

9-2022

Latinas in the Labor Market

Lorna Rivera

University of Massachusetts Boston, lorna.rivera@umb.edu

Vishakha Agarwal

University of Massachusetts Boston

Phillip Granberry

University of Massachusetts Boston, phillip.granberry@umb.edu

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



Part of the [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#), [Labor Economics Commons](#), [Latina/o Studies Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Rivera, Lorna; Agarwal, Vishakha; and Granberry, Phillip, "Latinas in the Labor Market" (2022). *Gastón Institute Publications*. 291.

https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/291

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
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON



Latinas in the Labor Market

Authors: Lorna Rivera, PhD, Vishakha Agarwal, PhD, and Phillip Granberry, PhD

September 2022





Latinas in the Labor Market

In Massachusetts, the share of Latinas in the overall population has been rapidly increasing. From 2000 to 2019, the number of Latinas increased by 81.5%¹ even as the number of Non-Latina women declined by about 5.8% during that same period. The share of Non-Latina White women in the Massachusetts female population dropped from approximately 82% in 2000 to 71% in 2019.

This report offers an in-depth look at the difference between the median wage income and other labor market outcomes of Latina and Non-Latina women in the Massachusetts workforce. (A great majority of Non-Latina women workers in Massachusetts are White at approximately 71% in 2019). Latina workers are one of the fastest-growing populations in the labor force, yet many still face structural disparities and discrimination that result in low wages and other negative labor market outcomes.²

These Massachusetts trends are similar to national trends. In particular, occupational segregation in lower paying service sectors not only widens the wage gap with men, but has also contributed to higher unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic.³ Thus, when Latinas are held back from labor market opportunities, their children face worse economic, educational, and health outcomes.⁴

The report starts with an overview of Latinas in the Massachusetts labor force, including trends in their labor force participation, unemployment, age structure, educational attainment, household composition, and work hours – all of these in comparison with Non-Latina women. The report then turns to wage comparisons, including comparisons within occupational categories. In each case, to arrive at the wage differential measure, we subtract Latina wage income from the Non-Latina wage income, then divide this difference by the Latina wage to arrive at a percentage wage differential. In addition to occupational categories, we also provide

¹ ACS public use microdata sample (PUMS). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.

² Kate Bahn & Will McGrew (2018). "The intersectional wage gaps faced by Latina women in the United States." Washington Center for Equitable Growth. <https://equitablegrowth.org/the-intersectional-wage-gaps-faced-by-latina-women-in-the-united-states/#footnote-7>

³ U.S. Department of Labor. <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WB/media/BearingTheCostReportFactSheet.pdf>

⁴ Phillip Granberry, Alejandro Alvarez, Alejandro, Vishakha Agarwal, Fabián Torres-Ardila, & Gastón Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston. (2021). "A Portrait of Latino Children: The Gap with Non-Latinos in Massachusetts." Gastón Institute Publications. 266. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/266

wage estimates by age, nativity, household type, and education.⁵ This analysis makes no attempt to control for other unobserved factors such as social networks or discrimination. Further research in Massachusetts is needed to find the cause of the wage gap this report finds.

Background on Latina labor force participation

Latina workers in Massachusetts face a double disadvantage.⁶ The intersection of race and ethnicity with sex places Latina workers in a vulnerable position in the labor force.^{7,8} COVID-19 brought more attention to the reality that women, including Latinas, provide unpaid dependent care in the household while often working in occupations that offer lower income compared to men.⁹ Before COVID-19 impacted households, Latinas spent over twice as much time as Latino men on household activities and close to three times as much on providing care for household members. While doing this household labor, they spent almost half as much time on work or work-related activities every day.¹⁰ As pandemic-induced shutdowns took effect and household and caregiving responsibilities increased, Latinas involuntarily left the market to care for their homes.

Latinas earn lower wages than Non-Latinas. (Henceforth, the term “Non-Latinas” in this report will refer specifically to Non-Latina women.) Even when controlling for educational attainment, experience, and immigration status, Latinas experience a significantly greater wage gap (in hourly wages) than Latino men: 15 percent for Latino men and 33 percent for Latinas when both groups are compared to Non-Latino White men.¹¹ Previous Gastón Institute research found that even though Massachusetts is among the wealthiest states in the country, Latinos in the state have struggled economically relative to Latinos nationwide.¹²

One explanation for the wage gap is occupational segregation.¹³ The United States

⁵ These descriptive results are generated using the 2000, 2010, 2019 and the 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data. The ACS is a yearly sample of approximately three percent of households in the United States. Even though the ACS provides a one-year estimate for Massachusetts, using the five-year ACS enables us to generate wage estimates for 23 major occupational categories. This pooled estimate has a smaller standard error than the one-year ACS and provides a more precise estimate than one-year data.

⁶ Politico Exchange (2022). “WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY: CLOSING THE BIG GAPS” https://www.politico.com/sponsored-content/2022/03/closing-the-big-gaps?utm_source=sponsor&utm_medium=social

⁷ Elyse Shawm & Nicole Mason, “Holding up Half the Sky: Mothers as Workers, Primary Caregivers, & Breadwinners During COVID-19.” <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Holding-Up-Half-the-Sky-Mothers-as-Breadwinners.pdf>

⁸ Kate Bahn & Will McGrew (2018). “The intersectional wage gaps faced by Latina women in the United States.” Washington Center for Equitable Growth. <https://equitablegrowth.org/the-intersectional-wage-gaps-faced-by-latina-women-in-the-united-states/>

⁹ Gretchen Livingston (2014). “Among Hispanics, immigrants more likely to be stay-at-home moms and to believe that’s best for kids,” Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/04/24/among-hispanics-immigrants-more-likely-to-be-stay-at-home-moms-and-to-believe-thats-best-for-kids/>

¹⁰ Kassandra Hernández, Diana Garcia, Paula Nazario, Michael Rios, & Rodrigo Domínguez-Villegas. Latinas Exiting the workforce: How the pandemic revealed historic disadvantages and heightened economic hardship. <https://latino.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Latinas-Exiting-the-Workforce.pdf>

¹¹ Marie T. Mora and Alberto Dávila, “The Hispanic–white wage gap has remained wide and relatively steady” (Washington: Economic Policy Institute, 2018).

¹² Trevor Mattos, Phillip Granberry, & Vishakha Agarwal (2022). “¡AVANCEMOS YA!: Persistent Economic Challenges and Opportunities Facing Latinos in Massachusetts.” Gastón Institute Publications. 281. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/281

¹³ Marina Zhavoronkova, Rose Khattar, Rose, & Matthew Brady (2022). “Occupational Segregation in America.” Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/occupational-segregation-in-america/>

labor market often has one demographic group overrepresented or underrepresented in a certain job category. Occupational segregation has historical roots in the United States due to slavery and women's unpaid household labor. Providing domestic care was seen as inherently female, and thus any dependent care work is associated with traditionally female-dominated occupations (like personal and homecare aides) that pay lower wages.¹⁴ Even though, historically, Latinas in the United States are less segregated than Latinos, occupational segregation lowers these women's wages more than those of their male counterparts.¹⁵

Family and age structures, along with different immigration experiences, shape Latinas' labor force participation. Even though Latinas have experienced declining fertility since the Great Recession, their fertility rates remain high compared to other ethno-racial groups.¹⁶ Much of this decline in the United States is attributed to the decrease in fertility among Mexican-American women.¹⁷ Women with young children are less likely than men to be in the labor force.¹⁸ And this was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as Latinas had the highest rate of unemployment claims in Massachusetts.¹⁹ Even though a large share of their population is in their prime-working years, ages 25-54, Latinas are more likely to work as part-time workers and experience higher unemployment.²⁰ Labor force participation differs by nation of origin.²¹ In Massachusetts, this difference in labor force participation can be explained by geographic location and changing economic structures in Gateway cities after 1980.²² Puerto Rican and Dominican women in cities like Holyoke and Lawrence live with less dynamic labor markets that have not transitioned economically as is the case with Boston (Figure 1). Nationally, Bahn and McGrew, using Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition analysis, find that the wage gap for Hispanic women is primarily caused by unexplained discrimination, followed by workplace segregation and restricted access to educational opportunities.²³

¹⁴ Randy Albelda, Mignon Duffy, & Nancy Folbre (2009). "Counting on Care Work: Human Infrastructure in Massachusetts." Center for Social Policy Publications. 33. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/csp_pubs/33

¹⁵ Coral del Río & Olga Alonso-Villar (2015). "The Evolution of Occupational Segregation in the United States, 1940–2010: Gains and Losses of Gender–Race/Ethnicity Groups," *Demography* 52 (3): 967–988.

¹⁶ MJK Osterman BE Hamilton. JA Martin, AK Driscoll, & CP Valenzuela (2022). "Births: Final data for 2020." *National Vital Statistics Reports*; vol 70 no 17. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

¹⁷ Gretchen Livingston (2019). "Hispanic women no longer account for the majority of immigrant births in the U.S." PEW Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/08/08/hispanic-women-no-longer-account-for-the-majority-of-immigrant-births-in-the-u-s/>

¹⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *The Economics Daily*, Labor force participation declines for mothers and fathers in 2020 at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2021/labor-force-participation-declines-for-mothers-and-fathers-in-2020.htm> (visited May 24, 2022).

