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### Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Fitchburg

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# **Latinos in Massachusetts**

## **Selected Areas:**

### **Fitchburg**

**Phillip Granberry, Victor Luis Martins, & Michelle Borges**

**July 2023**



THE MAURICIO GASTÓN INSTITUTE  
FOR LATINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
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**Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Fitchburg**

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## Fitchburg Overview

Fitchburg is a city of 41,946 residents, including 12,608 (30.1%) who identify as Latino or Hispanic, according to the 2020 Decennial Census. Statewide, Latino residents contribute 12.6% of the total population. In Fitchburg, Whites make up the majority (54.6%) of the city, while Blacks and Asians account for 6.1% and 3.6% of the population, respectively (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Population Percentages by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg**

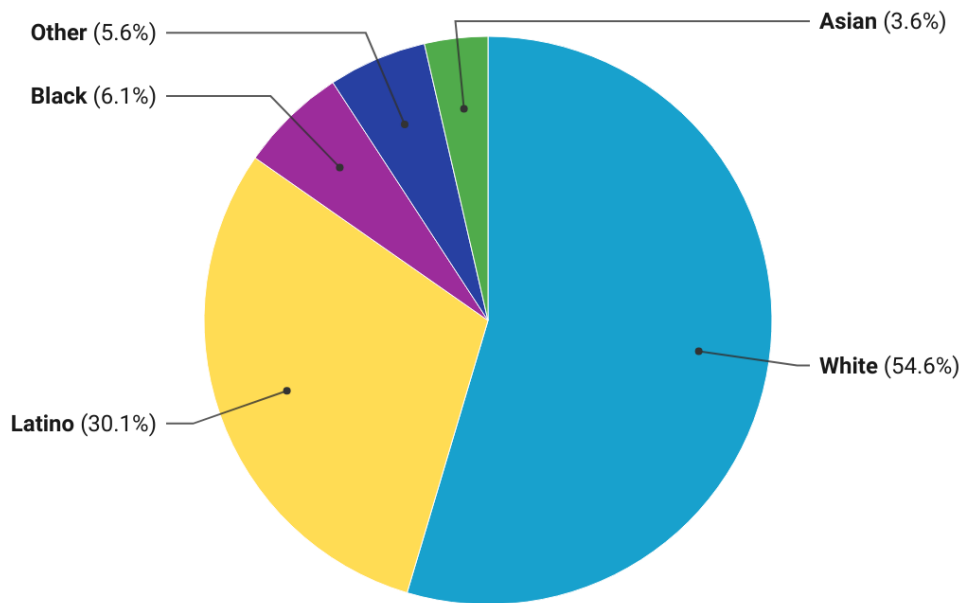


Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2020 Decennial Census · Created with Datawrapper

Between 2010 and 2020, the Latino population grew by 44.5% (Figure 2) and was only outpaced by Blacks (59.8%). With these two populations outpacing Fitchburg's 4.0% population growth during the decade, the White population experienced a 16.7% decrease. By comparison, the White population in Massachusetts declined by 4.7%, while the Latino population increased by 41.4%. The smaller Asian population in Fitchburg grew by 3.9%.

## Figure 2: Population Growth by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg from 2010 to 2020



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census · Created with Datawrapper

The remainder of this profile uses 2017–2021 American Community Survey data in order to analyze the demographic and economic characteristics presented in this profile.

Fitchburg has a well-established Puerto Rican population (Figure 3). There are 9,261 Puerto Ricans, compared to only 972 Mexicans, the second-largest Latino population in the city. Other smaller Latino populations are Uruguayans, Dominicans, and Ecuadorians. Statewide, the five largest Latino populations in Massachusetts in order of size are Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Mexicans.

Despite having a sizeable Latino community, Fitchburg has a very small foreign-born population, making up only 4.3% of town residents. (Note that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birth, whether born on the island or the mainland.) By comparison, foreign-born residents of Massachusetts make up 17.3% of the statewide population, and Latinos are 32.1% foreign-born.

