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Latinos in Lowell

Part 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

The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy was established at the University of Massachusetts at 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 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 United States Census. These profiles are but one part of the Gastón Institute's broader initiative to disseminate the 1990 United States Census and to address other relevant aspects of the social and economic situation of Latinos in the Commonwealth.

While population changes in the city of Lowell reflected statewide trends in other respects, Asians surpassed Latinos (as of 1990 the largest minority group in the state) as the largest racial/ethnic minority group in the city. Between 1980 and 1990 the total population of Lowell increased by 11.9%, and its composition changed substantially. The total Latino population of Lowell grew from 4,585 in 1980 to 10,499 in 1990, for an inter-censal increase of 129%. While in 1980 Latinos represented 5.0% of the total population of the city, they represented 10.1% in 1990. Lowell had the sixth largest absolute number of Latinos in Massachusetts in 1990, and its Latino population as a proportion of the total population of the city ranked seventh in the Commonwealth. (For more information about Latinos in Massachusetts see the back page.) The non-Latino white population decreased by 7.4% between 1980 and 1990, and the non-Latino black and Asian populations increased by 84.6% and 1802.8% respectively.

Lowell: Total Population by Race and Ethnicity for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Number of persons | % of total population | Number of persons | % of total population | |
| Non-Latino population* | 87,833 | 95.0 | 92,940 | 89.9 | 5.8 |
| White | 85,481 | 92.5 | 79,165 | 76.5 | -7.4 |
| Black | 1,134 | 1.2 | 2,093 | 2.0 | 84.6 |
| Asian** | 604 | 0.7 | 11,493 | 11.1 | 1802.8 |
| Other | 614 | 0.7 | 189 | 0.2 | -69.2 |
| Latino population | 4,585 | 5.0 | 10,499 | 10.1 | 129.0 |
| Total | 92,418 | 100.0 | 103,439 | 100.0 | 11.9 |

* Mutually exclusive categories

** This count of Non-Latino Asians includes Latinos who are Asians.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980. Census of Population and Housing: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics: Massachusetts. Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office. U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990. Census of Population and Housing, Massachusetts. Massachusetts Summary Tape File 1A.

¹ Latino will be used throughout to refer to a person living in the United States of Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, or Mexican ancestry as well as other Spanish-speaking people from Central or South American countries.

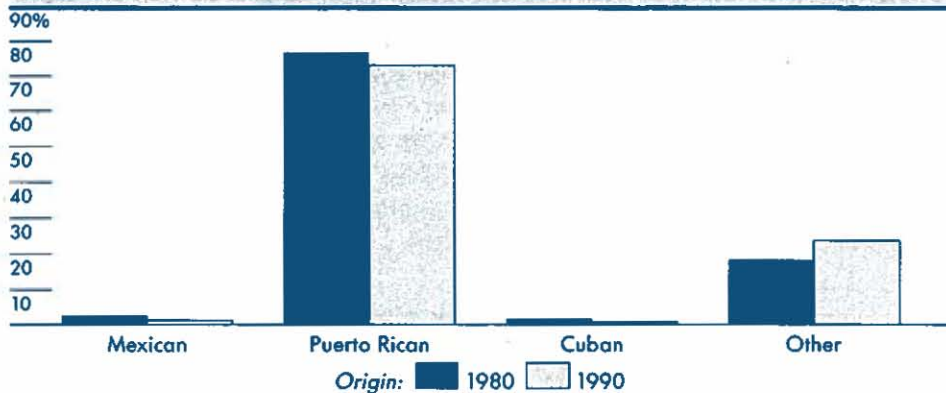
Puerto Ricans and "Other" Latinos were the major Latino subgroups in Lowell. Making up this "Other" category are Latinos from the Dominican Republic, Central and South America.² While the absolute number of both Puerto Ricans and "Other" Latinos more than doubled between 1980 and 1990, their proportion in relation to the total Latino population remained almost the same. The share of "Other" Latinos increased from 18.5% in 1980 to 23.9% in 1990.

Lowell: Composition of Latino Population by National Origin for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Mexican | 117 | 2.6 | 153 | 1.5 | 30.8 |
| Puerto Rican | 3,528 | 76.9 | 7,732 | 73.6 | 119.2 |
| Cuban | 91 | 2.0 | 100 | 1.0 | 9.9 |
| Other | 849 | 18.5 | 2,514 | 23.9 | 196.1 |
| Total | 4,585 | 100.0 | 10,499 | 100.0 | 129.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

Lowell: Latino Population by Origin (Percent of total Latinos in 1980-1990)