¹⁹ Trevor Mattos, Bansari Kamdar, Phillip Granberry, & Fabián Torres-Ardilla. "Latinx Population Hit Hard in the COVID-19 Recession: Mounting Hardships and One Big Idea for an Inclusive Recovery" (2021). Gastón Institute Publications. 265. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/265

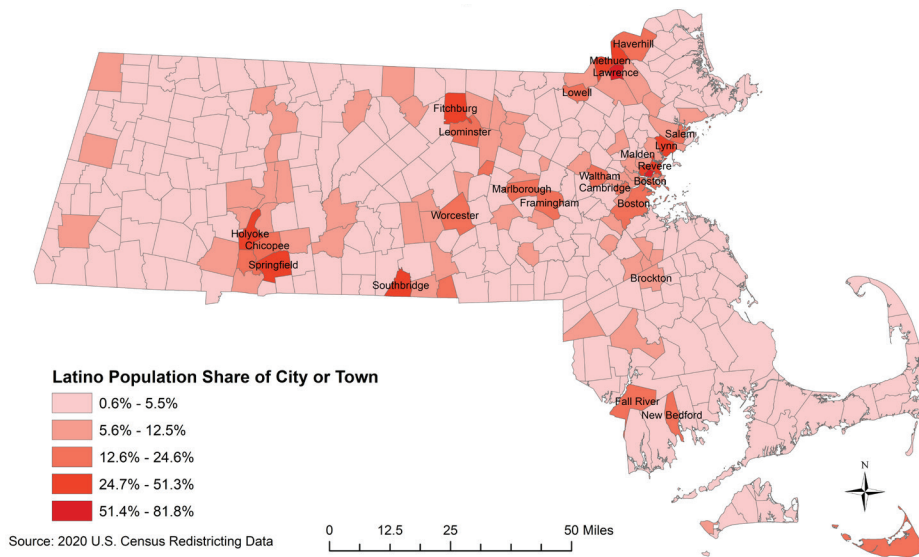
²⁰ Daniella Zessoules, Galen Hendricks, & Michael Madowitz, Michael (2018). "The State of the Labor Market for Latinas: Pre-October Jobs Day Release." Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/state-labor-market-latinas-pre-october-jobs-day-release/>

²¹ Institute for Women's Policy Research, "Women's Labor Force Participation" (2016).

²² Trevor Mattos, Phillip Granberry, Phillip, & Vishakha Agarwal (2022). "¡AVANCEMOS YA!: Persistent Economic Challenges and Opportunities Facing Latinas in Massachusetts" Gastón Institute Publications. 281. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/281

²³ Kate Bahn & Will McGrew (2018). "The intersectional wage gaps faced by Latina women in the United States." Washington Center for Equitable Growth. <https://equitablegrowth.org/the-intersectional-wage-gaps-faced-by-latina-women-in-the-united-states/>

Figure 1: Latino Share of Total Population in Massachusetts in 2020

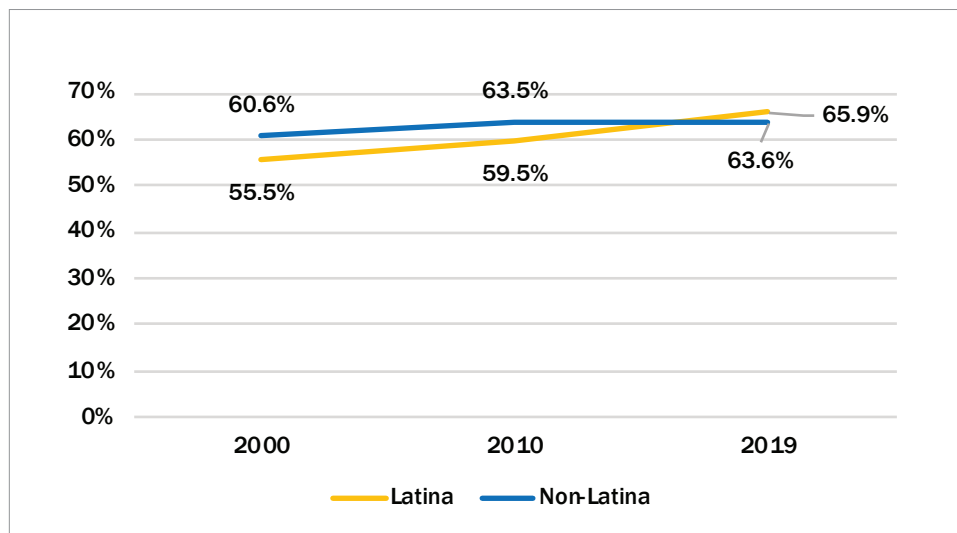


Source: 2020 Census

Labor Force Participation

Since 2000, Latinas' labor force participation in Massachusetts has outpaced that of Non-Latinas. This is because labor force participation for Non-Latinas in the state has declined from 2000-2019 while, the Latina rate increased steadily from 55.5% in 2000 to 65.9% in 2019 (Figure 2). In Massachusetts, likely due to a younger age profile, the labor force participation rate is now higher for Latinas than for Non-Latinas. This labor force participation rate is the percentage, among Latina and Non-Latina populations 16 years and older, of those who either are employed or unemployed but looking for work.

Figure 2: Labor Force Participation in Massachusetts

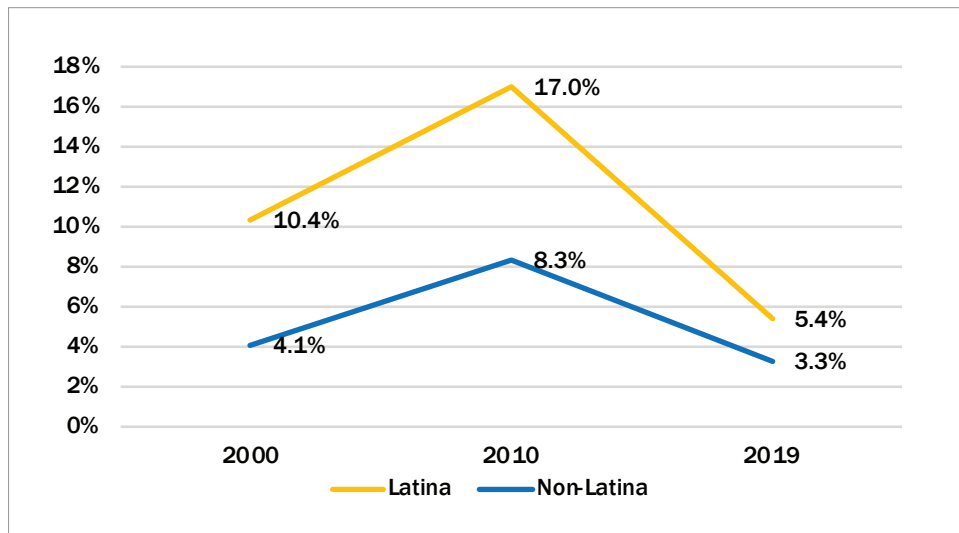


Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Unemployment

In Massachusetts, unemployment has been higher for Latinas than for Non-Latinas. For instance, as shown in Figure 3, even though the unemployment rate for Latinas dropped from 17% in 2010 during the Great Recession to 5.4% in 2019 before COVID-19, it is still higher than the Non-Latina unemployment rate by about 3.3%. However, this gap between the Latina and Non-Latina unemployment rate has reduced over the years. Their slightly higher unemployment rates are accompanied by their slightly higher labor force participation rates. Problems related to Latinas' unemployment have only been amplified by COVID-19, but ACS data for 2020 that would show the effect have not yet been released.²⁴

Figure 3: Unemployment in Massachusetts



Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

The wage gap for Latinas in Massachusetts, analyzed later in the report, does not appear to be related to Latinas' labor force participation, which has remained constant while the wage gap has increased. It should be noted that many of the factors explained in this report indicate that COVID-19 have kept Latinas' labor force participation from growing during the pandemic.²⁵ The structural household and labor market roles that Latinas fill contribute to the wage gap examined in this report. Therefore, in the next section, we examine the demographic characteristics including age, nativity, and household composition, along with such individual characteristics as educational attainment and occupational distribution.

²⁴ Trevor Mattos, Bansari Kamdar, Phillip Granberry, & Fabián Torres-Ardilla (2021). "Latinx Population Hit Hard in the COVID-19 Recession: Mounting Hardships and One Big Idea for an Inclusive Recovery." *Gastón Institute Publications*. 265. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/265

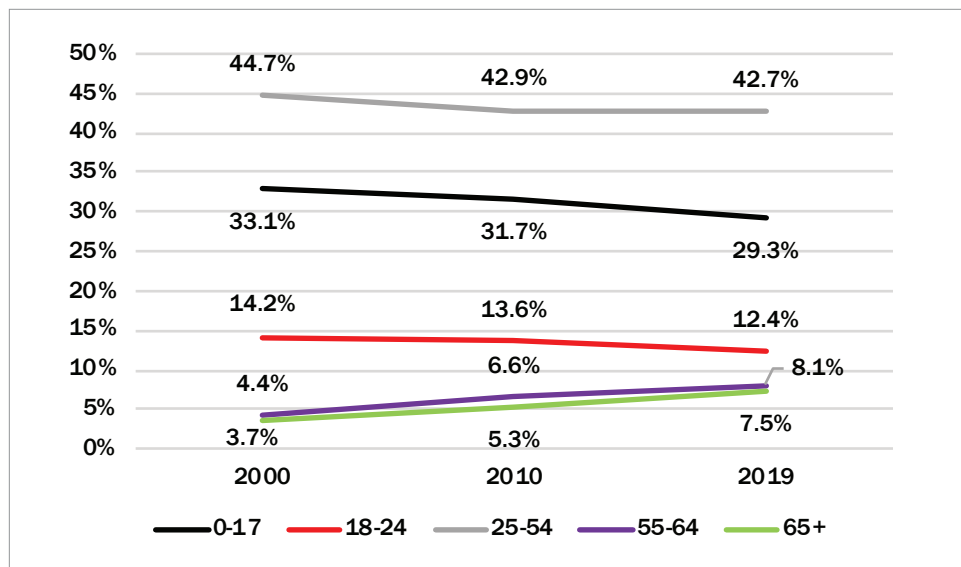
²⁵ Kassandra Hernández, Diana Garcia, Paula Nazario, Michael Rios, & Rodrigo Domínguez-Villegas. Latinas Exiting the workforce: How the pandemic revealed historic disadvantages and heightened economic hardship. <https://latino.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Latinas-Exiting-the-Workforce.pdf>

Age Structure

On average, Latinas in Massachusetts are younger than Non-Latinas. The number of Non-Latinas of prime working-age, 25-54 years, has been steadily declining over the years. From 2000 to 2019, the share of Non-Latina population in that age group declined from 45.1% to 38.7%, while the corresponding decline for Latinas was only from 44.7% to 42.7%. These trends in Massachusetts are similar to the national trends.²⁶ In 2019, only 15.6% of Latinas were 55 years or older as compared to 34.8% of Non-Latinas (Figures 4a and 4b). In contrast, in 2019, 41.7% of Latinas, as compared to 26.6% Non-Latinas, were under the age of 25.