## Figure 3: Origin of the Top Latino Populations in Fitchburg



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

## Median Age and Marital Status

The median age in Fitchburg is 39.6 years. The Latino population, with a median age of 27.3 years, helps lower the city's overall median age (Figure 4). This median age is much younger than for White residents of Fitchburg, for whom the median age is 45.8 years. Asians have a median age closer to Whites, while Blacks are younger than Latinos. Statewide, Latino residents have a median age of 28.9 years, slightly older than in Fitchburg.

**Figure 4: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg**



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

The marriage rate in Fitchburg is 40.0%. Possibly due to their younger age profile, Latinos with a marriage rate of 33.0% are below this rate for the city and also below the rate for Massachusetts Latinos overall (36.4%). Whites and Asians have higher marriage rates, while Blacks have lower marriage rates.

**Figure 5: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg (Ages 15+)**



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment in Fitchburg is lower than it is across the state. Specifically, 46.6% of those ages 25 or older across the state hold at least a Bachelor's degree, while this figure is 23.7% in Fitchburg. Latinos in Fitchburg have the lowest proportion of degree holders (9.4%), while Blacks have the highest rate at 34.4%, Whites (27.2%) and Asians (22.3%) are in between. Across the state, 21.6% of Latinos have at least a Bachelor's degree. At the other end of the educational attainment scale, 30.0% of Latinos in Fitchburg have less than a high school education compared to 27.4% statewide.

**Figure 6: Educational Attainment by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg (Ages 25+)**

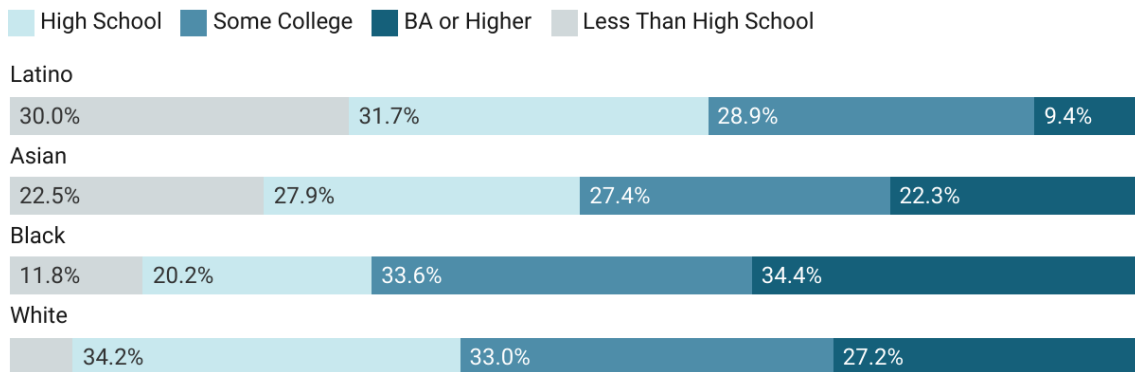


Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

## Labor Force Participation

Fitchburg's labor force participation rate is 65.8%, lower than Massachusetts's rate of 67.1%. The older White population, with a labor force participation rate of 61.0%, lowers the city's labor force participation (Figure 7). Latino labor force participation in Fitchburg (74.7%) is lower than only Blacks (79.8%) in the city but is higher than the statewide participation rate for Latinos (68.7%).

**Figure 7: Labor Force Participation by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg (Ages 16+)**



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

The unemployment rate in Fitchburg is 7.8%, which is higher than the state's 5.3% during this period. Statewide, the Latino unemployment rate is 8.9%, while in Fitchburg, Latinos with an 11.5% unemployment rate have the highest in the city (Figure 8). Asians have the next highest unemployment (8.2%), followed by Blacks (7.6%) and Whites (5.9%).

### Figure 8: Unemployment Rate by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg (Ages 16+)



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

For those employed in Fitchburg, Black, Asian, and White workers range between 39.5% and 45.6% in white-collar occupations. Latino residents have the lowest proportion working such jobs (22.5%). On the other hand, Latinos are more likely to work in services (44.5%) and blue-collar (33.0%). For Latinos across the state, this distribution is 28.8% white-collar, 45.4% service, and 25.7% blue-collar.

