Latinos in Holyoke: Poverty, Income, Education, Employment, and Housing

Gaston Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston
Latinos in Holyoke

Poverty, Income, Education, Employment, and Housing

Part two of a series of profiles of Latinos in Massachusetts completed with support from The Boston Foundation

The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy was established at the University of Massachusetts Boston in December of 1989. The creation of the Gastón Institute responds to the need for better understanding of the experience and conditions of life of Latinos in the Commonwealth. Its purpose is to conduct research about the Latino population in Massachusetts and to develop the kind of information and analysis necessary for the development of sound public policy and for the effective participation of the Latino population in public policy development in the Commonwealth. In an effort to facilitate the access to vital information about Latinos to various audiences, and with support from the Boston Foundation, the Gastón Institute has produced a series of basic demographic profiles for selected cities in the Commonwealth based on the 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing (Massachusetts Summary Tape File 3A, produced by the U.S. Bureau of the Census). These profiles are but one part of a broader initiative to disseminate the 1990 U.S. Census and to address other relevant aspects of the social and economic situation of Latinos in the Commonwealth.

Latinos had the largest proportion of persons with income below the poverty level, 59.1%. The poverty rate for Latinos is more than four times that of whites (13.7%) and higher than the rate for blacks (42.8%) and Asians (15.8%). Of those Latinos under the age of 18, 67.6% had income below the poverty level. In particular, the rate of poverty was greatest among those Latino children under 11 years of age.

### Holyoke: Select Poverty Rates by Race and Ethnicity in 1989

![Bar chart showing poverty rates by race and ethnicity in Holyoke in 1989.]

- **Latino**
  - All persons: 59.1%
  - Under 18: 67.6%
  - Single female householders: 60.0%

- **White**
  - All persons: 25.7%
  - Under 18: 49.6%
  - Single female householders: 42.8%

- **Black**
  - All persons: 13.7%
  - Under 18: 22.9%
  - Single female householders: 20.8%

- **Asian**
  - All persons: 34.8%
  - Under 18: 42.8%
  - Single female householders: 53.8%

### Holyoke: Poverty Status by Age and Race and Ethnicity in 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons Below Poverty</th>
<th>Latino* Poverty Rate</th>
<th>Total ** Poverty Rate</th>
<th>White Poverty Rate</th>
<th>Black Poverty Rate</th>
<th>Asian Poverty Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total below poverty level</td>
<td>7,729</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>10,880</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>1,601</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
<td>1,995</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 11 years</td>
<td>1,365</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>1,725</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 17 years</td>
<td>1,076</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>1,334</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 64 years</td>
<td>3,286</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>4,579</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>1,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74 years</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 years and over</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13,068</td>
<td>42,393</td>
<td>30,704</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Persons for whom poverty status is determined and families headed by single females

*Latino may be of any race

**Total includes Native Americans and Other Races

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Among Latino families, 61.1% had income below the poverty level in 1989, more than five times that of white families (11.2%). Black and Asian families also had a high rate of income below the poverty level, 36.4% and 15.4% respectively. However, in all race and ethnicity groups, the majority of those families with income below the poverty level were single female householders. For Latino families, 80.6% of single female households had income below the poverty level.

While the Massachusetts median household income in 1989 was $36,952, the median income for Holyoke was $22,858. In 1989, the per capita income of Latinos in Holyoke was $4,131 lower than any other race or ethnic group. Blacks and Asians had a slightly higher per capita income, $6,709 and $5,384 respectively. Whites had the highest per capita income, $13,530.
In 1990, 60.0% of the Latinos in the city of Holyoke had not received a high school diploma. This proportion was higher than any other race or ethnic group. At higher levels of education, 11.9% of Latinos attended some college or received an associate’s degree. However, only 4.3% received a bachelor’s or a professional or graduate degree. Overall, the educational attainment of the Latino population lagged the other race or ethnic groups.

![Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity in 1990]

In 1990, Latinos constituted 17.1% of the Holyoke labor force (employed plus unemployed). Of the 3,119 Latinos in the labor force, 1,292 were females and 1,827 were males. The labor force participation rate for Latino men in 1990 was 57.1%, lower than any other group. Their unemployment rate was 22.4%; this proportion is higher than white men, 8.0%, black men, 22.0%, but lower than Asian men, 27.2%. Latinas, on the other hand, had the lowest participation rate, 31.7%, and the highest unemployment rate, 33.7%.

![Employment Status by Race and Ethnicity in 1990]
In 1989, only 5.2% of Latino owner-occupied households were homeowners, compared to 50.3% of white, 3.1% of black, and 59.4% of Asian homeowners. The majority of Latino households, 94.8%, rented their dwelling. This was higher than the rate for Latinos in Massachusetts where 82.6% of Latino households are renters.

Of those with a mortgage, 50% or more of all the groups, except whites, had a mortgage of over $500; only 41.2% of whites had a mortgage over $500.

Of those renter-occupied housing units, 67.6% of the Latino population paid less than $500 monthly compared to 63.4% of whites, and 43.4% of blacks. In 1989, 32.4% of Latinos paid a monthly rent of over $500, while 35.5% of whites, 56.6% of blacks, and 100% of Asians paid over $500.