This age structure highlights the aging of the Non-Latina population, which means that Latinas positioned to take a more productive role in the U.S. labor market over the next several years. This demographic trend has two negative components for Non-Latinas: declining prime working-age population and rapidly increasing 55 years or older population. This selected aging of the population gives Latinas a larger share of the population in their prime-working years.

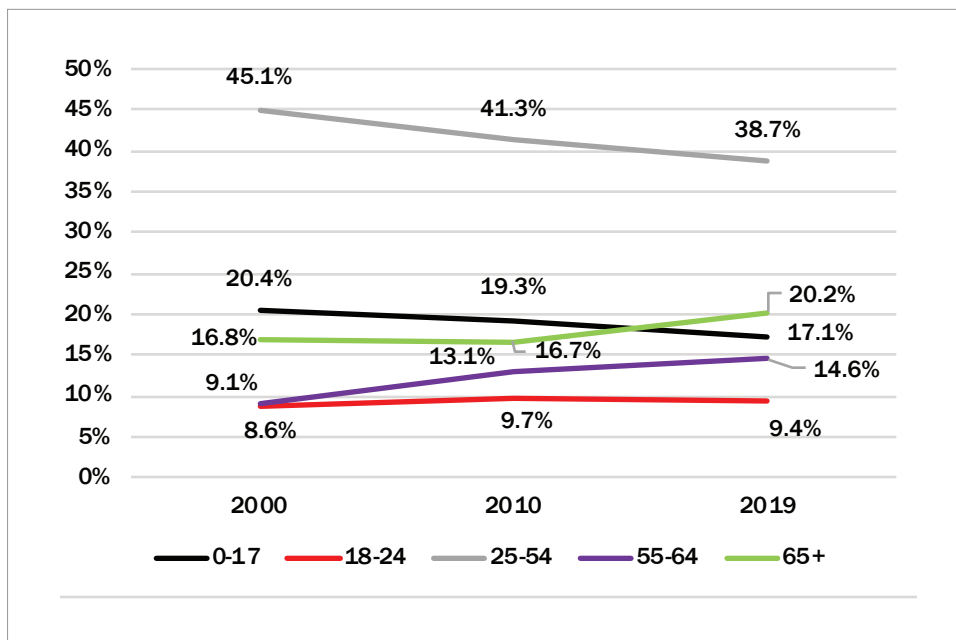
Figure 4a: Age Structure of the Latina Population



Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

²⁶ Sandra Black, DianeWhitmore Schanzenbach, & Audrey Breitwieser (2017). "The Recent Decline in Women's Labor Force Participation." https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/es_10192017_decline_womens_labor_force_participation_blackshchanzenbach.pdf

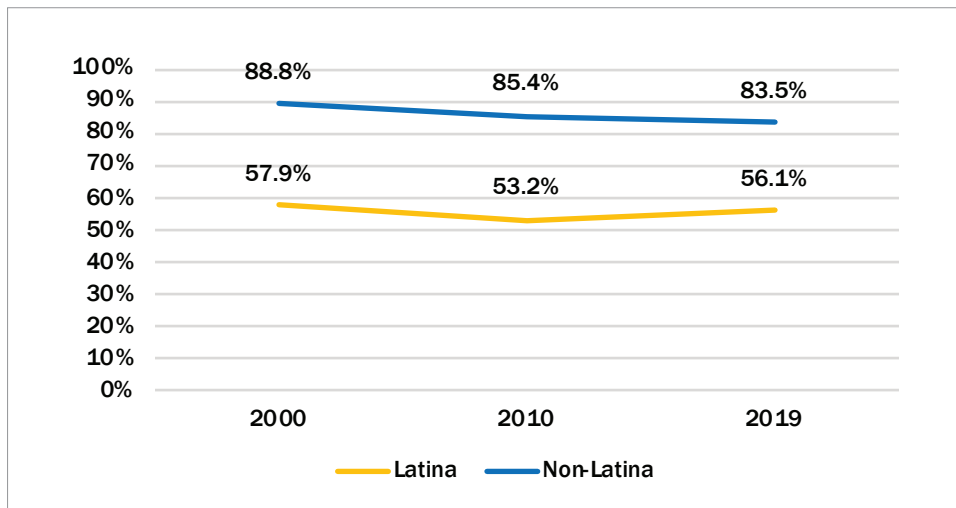
Figure 4b: Age Structure of the Non-Latina Population



Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Nativity of Employed Workers

Figure 5a: Ethnicity of Employed Workers in Massachusetts, Native-Born

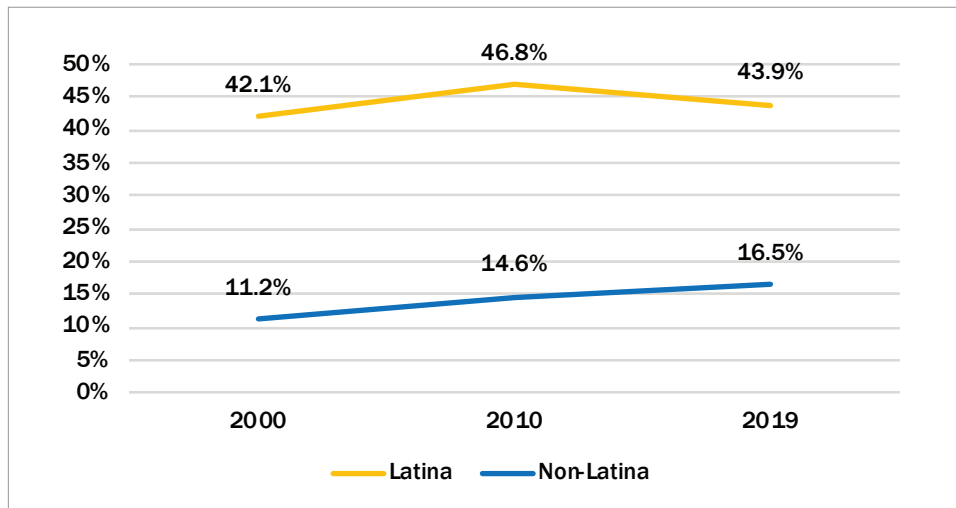


Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

As shown in Figures 5a and 5b, a much higher proportion of Latina workers than Non-Latina workers are foreign-born. The share of foreign-born Latinas in 2019 saw a slight decline since 2010. In 2019, approximately 44% of Latinas in Massachusetts were foreign-born. This trend should continue because population projections

suggest that Latina population growth over the next twenty years will be due more to their natural increase in the United States than to immigration.²⁷ About 26% of the foreign-born Latina workers in Massachusetts are Dominicans (8.1%), Brazilians (7.3%) Colombians (3.3%), Salvadorans (3.0%), Guatemalans (1.9%), Mexicans (1.3%), and Hondurans (1.1%). Non-Latina women workers constitute about 68.6% of the foreign-born population, and about 4.8% are Other Latina subgroups. When examining the origins of Latinas, it is important to note that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens; they are not included in foreign-born estimates here.

Figure 5b: Ethnicity of Employed Workers in Massachusetts, Foreign-Born



Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

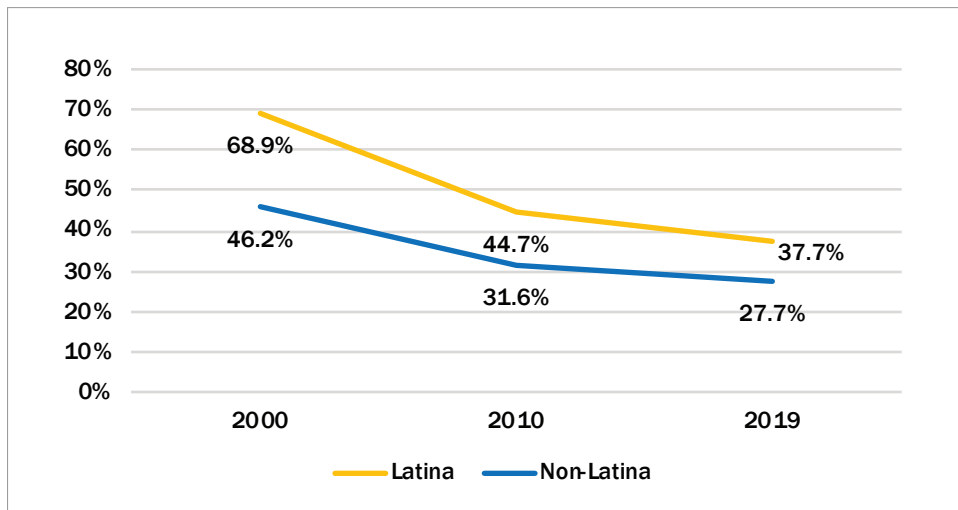
Households with Children

Since 2008, births have been declining in the United States, especially among foreign born women.²⁸ Figure 6 presents the data for employed female workers with children aged 17 years or under in Massachusetts. In 2000, the share of Latina workers with children under the age of 17 years (69%) was much higher than the corresponding figure for Non-Latina workers (46%). The share of both Latina and Non-Latina workers with dependent children has sharply declined over the decades, but the share of Latinas with dependent children is still higher than Non-Latinas. Likewise, although the share of Latinas without children more than doubled (to 68%) from 2000 to 2019, that share was still less than the 78% of Non-Latina workers without children..