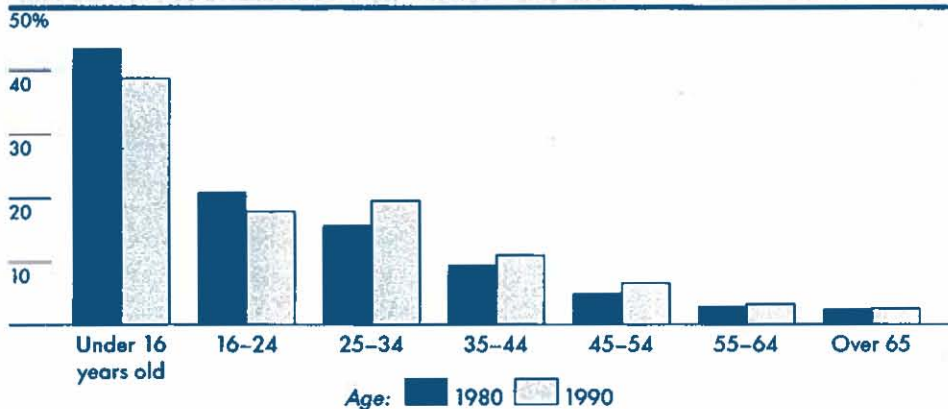
Lowell: Latino Population by Age for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Under 16 years old | 1,989 | 43.4 | 4,067 | 38.7 | 104.5 |
| 16-24 | 958 | 20.9 | 1,888 | 18.0 | 97.1 |
| 25-34 | 720 | 15.7 | 2,058 | 19.6 | 185.8 |
| 35-44 | 429 | 9.4 | 1,162 | 11.1 | 170.9 |
| 45-54 | 233 | 5.1 | 692 | 6.6 | 197.0 |
| 55-64 | 135 | 2.9 | 342 | 3.3 | 153.3 |
| Over 65 | 121 | 2.6 | 290 | 2.8 | 139.7 |
| Total | 4,585 | 100.0 | 10,499 | 100.0 | 129.0 |

Median age 18.6 21.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

Lowell: Latino Population by Age (Percent of total Latinos in 1980-1990)



The Latino population in the city of Lowell, while remaining relatively young, became older in general. Latino median age increased from 18.6 years in 1980 to 21.6 years in 1990. While Latinos 24 years of age or younger represented 64.3% of the total Latino population in 1980, they represented 56.7% in 1990. Conversely, for the same period, the percentage of Latinos between 25 and 54 years of age increased from 30.2% to 37.3%, and the percentage of Latinos 55 years of age and older increased slightly from 5.5% to 6.1%.

²It is not possible to disaggregate the "Other" Latino category so as to differentiate the share of those individuals from the Dominican Republic, South and Central American countries. Still unpublished 1990 U.S. Census data by nativity would further permit some degree of differentiation.

**Lowell: Composition of
Male Latino Population by Age for 1980 and 1990**

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Under 16 years old | 1,258 | 56.5 | 2,027 | 39.9 | 61.1 |
| 16-24 | 211 | 9.5 | 888 | 17.5 | 320.9 |
| 25-34 | 331 | 14.9 | 999 | 19.7 | 201.8 |
| 35-44 | 200 | 9.0 | 546 | 10.8 | 173.0 |
| 45-54 | 104 | 4.7 | 345 | 6.8 | 231.7 |
| 55-64 | 70 | 3.1 | 146 | 2.9 | 108.6 |
| Over 65 | 54 | 2.4 | 123 | 2.4 | 127.8 |
| Total | 2,228 | 100.0 | 5,074 | 100.0 | 127.7 |
| Median age | 17.8 | | 21.2 | | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

**Lowell: Composition of
Female Latino Population by Age for 1980 and 1990**

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Under 16 years old | 731 | 31.0 | 2,040 | 37.6 | 179.1 |
| 16-24 | 747 | 31.7 | 1,000 | 18.4 | 33.9 |
| 25-34 | 389 | 16.5 | 1,059 | 19.5 | 172.2 |
| 35-44 | 229 | 9.7 | 616 | 11.4 | 169.0 |
| 45-54 | 129 | 5.5 | 347 | 6.4 | 169.0 |
| 55-64 | 65 | 2.8 | 196 | 3.6 | 201.5 |
| Over 65 | 67 | 2.8 | 167 | 3.1 | 149.3 |
| Total | 2,357 | 100.0 | 5,425 | 100.0 | 130.2 |
| Median age | 19.4 | | 22.1 | | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

The composition of Lowell's Latino population by household did change, although not dramatically. Among the most evident changes were a decline in the share of married-couple households with and without related children, an increase in the share of male-headed households, and an increase in the share of householders living alone or with other unrelated individuals. Contrary to commonly held views, the percentage of female-headed households with and without related children did not increase dramatically during this period.

