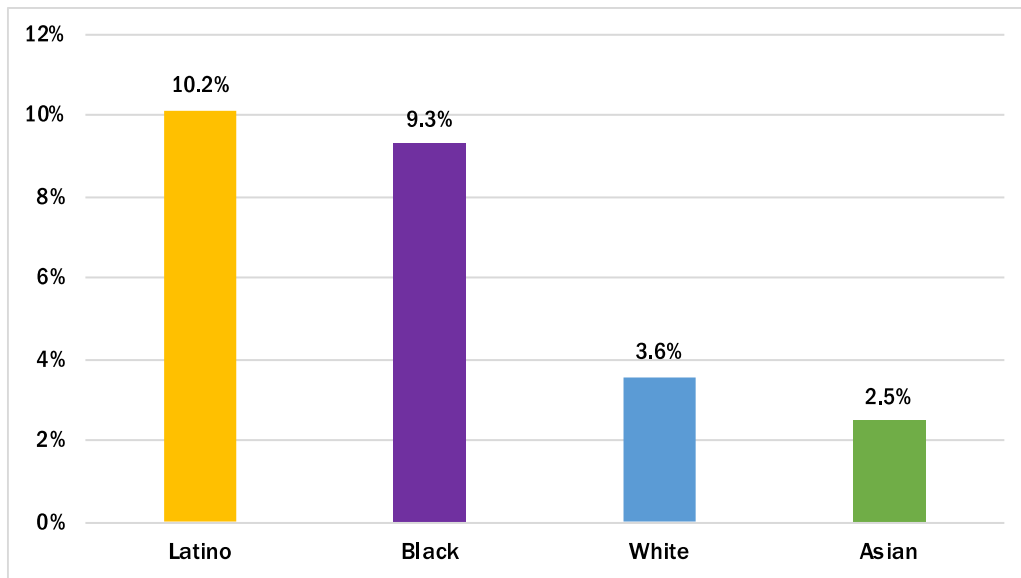
Figure 11: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

Framingham has a higher rate of medical uninsurance (5%) than the statewide average of 3%. Some of this might be attributed to its higher concentration of foreign-born residents, who have the highest rates of uninsurance. Figure 12 shows that Latinos have the highest rate of medical uninsurance in Framingham at 10%, which is higher than the rate for Latinos statewide (6%).

Figure 12: Medical Uninsurance by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

About the Gastón Institute

Established in 1989, the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy was created by the Massachusetts Legislature in response to a need for improved understanding about the Latino experience in the commonwealth. Now in its 30th year, the Gastón Institute continues its mission of informing the public and policymakers about issues vital to the state's growing Latino community and providing information and analysis necessary for effective Latino participation in public policy development. To learn more about the Gastón Institute, visit www.umb.edu/gastoninstitute.

One of the goals of the Gastón Institute is to be responsive to the needs of the Latino and policy communities through the research we undertake. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or requests for specific information.

About the Authors

Phillip Granberry worked with various community-based organizations assisting recently arrived U.S. immigrants before earning a Ph.D. in Public Policy from UMass Boston. He has published several articles on the accumulation and use of social capital among Latinos and the sexual health communication of Puerto Rican mothers with their children. In addition to his research and teaching in the Gastón Institute and Economics Department at UMass Boston, he is Senior Researcher in demography for the Boston Planning and Development Agency.

Vishakha Agarwal recently earned a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the McCormack Graduate School at UMass Boston. Vishakha's research focuses on students' everyday classroom experiences, violent school discipline, and student engagement. Her dissertation takes an ethnographic approach and examines how interactions between teachers and students and among peers impacts students' learning outcomes and, shapes their perceptions of self and sense of school belonging.



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