²⁷ Phillip Granberry & Trevor Mattos (2019). "Massachusetts Latino Population: 2010-2035." Gastón Institute Publications. 241. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/241

²⁸ Gretchen Livingston (2019). "Hispanic women no longer account for the majority of immigrant births in the U.S." PEW Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/08/08/hispanic-women-no-longer-account-for-the-majority-of-immigrant-births-in-the-u-s/>

Figure 6: Employed Females with Children aged 17 years or under

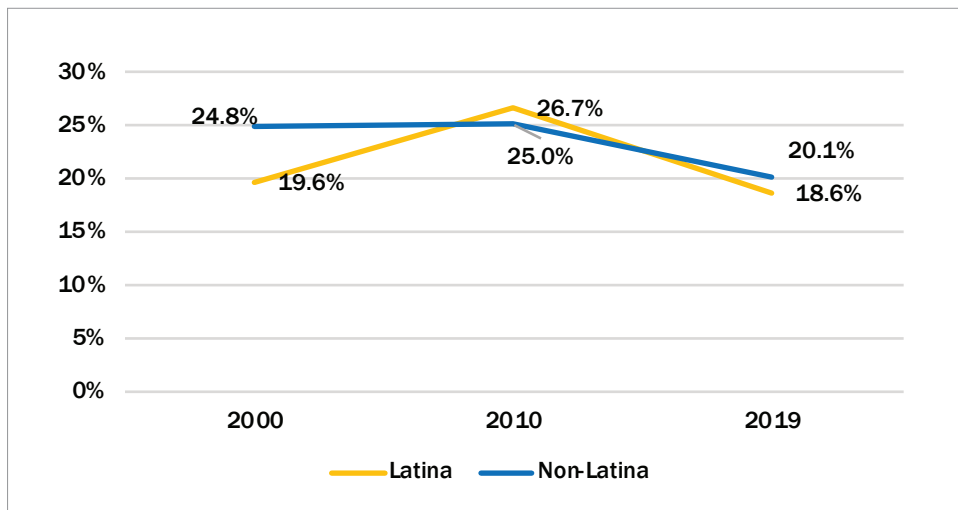


Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Work Hours

Among the women workers, the share of Latinas who worked full-time in 2019, at about 81%, is slightly higher than the share of Non-Latina workers working full-time (80%). Correspondingly, the share of Latinas working part-time or seasonally (19%) is slightly lower than Non-Latinas (20%) (Figure 7). Full-time year-round workers are defined as those working 48 or more weeks and 35 or more hours in a week.

Figure 7: Part-Time or Seasonal Workers



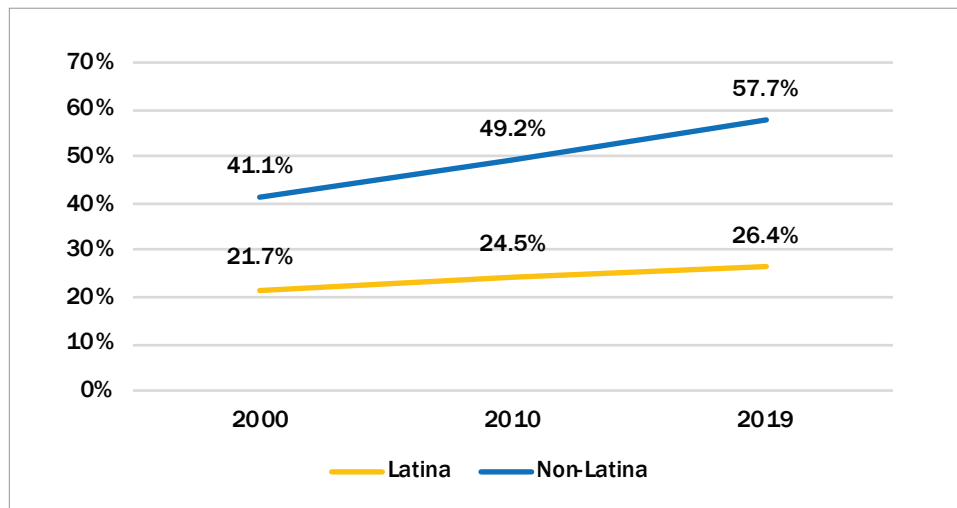
Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

About 67% of the part-time seasonal Latina workers are concentrated in these five regions of Massachusetts: Central Massachusetts (16.2%), Northeastern Massachusetts (14.7%), South Coast (12.8%), Boston (12.4%), and Pioneer Valley (10.8%).

Educational Attainment of Employed Workers

Historically, Latina workers have lower educational attainment than Non-Latinas. However, their educational attainment has improved over the decades. More and more Latina workers aged 25 years or older are getting Bachelor's or graduate degrees: 26% in 2019 as compared to 22% in 2000 (Figure 8). In addition, the rate of Latina workers with less than high school education has reduced drastically over the years, from 20.8% to 15% (Figure 9). However, as shown in the figures below, the gap between Latina workers and Non-Latina workers with a Bachelor's degree or higher is increasing. Meaning that more Non-Latina workers are getting a higher education credential than Latina workers.²⁹

Figure 8: Educational Status of Employed Workers, Bachelor's Degree or Higher

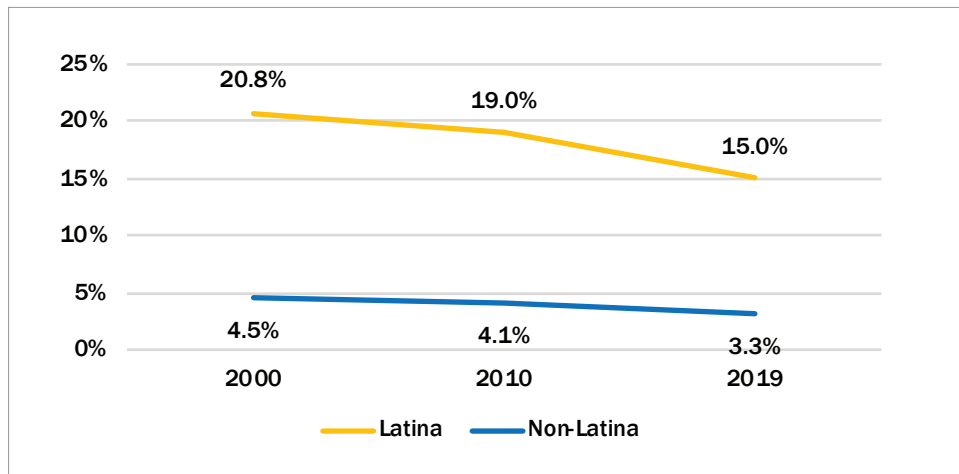


Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys



²⁹ Billie Gastic, Melissa Colón, & Andrew Flannery Aguilar (2010). "The State of Latinos and Education in Massachusetts: 2010" (2010). *Gastón Institute Publications*. 160. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/160

Figure 9: Educational Status of Employed Workers, Less than High School

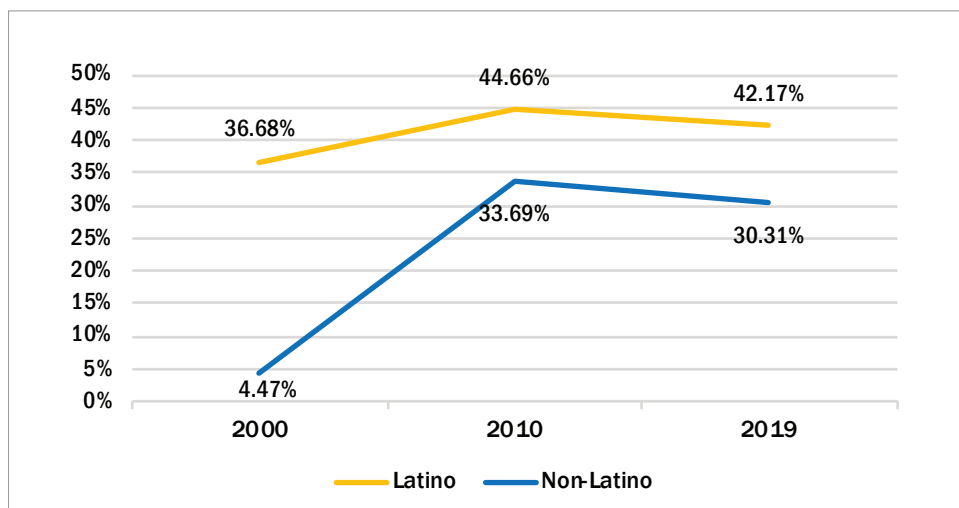


Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

English Language Proficiency of Employed Workers

Compared to Non-Latina workers, fewer Latina workers are English proficient. Figure 10 shows the English language proficiency among employed workers aged 16 and above in Massachusetts. Over the years, the share of Latina workers with limited English proficiency has increased from 36.7% in 2000 to 42.2% in 2019, meaning that more Latinas with limited English proficiency are entering the labor market. The share of non-Latina workers with limited English proficiency has also increased, from 2000 (4.5%) to 2019 (30.3%). However, the share of non-Latina workers with limited English proficiency is smaller than Latina workers.