### Figure 9: Occupational Categories by Employed Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg (Ages 16+)

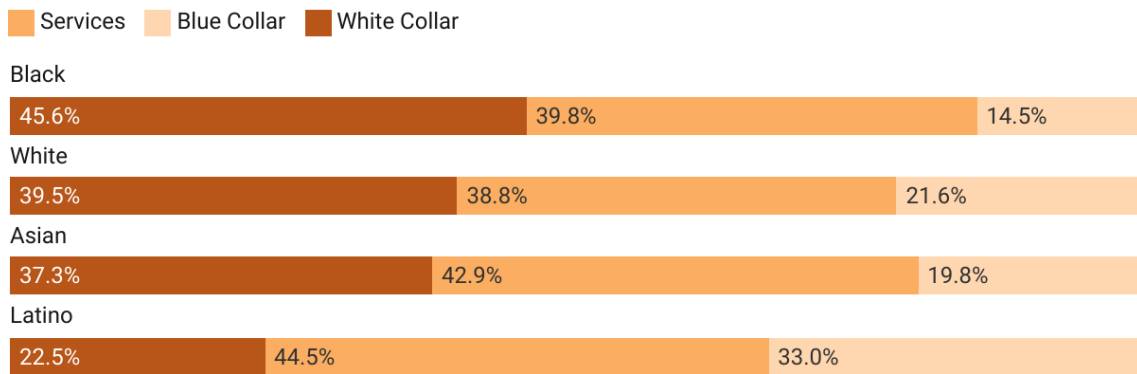


Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

## Income

Fitchburg residents have a median household income of \$60,446, less than the statewide median of \$89,026. Within Fitchburg, the smaller Asian population has the highest median household income (\$102,039). Latinos have a median household income of \$52,407 (Figure 10), very close to the statewide Latino median of \$52,106.

### Figure 10: Median Household Income by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper



## Housing Status and Medical Uninsurance

The final measures of Latino participation in Fitchburg are intended to identify how well Latinos are being rewarded for their economic, social, and political participation.

Fitchburg's homeownership rate of 56.1% is significantly lower than the overall Massachusetts rate of 62.4%. Among Latinos, however, the homeownership rate of 31.7% is higher than the statewide Latino rate of 29.7%. Blacks in Fitchburg (20.0%) have a lower homeownership rate than Latinos, while the rates for Whites (66.5%) and Asians (53.0%) are much higher (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg**



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

The share of city residents who lack medical insurance in Fitchburg (2.7%) is slightly higher than the statewide rate (2.5%). In Fitchburg, uninsured rates (Figure 12) are highest for Asians (3.8%), followed by Latinos (3.7%), Blacks (3.0%), and Whites (2.4%). The Latino statewide rate of medical uninsurance is 5.5%.

**Figure 12: Medical Uninsurance Rates by Ethno-Racial Groups in Fitchburg**



Chart: Gastón Institute · Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey · Created with Datawrapper

## About the 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 an improved understanding of the Latino experience in the commonwealth. Now in its 34<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.umb.edu/gastoninstitute).

## 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 at the Gastón Institute and Economics Department at UMass Boston, he is Senior Researcher in demography for the Boston Planning and Development Agency.

**Victor Luis Martins** holds an M.A. in Applied Economics from the University of Massachusetts Boston, specializing in Financial Economics and Macroeconomics. With a strong background in statistical analysis and data manipulation, he applies quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to analyze economic and social policy issues. Victor's current research focuses on the financialization and interest burden of non-financial corporations in the United States, as well as related economic and demographic conditions in Latinx communities in Massachusetts. His expertise

includes programming skills for data analysis, statistical modeling, and the interpretation of empirical data.

**Michelle Borges** is an economist from Brazil. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Applied Economics at the University of Massachusetts Boston and working as a research assistant at the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy. Her research interests span the areas of Labor Economics, Development Economics, Immigration, and Feminist Economics.