Figure 10: English Language Proficiency of Employed Workers, Limited English Proficient



Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Wage Earnings

Table 1 highlights the double disadvantage that Latina workers face in the labor market. Latina workers experience a larger wage gap than Latino men. Latina workers earn lower median wage incomes when compared to Non-Latinas and Latino men. They also earn lower median wages than other race and ethnicity groups. The wage gap between these groups has only increased over time. The gap between Latinas and Non-Latinas in 2019 was 51% while between Latinas and Latino men it was 15%. The discrepancies with non-Latinos are large. Nationally, Latina workers earn 57 cents for every dollar earned by Non-Latino White men.³⁰

Table 1: Median Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Sex

	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latino Men	Wage Gap
2000	\$ 34,731	\$ 48,960	-41%	\$ 38,250	-10%
2010	\$ 35,066	\$ 52,598	-50%	\$ 40,910	-17%
2019	\$ 39,396	\$ 59,599	-51%	\$ 45,457	-15%

Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Income by Age Cohorts

Across the age cohorts, full-time Latina workers have lower wage income than Non-Latina workers in Massachusetts. The wage gap is fairly small in the 18-24 age categories but much higher in the 25-54 and 55-64 age cohorts.

From 2000 to 2019, the real median wages for both Latina and Non-Latina workers aged 18-24 decreased. However, Latina workers saw a greater decline. While, for workers aged 25-54, the largest share of the workforce, both Latinas and Non-Latinas saw a rise in median wages from 2000 to 2019. However, this increase in median wages is smaller for Latina workers (15%) than for Non-Latina workers (19%). In 2019, the wage gap between Latina and Non-Latina full-time workers aged 25-54 years was 50%.

Table 2: Median Real Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Age Cohorts

Age	2000			2010			2019		
	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap
18-24	\$28,611	\$32,130	-12%	\$26,883	\$29,338	-9%	\$26,264	\$31,517	-20%
25-54	\$35,190	\$50,796	-44%	\$36,936	\$56,105	-52%	\$40,406	\$60,609	-50%
55-64	\$36,720	\$45,900	-25%	\$37,403	\$57,274	-53%	\$35,355	\$60,609	-71%

Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

³⁰ Institute for Women's Policy Research (2021). <https://iwpr.org/iwpr-publications/fact-sheet/latina-women-equal-pay-2021/>

Nativity

Latinas in Massachusetts have an increased share of foreign-born population, as shown in Figure 5b. The foreign-born Latinas are more likely to have increased labor force participation, but the wage gap persists. As mentioned earlier, Latinas earn lower wage incomes than Non-Latinas, and this trend holds true when compared based on their nativity. The wage gap for Latina foreign-born workers is 61% and for native-born Latinas it is 50%.

Table 3: Median Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Nativity

Nativity	2000			2010			2019		
	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Native born	\$38,097	\$48,960	-29%	\$35,066	\$54,935	-57%	\$40,406	\$60,609	-50%
Foreign-born	\$30,600	\$41,922	-37%	\$33,896	\$45,585	-34%	\$31,416	\$50,507	-61%

Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Household Type

The wage gap between Latina workers and Non-Latina workers with children under the age of 17 years has increased over the decades.

In Massachusetts, among employed women, Puerto Ricans (9.1%) and Dominicans (5.3%) disproportionately are single heads of households.

Table 4: Median Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Household Type

Presence of Own Children	2000			2010			2019		
	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Females without children	\$41,310	\$53,550	-30%	\$36,936	\$51,780	-40%	\$40,406	\$55,558	-37%
Female with children under 17 years	\$33,660	\$48,960	-45%	\$34,014	\$58,442	-72%	\$39,295	\$69,700	-77%

Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Educational Attainment

Earlier we saw that Latina educational attainment has improved over the decades. However, it seems that Latina workers earn lower wage income than Non-Latina workers with the same level of educational attainment (Table 5). Latinas with less than a high school education have a slightly lower wage gap (17%) in 2019. In 2019, the median wage income of Latina workers with a college degree was 22% lower

than for Non-Latina workers with the same level of education. Thus, we will next explore occupational segregation to help explain this persistent wage gap.

Table 5: Median wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Educational Attainment

Education	2000			2010			2019		
	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap	Latina	Non-Latina	Wage Gap
LTHS	\$26,010	\$30,600	-18%	\$23,376	\$28,052	-20%	\$30,304	\$35,355	-17%
HS	\$31,212	\$39,780	-27%	\$30,390	\$37,403	-23%	\$30,304	\$40,204	-33%
Some college	\$36,873	\$46,818	-27%	\$36,234	\$46,754	-29%	\$31,416	\$44,446	-41%
BA+	\$58,140	\$62,883	-8%	\$58,442	\$70,130	-20%	\$60,609	\$73,741	-22%

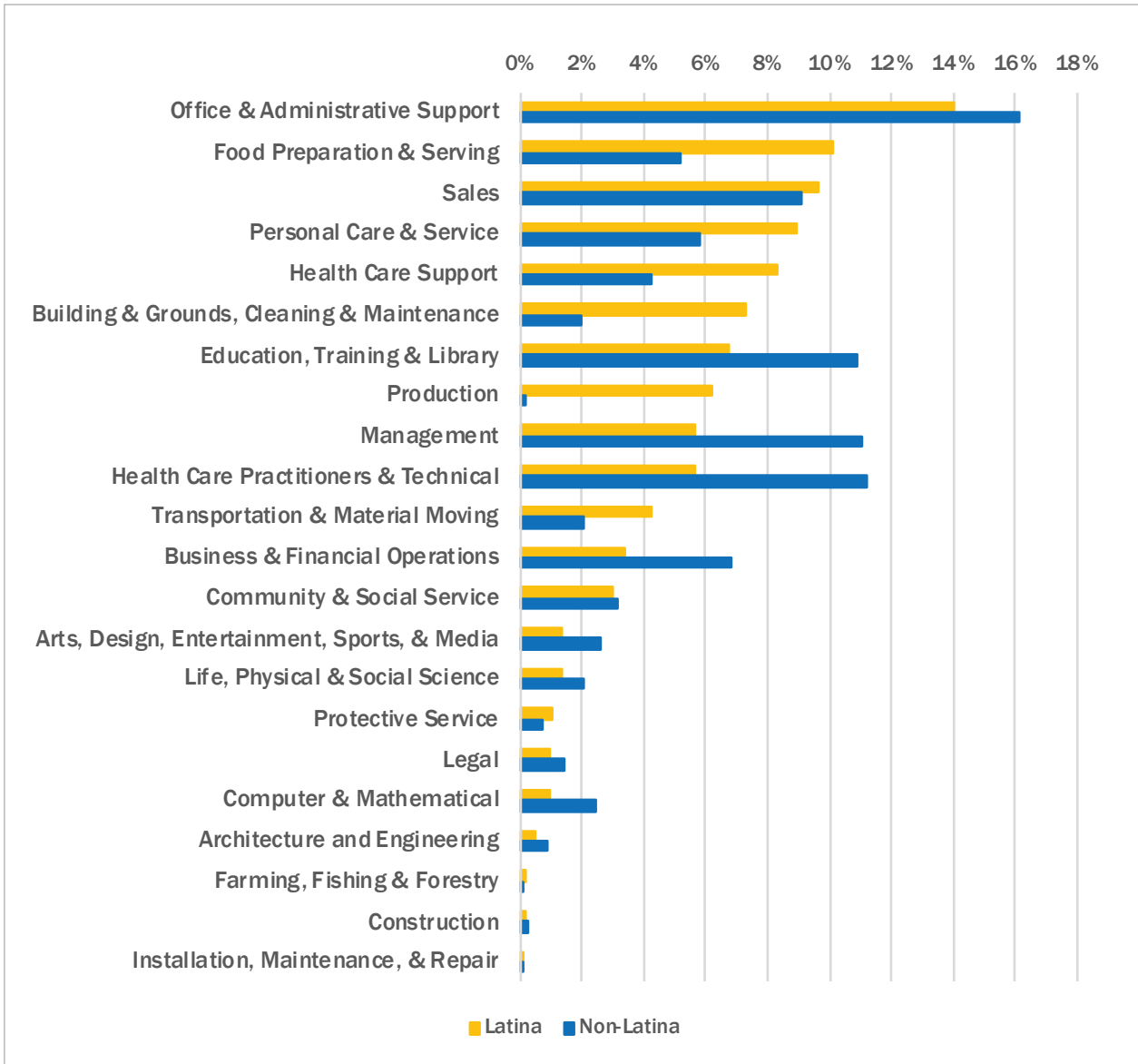
Source: 2000 Census & 2010, 2019 American Community Surveys

Wage Income Differentials by Occupations

The Standard Occupation Code created by the Office of Management and Budget classifies detailed occupations with similar job duties, and in some cases skills, education, or training. Workers are classified into one of 867 detailed occupations according to their occupational definition. These detailed occupations are combined to form 459 broad occupations, 98 minor groups, and 23 major groups. This report uses the 23 major occupational groups for its analysis. We generate median wage income using the 5-year 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data.

The occupational distribution of a population is related to the overall labor supply of a region. For a vibrant economy, we need both higher- and lower-skilled workers. Latina workers are disproportionately found in a few occupational categories in the labor force in Massachusetts. About 69% of Latinas work in just eight major categories: Office & Administrative Support (14.1%), Food Preparation & Serving (10.2%), Sales (9.6%), Personal Care & Service (9.0%), Health Care Support (8.3%), Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance (7.3%), Production (6.2%), Transportation & Material Moving (4.3%). These occupations pay lower wages. In comparison, only 44.7% of Non-Latinas work in these occupations. The situation is quite different for higher-skilled occupations which generally require higher educational attainment. Slightly above 22% of Latinas work in the following five higher-paying occupations: Management (6%), Health Care Practitioners & Technical (6%), Business & Financial Operations (3%), Computer & Mathematical (1%), Education, Training & Library (7%), while 42.5% of Non-Latinas work in these same occupations (Figure 10).

Figure 11: Occupational Distribution of Employed Workers



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Table 6 uses the thirteen occupational categories that are included in Figure 10 and highlighted in the above paragraph. In this table (and in Tables 7-12 that follow), higher- and lower-skilled occupational categories are separated. For each occupational category, median wages for Latinas and Non-Latinas are given, followed by their gap. As a reminder, the gap is calculated by subtracting the Latina median from the Non-Latina median and then dividing the result by the Latina median. The other 10 occupational wage gaps are reported in the appendix.

Table 6: Median Wage Income by Occupational Distribution among Full-Time Workers

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Business & Financial Operations	\$50,000	\$74,000	-48%
Management	\$58,000	\$82,000	-41%
Education, Training & Library	\$44,500	\$59,000	-33%
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$65,000	\$76,000	-17%
Computer & Mathematical	\$86,000	\$90,000	-5%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,800	\$38,000	-83%
Sales	\$31,200	\$50,000	-60%
Health Care Support	\$31,100	\$37,000	-19%
Production	\$31,000	\$36,000	-16%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$25,000	\$27,000	-8%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$26,000	\$26,000	0%
Personal Care & Service	\$28,600	\$28,000	2%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey			

When we compare the gaps in Table 6, we find that among low-skilled occupations, the highest gaps between Latina and Non-Latina workers occur in two categories, Transportation & Material Moving, and Sales, at 83% and 60%, respectively. In higher-skilled occupations, the highest differential is in the Business & Financial Operations category at 48% followed by the Management category at 41%. In the Personal Care & Service category, full-time Latina workers seem to earn a higher median wage than Non-Latina workers by about 2%. In one category, Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance, there is no wage differential between Latina and Non-Latina workers. In the other eight categories, the differentials are within the range of 5% to 33%.

Prime Working Age

Table 7 examines the same occupational categories but focuses on full-time workers aged 25-54 years, that is, workers who are in their prime earning years. Latinas have the highest share of their population between these ages. Earlier in this report, Table 2 showed that the wage gap between Latinas and Non-Latinas in this age group in 2019 was 50% in the state of Massachusetts. Table 7 describes the wage gaps by occupations.

Table 7: Median Wage Income by Occupations Among Full-Time Workers ages 25-54

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Business & Financial Operations	\$47,500	\$75,000	-58%
Management	\$58,000	\$83,000	-43%
Education, Training & Library	\$77,000	\$98,000	-27%
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$70,000	\$75,000	-7%
Computer & Mathematical	\$65,000	\$60,000	8%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,000	\$45,000	-125%
Sales	\$31,800	\$55,000	-73%
Health Care Support	\$31,100	\$38,000	-22%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$25,000	\$30,000	-20%
Production	\$30,000	\$36,000	-20%
Office & Administrative Support	\$40,000	\$45,400	-14%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$26,200	\$26,000	1%
Personal Care & Service	\$28,600	\$28,200	1%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey			

On comparing Table 7 with Table 6 (which includes workers of all age groups), we find that the wage gaps are slightly higher in most occupations for prime-working-age Latinas. Latina workers aged 25-54 earn a higher wage income than Non-Latina workers in the same age grouping in the following three categories: Education, Training, & Library (8%), Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance (1%), and Personal Care & Service (1%). The negative wage differentials for Latina workers in this age group are significantly larger in the Sales category (-73%), and Transportation & Material Moving category (-125%). The differential in the higher-skilled occupations is greater in Management category (-43%), and Business & Financial Operations category (-58%).

Nativity

The following two tables (Table 8 and Table 9) follow-up on the earlier Table 3, which broke down the wage gap between native-born and foreign-born workers. It is important to note that Puerto Ricans, as U.S. citizens, count in the native-born category. Table 3 showed overall gaps of 50% and 61%, respectively, for native-born and foreign-born workers. Tables 8 and 9 show the breakdown by occupations.

Table 8: Median Wage Income by Occupational Distribution among Full-Time, Native-Born Workers

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Business & Financial Operations	\$47,500	\$75,000	-58%
Education, Training & Library	\$47,000	\$60,000	-28%
Management	\$71,000	\$83,000	-17%
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$72,000	\$78,000	-8%
Computer & Mathematical	\$90,000	\$85,000	6%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Sales	\$25,000	\$50,000	-100%
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,000	\$40,000	-100%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$23,000	\$30,000	-30%
Health Care Support	\$30,000	\$36,000	-20%
Office & Administrative Support	\$40,000	\$47,000	-18%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$24,000	\$27,300	-14%
Production	\$35,000	\$39,800	-14%
Personal Care & Service	\$35,000	\$28,000	20%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

The breakdown by occupations shows gaps that are much lower than the overall figure (50% in the case of native-born) but still quite significant. Comparing Table 8 to the earlier tables, the gaps are slightly lower than in both lower- and higher-skilled categories. However, the wage gap for Sales has increased to 100%. The wage gap for native-born Latinas has improved in the Personal Care and Service category, where they earn wages that are 20% higher than those of native-born Non-Latinas.



Table 9: Median Wage Income by Occupations among Full-Time, Foreign-Born Workers

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$28,000	\$72,000	-157%
Management	\$55,000	\$80,000	-45%
Computer & Mathematical	\$77,000	\$1,05,000	-36%
Business & Financial Operations	\$55,000	\$70,000	-27%
Education, Training & Library	\$44,500	\$46,000	-3%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,800	\$36,100	-74%
Personal Care & Service	\$17,500	\$30,000	-71%
Health Care Support	\$31,100	\$38,000	-22%
Production	\$30,000	\$35,000	-17%
Office & Administrative Support	\$38,000	\$42,000	-11%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$25,000	\$25,000	0%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$32,500	\$25,000	23%
Sales	\$47,000	\$29,600	37%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey			

Among foreign-born workers, as Table 9 shows when compared with Table 8, the category-by-category gaps are smaller than among native-born workers. This is especially true in the lower-skilled occupational categories. Two categories in which foreign-born Latina workers earn higher wage incomes than Non-Latinas are Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance, and Sales, with gaps of -23% and -37%, respectively.

Educational Attainment

One of the findings of Table 5 was that for workers having at least a Bachelor’s degree, the wage gap between Latina and Non-Latina workers in 2019 is -22% statewide. The first part of Table 10, focused on higher-skilled occupations, includes only those workers with a Bachelor’s degree or higher. In two of the five categories, Computer & Mathematical, and Education, Training & Library, Latinas earn higher wage incomes than Non-Latinas, with gaps of 7% and 3%, respectively. In the other three categories, the wage gap is slightly higher than the -22% overall figure. It is also worth remembering that a smaller proportion of Latinas hold these higher-skilled jobs, 22.4% compared to 42.5% for Non-Latinas.

Table 10: Median Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Educational Attainment and Occupations

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Business & Financial Operations	\$55,000	\$78,000	-42%
Management	\$76,000	\$95,000	-25%
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$70,000	\$85,000	-21%
Education, Training & Library	\$65,000	\$63,000	3%
Computer & Mathematical	\$1,05,000	\$98,000	7%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,800	\$35,000	-68%
Office & Administrative Support	\$29,500	\$44,000	-49%
Health Care Support	\$30,000	\$38,000	-27%
Production	\$31,000	\$36,000	-16%
Sales	\$30,450	\$35,000	-15%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$25,000	\$27,000	-8%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$25,000	\$26,000	-4%
Personal Care & Service	\$26,200	\$25,000	5%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey			

The lower part of Table 10, focusing on wage gaps among lower-skilled occupations, includes only those workers with a high school education or less. These categories include about 69% of all Latina workers. In only one of these eight occupations, Personal Care & Support, is the gap positive, that is, Latinas earn higher wage incomes than Non-Latinas. In the others, the gap ranges from -4% to -68%.

Household Type

The following two tables follow up on the earlier Table 4, which broke down the wage gap between workers with children under the age of 18 and workers with no children under that age. Table 4 showed overall gaps of 77% and 37%, respectively, for workers with children under the age of 18 and workers with no children under that age. Tables 11 and 12 show the distribution by occupations.

Table 11: Median Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Household Type and Occupations, Children aged 17 years or under

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Management	\$55,000	\$91,000	-65%
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$55,000	\$88,000	-60%
Computer & Mathematical	\$77,000	\$1,00,000	-30%
Education, Training & Library	\$55,000	\$70,000	-27%
Business & Financial Operations	\$70,500	\$80,000	-13%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,000	\$30,000	-50%
Health Care Support	\$30,000	\$40,000	-33%
Sales	\$47,000	\$55,500	-18%
Office & Administrative Support	\$40,000	\$47,000	-18%
Production	\$30,000	\$35,000	-17%
Personal Care & Service	\$26,200	\$30,000	-15%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$26,200	\$25,000	5%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$30,000	\$25,000	17%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

The distribution by occupations shows gaps that are much lower than the overall figure (77% in the case of workers with children under the age of 17) but still quite significant. Latina workers with children under 18 years earn higher wage income than Non-Latina workers in two categories: Food Preparation & Serving, and Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance, with positive gaps of 17% and 5%, respectively.



Table 12: Median Wage Income of Full-Time Workers by Household Type and Occupations, No Children

Major Occupation Categories	Full-time Latina	Full-time Non-Latina	Wage Gap
Higher skilled occupations			
Education, Training & Library	\$48,000	\$64,000	-33%
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	\$67,000	\$80,000	-19%
Management	\$85,000	\$90,000	-6%
Business & Financial Operations	\$73,000	\$76,000	-4%
Computer & Mathematical	\$1,15,000	\$95,000	17%
Lower-skilled occupations			
Transportation & Material Moving	\$20,300	\$45,000	-122%
Sales	\$26,950	\$50,000	-86%
Building & Grounds, Cleaning & Maintenance	\$24,000	\$30,000	-25%
Office & Administrative Support	\$40,000	\$50,000	-25%
Food Preparation & Serving	\$25,000	\$30,000	-20%
Production	\$45,000	\$45,000	0%
Health Care Support	\$45,000	\$38,000	16%
Personal Care & Service	\$41,100	\$30,000	27%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey			

Among workers with no children, as Table 12 shows when compared with Table 11, the wage gaps in the higher-skilled categories are smaller than among workers with children aged 17 years or under. The gaps in the lower-skilled categories are much higher in comparison with Table 11. In Health Care Support and Personal Care & Services, Latinas earn higher wage incomes than Non-Latinas with no children, with positive gaps of 16% and 27%, respectively. In two of these eight categories, Sales, and Transport and Material Moving, the gap is noticeably higher, at 86% and 112%, respectively. In other categories, the gap ranges from 20% to 28%.

A large share of Dominican and Puerto Rican women reside in Massachusetts, at 2.1% and 4.9%, respectively, according to the 2019 ACS. This section compares the socio-demographic characteristics of Dominican and Puerto Rican women in Massachusetts in 2019. In 2019, the labor force participation rate among Dominican women (68%) was slightly higher than among Puerto Rican women (60.8%) aged 16 years or older. Puerto Rican women saw a slightly higher unemployment rate at 5.3% than Dominican women at 4.5%, in the state. Among employed women, more Puerto Ricans (19.3%) than Dominicans (17.7%) worked as part-time or seasonal workers. There was a vast difference in the educational attainment among Dominican and Puerto Rican women who were employed and aged 25 years or older. The share

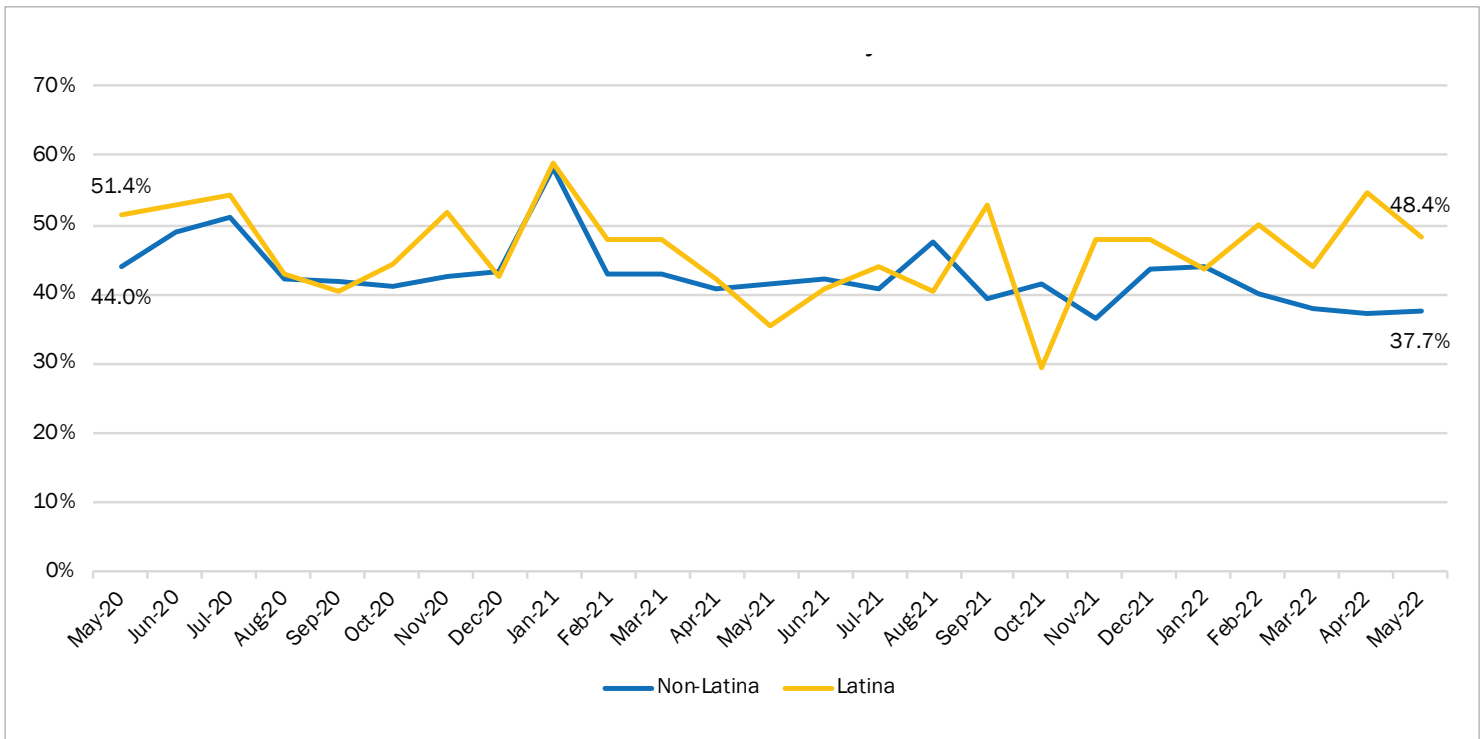
of Dominican women workers with less than high school education is higher than Puerto Rican women workers, at 15% and 11%, respectively, meaning that fewer Dominican women workers are gaining education than Puerto Rican women workers. In addition, comparing educational attainment at the higher educational level, we find that more Puerto Rican than Dominican women workers are getting a Bachelor's degree or higher (22.4% versus 15.2%).

About 58% of Dominican women work in just five major categories: Health Care Support (15.8%), Office & Administrative Support (11.7%), Food Preparation & Serving (10.6%), Production (10.6%), and Sales (9.1%). Approximately 62% of Puerto Rican women work in five major categories: Health Care Support (16.9%), Office & Administrative Support (15.8%), Sales (12.9%), Food Preparation & Serving (8.6%), and Education, Training, & Library (7.6%). All these occupations, except Education, Training, & Library, are low-paying jobs.

The Effect of COVID-19 on Latinas

To examine the effect of COVID-19 on Latinas in Massachusetts, we use data from Pulse Household Survey. The U.S. Census Bureau, in collaboration with multiple federal agencies, has produced data on COVID-19's social and economic effects on American households. The Pulse Household Survey has been produced in near real-time to inform federal and state response and recovery planning. As a result, the sample size is small, and the data are "noisy," with large margins of error. Even with these limitations, we see that more Latinas than Non-Latinas have consistently reported not having worked in the last 7 days. The share reported in Figure 12 should not be confused with unemployment. For example, in the 2019 American Community Survey, nearly 33% of Latinas and Non-Latinas aged 18 and older did not work. Over the 25 months reported here, Latina had a 4% higher share not working. This increase in not working may have been due to disruptions in the workplace and school and afterschool programs.

Figure 12: No Work in the Last 7 Days



Source: 2020-2022 Pulse Household Survey



Conclusion

For Latina and Non-Latina workers in higher-skilled and higher-paying occupations, it is common to have benefits such as paid leave and workplace flexibility. However, for low-income occupations, workers do not have access to such benefits. Women have higher care giving responsibilities than men,^{31,32} especially Latinas and women from other racial and ethnic groups.³³ More Latinas work in lower-skilled occupations than Non-Latinas (see Figure 11), which requires them to work outside of their homes and to access childcare facilities for their children. However, the cost of childcare is often too high,³⁴ forcing Latina mothers to either work reduced hours or exit the labor market.

How can we improve labor market outcomes for Latina women? The data presented in this report do not explain *WHY* there are significant wage gaps for Latina women, or why other disparities persist in Massachusetts. More qualitative research is needed to better understand the experiences of Latina workers in specific labor market sectors, especially in sectors where there is entrenched occupational segregation and where Latinas face discrimination.

The Gastón Institute's report on Latinos in the Labor Force³⁵ also highlighted the severe wage gaps for Latina women and our other reports, *A Portrait of Latino Children*³⁶ and *COVID-19 and Latinos in Massachusetts*, examined the social determinants of health for Latina women.³⁷ In our research findings, there continue to be unacceptably high rates of Latino children living in poverty, with one in four Latinos in Massachusetts living in poverty. Massachusetts' Latinos face food insecurity³⁸ rates that are substantially higher than for U.S. Latinos and for other communities of color in Massachusetts. A disturbing one in four Latinos in

³¹ Kim Parker (2015). "Women more than men adjust their careers for family life." PEW Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/10/01/women-more-than-men-adjust-their-careers-for-family-life/>

³² Sarah J. Glynn (2018). "An Unequal Division of Labor: How Equitable Workplace Policies Would Benefit Working Mothers." Center for American Progress, Washington. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/valuing-womens-caregiving-coronavirus-crisis/>

³³ Jocelyn Frye (2020). "On the Frontlines at Work and at Home: The Disproportionate Economic Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Women of Color." Center for American Progress, Washington. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/frontlines-work-home/>

³⁴ D. Crosby, J. Mendez, & A. Barnes (2019). "Child care affordability is out of reach for many low-income Hispanic households." Bethesda, MD: National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families. <https://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Hispanic-Center-Child-Care-Affordability-October-2019-FINAL.pdf>

³⁵ Phillip Granberry (2020). "Latinos in the Labor Force." Gastón Institute Publications. 248. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/248

³⁶ Phillip Granberry, Alejandro Alvarez, Vishakha Agarwal, Fabián Torres-Ardila, & Gastón Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston (2021). "A Portrait of Latino Children: The Gap with Non-Latinos in Massachusetts." Gastón Institute Publications. 266. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/266

³⁷ Lorna Rivera, Phillip Granberry, Lorena Estrada-Martínez, Miren Uriarte, Eduardo Siqueira, Ana Rosa Linde-Arias, & Gonzalo Bacigalupe (2020). "COVID-19 and Latinos in Massachusetts." Gastón Institute Publications. 253. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/253

³⁸ Trevor Mattos, Phillip Granberry, & Vishakha Agarwal (2022). "¡AVANCEMOS YA!: Persistent Economic Challenges and Opportunities Facing Latinos in Massachusetts." Gastón Institute Publications. 281. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/281

Massachusetts are experiencing food insecurity. Indeed, Latinas are struggling to take care of their families in Massachusetts, working hard for low wages.

Where Latinas in Massachusetts live and work makes a huge difference because Massachusetts has some of the nation's highest housing costs and Boston has the nation's second most expensive rental market. Latino populations are concentrated in Gateway cities such as Holyoke and Lawrence and these are cities that have limited economic opportunities, limited public transportation, and underfunded public schools (see Figure 1).³⁹ Massachusetts' Gateway cities have historically attracted immigrant workers who use their social networks to obtain jobs in these cities/towns.⁴⁰ The Gastón Institute's research about immigrant entrepreneurs in East Boston and Dorchester's Fields Corner neighborhood found that employment networks for mixed-status immigrant Latinas relied upon extended family and close ethnic ties to other immigrants. As many Latinas find jobs through their immigrant/ethnic networks, their networks often reinforce occupational segregation.⁴¹

We need to increase access to affordable and quality childcare in Massachusetts, one of the states with the nation's highest costs for childcare. As mentioned earlier, Latina workers face a double disadvantage and have faced historical oppression as workers in the U.S. labor force. They remain overrepresented in female-dominated occupations that pay low wages, and these jobs offer few, if any, benefits such as paid leave and workplace flexibility. Because more Latinas work in lower-skilled occupations than non-Latinas, they tend to work outside of their homes. This requires Latina mothers to access childcare facilities for their children; however, the cost of childcare is often too high,⁴² forcing Latina mothers to either work reduced hours or exit the labor market. Even for higher-skilled Latinas, a lack of access to childcare can reduce labor force participation or the ability to pursue jobs with competitive salaries. This is especially challenging for single-parent households. A national study by the Pew Research Center found that, of all mothers in the United States, Latinas were most likely to stay at home with their children.⁴³

We need to increase access to ESOL and ABE classes in Massachusetts. In Massachusetts 40% of Latinas 18 + have limited English proficiency. Not being proficient in English affects employment opportunities for Latinas. However, there

³⁹ Trevor Mattos, Phillip Granberry, & Vishakha Agarwal (2022). "¡AVANCEMOS YA!: Persistent Economic Challenges and Opportunities Facing Latinos in Massachusetts." Gastón Institute Publications. 281. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/281

⁴⁰ Changing Faces of Greater Boston. <https://www.bostonindicators.org/-/media/indicators/boston-indicators-reports/report-files/changing-faces-2019/changing-faces-of-greater-boston.pdf%209>

⁴¹ Ramon Borges-Mendez, Michael Liu, & Paul Watanabe (2005). "Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Neighborhood Revitalization: Studies of the Allston Village, East Boston and Fields Corner Neighborhoods in Boston." Institute for Asian American Studies Publications. 13. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/iaas_pubs/13

⁴² D. Crosby, J. Mendez, & A. Barnes (2019). "Child care affordability is out of reach for many low-income Hispanic households." Bethesda, MD: National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families. <https://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Hispanic-Center-Child-Care-Affordability-October-2019-FINAL.pdf>

⁴³ Gretchen Livingston (2014). "Among Hispanics, immigrants more likely to be stay-at-home moms and to believe that's best for kids," Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/04/24/among-hispanics-immigrants-more-likely-to-be-stay-at-home-moms-and-to-believe-thats-best-for-kids/>

are long waiting lists and a great need for more ESOL and Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes throughout the commonwealth. The Gastón Institute's research with community partners finds that there is a need for workforce training that is multilingual and accessible. According to English for New Bostonians and their English Works Survey results, ESOL classes and English classes are needed for employees at all levels and with flexible schedules. There is a strong desire for opportunities for employees to learn English while at work.⁴⁴

In order to address occupational segregation that affects Latinas disproportionately, **we need to increase access to post-secondary education for Latinas.** We also need more Latina representation in higher-skilled professions such as the STEM professions. Addressing racial discrimination is key because even when Latinas have a Bachelor's degree they still earn less than non-Latinas with a Bachelor's degree. Improving post-secondary education access and attainment of Bachelor's degrees is critical, but we also need to create pathways for Latina students to pursue STEM areas of study. In Massachusetts, the highest paying jobs where there is local demand are in the Biotechnology sector. Recruitment and retention of Latinas in higher-skilled professions will require intentional diversity, inclusion, and equity initiatives in these workplaces.

This report does not fully address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Latina workers and the long-term negative effects from the pandemic on Latinas in Massachusetts remain to be seen. We already know that Latinas in other parts of the US have suffered disproportionately from effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁵ A Gastón Institute report, *Latinx Population Hit Hard in the COVID-19 Recession: Mounting Hardships and One Big Idea for an Inclusive Recovery*,⁴⁶ suggests that in order to address the disproportionate social and economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the Latinx population, **there should be a guaranteed income and cash assistance provided directly to families.** Having a guaranteed income would bolster economic security in tough times. For Latinas and their families who are more likely to live in poverty, a guaranteed income can be a lifeline as evidenced in a pilot study of Universal Basic Income in the Latino-majority city, Chelsea, Massachusetts.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ English for New Bostonians (2021). "ESOL Will Help Fuel Boston's Equitable Economic and Educational Recovery." https://www.englishfornewbostonians.org/_files/ugd/8eaff8_1b153b8e544f4bb18cea8dbb27746767.pdf

⁴⁵ Kassandra Hernández, Diana García, Paula Nazario, Michael Rios, & Rodrigo Domínguez-Villegas (2021). "Latinas Exiting the Workforce: How the Pandemic Revealed Historic Disadvantages and Heightened Economic Hardship." UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative. <https://latino.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Latinas-Exiting-the-Workforce.pdf>

⁴⁶ Trevor Mattos, Bansari Kamdar, Phillip Granberry, & Fabián Torres-Ardilla (2021). "Latinx Population Hit Hard in the COVID-19 Recession: Mounting Hardships and One Big Idea for an Inclusive Recovery." Gastón Institute Publications. 265. https://scholarworks.umb.edu/gaston_pubs/265

⁴⁷ "The Guaranteed Income Program In Chelsea, Mass. Should Be A National Model." <https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2021/05/24/covid-19-chelsea-guaranteed-income-rich-barlow>

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. Follow us on Twitter: @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

Dr. Lorna Rivera is Associate Professor & Director of the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development & Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. Rivera has a Ph.D. in Sociology from Northeastern University and was National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellow in 2003. Rivera's research focuses on adult literacy programs, social welfare reform policies, gender/racial/ethnic-based health disparities, and the education of Latinx students. Currently, Rivera is Principal Investigator on three federally funded projects examining the impact of COVID-19 and Latinx and immigrant communities. She is also Co-PI. researcher on the EPA funded study, "Community-Driven Environmental Assessment" in Vieques, Puerto Rico.

Vishakha Agarwal is a researcher concerned with equitable quality education for all. Vishakha completed her Ph.D. in Public Policy in 2022 from the University of Massachusetts Boston. Her research centers on the systems that give rise to social and educational inequalities and the experiences of individuals, especially children, that are most impacted. Vishakha's work focuses on schooling processes and practices, children's education, and their subjectivities – perceptions of self and sense of school belonging. Vishakha also holds a Master's in Public Policy from UMass Boston and a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Shiv Nadar University in India.

Phillip Granberry is a social demographer specializing in immigration in the United States. He worked with various community-based organizations assisting recently arrived U.S. immigrants before earning a Ph.D. in Public Policy. His research focuses on the accumulation and use of social capital among Mexican migrants and the impact of welfare and immigration policy reform on Latinos in Massachusetts. He is currently a senior research associate for the Gastón Institute. He teaches in the Economics Department at the UMass Boston, where he teaches courses on international migration and metropolitan area economic development.