**Lowell: Latino Population by
Household Type for 1980 and 1990**

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Married-couple family with related children | 382 | 30.2 | 787 | 25.4 | 106.0 |
| Married-couple family, no related children | 149 | 11.8 | 310 | 10.0 | 108.1 |
| Male householder, no wife present, with or without related children | 70 | 5.5 | 198 | 6.4 | 182.9 |
| Female householder, no husband present, with related children | 390 | 30.8 | 1,039 | 33.5 | 166.4 |
| Female householder, no husband present, no related children | 36 | 2.8 | 110 | 3.5 | 205.6 |
| Householder living alone | 188 | 14.8 | 522 | 16.8 | 177.7 |
| Householder not living alone | 51 | 4.0 | 137 | 4.4 | 168.6 |
| Total | 1,266 | 100.0 | 3,103 | 100.0 | 145.1 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

In general, the median age of both Latino males and females increased in Lowell, although Latino females continued to be relatively older than Latino males. Median age for Latino males increased from 17.8 years in 1980 to 21.2 years in 1990, and the median age for Latino females increased from 19.4 years to 22.1 years.

Latinos in Massachusetts

The following charts correspond directly to those on the previous pages and offer a quick reference to the population, age and household status of Latinos in Massachusetts.

In brief:

- The total population of Massachusetts increased from 5,737,037 in 1980 to 6,016,425, with Latinos growing in absolute number more than any other racial/ethnic group, becoming the largest minority group in the Commonwealth.
- Puerto Ricans and "Other" Latinos were the largest Latino subgroups in the state, accounting respectively for 2.5% and 1.9% of the total population. (Latinos in the "Other" category are from the Dominican Republic, Central and South America.)
- The Latino population, while remaining relatively young, became older in general, with the Latino median age increasing from 21.2 years in 1980 to 23.7 years in 1990.
- The median age of both Latino males and females increased between 1980 and 1990, with the median age for Latino males increasing from 20.3 years in 1980 to 23.1 years in 1990, and Latino females' median age increasing from 22.2 years to 24.3 years.

Massachusetts: Composition of Total Population by Racial/Ethnic Group and Latino Population by National Origin for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Non-Latino — white | 5,305,963 | 92.5 | 5,280,292 | 87.8 | -0.5 |
| Non-Latino — black | 212,608 | 3.7 | 274,464 | 4.6 | 29.1 |
| Non-Latino — Asian | 49,501 | 0.9 | 143,392 | 2.4 ^a | 189.7 |
| Latino origin | 141,043 | 2.5 | 287,549 | 4.8 | 103.9 |
| Mexican | 7,385 | 0.1 | 12,703 | 0.2 | 72.0 |
| Puerto Rican | 76,450 | 1.3 | 151,193 | 2.5 | 97.8 |
| Cuban | 6,617 | 0.1 | 8,106 | 0.1 | 22.5 |
| Other | 50,591 | 0.9 | 115,547 | 1.9 | 128.4 |
| Total Population | 5,737,037 | 100.0^b | 6,016,425 | 100.0^c | 4.9 |

^a This count of Non-Latino Asians includes Latinos who are Asians. In 1980, 892 Latinos (0.6% of all Latinos) identified their race as Asian in Massachusetts.

^b The 1980 total population includes 27,922 persons who are of other races and not of Latino origin.

^c The 1990 total population includes 30,728 persons who are of other races and not of Latino origin.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980. Census of Population and Housing: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics: Massachusetts. Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office. U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990. Census of Population and Housing, Massachusetts. Massachusetts Summary Tape File 1A.

Massachusetts: Latino Population by Household Type for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|---|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Married-couple family with related children | 12,648 | 31.5 | 20,371 | 24.9 | 70.2 |
| Married-couple family, no related children | 5,995 | 14.9 | 10,201 | 12.5 | 222.9 |
| Male householder, no wife present, with or without related children | 1,600 | 4.0 | 5,166 | 6.3 | 145.0 |
| Female householder, no husband present, with related children | 9,449 | 23.6 | 23,150 | 28.4 | 115.9 |
| Female householder, no husband present, no related children | 1,725 | 4.3 | 3,725 | 4.6 | 53.4 |
| Householder living alone* | 8,689 | 21.7 | 13,330 | 16.3 | 53.4 |
| Householder not living alone | | | 5,706 | 7.0 | |
| Total | 40,106 | 100.0 | 81,649 | 100.0 | 103.6 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

*In 1980, this category includes non-family householders (living alone or not)

Massachusetts: Latino Population by Age for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Under 16 years old | 53,503 | 37.9 | 97,135 | 33.8 | 181.6 |
| 16-24 | 28,477 | 20.2 | 55,042 | 19.1 | 193.3 |
| 25-34 | 24,655 | 17.5 | 59,333 | 20.6 | 140.7 |
| 35-44 | 14,531 | 10.3 | 35,774 | 12.4 | 146.2 |
| 45-54 | 8,809 | 6.2 | 19,081 | 6.6 | 116.6 |
| 55-64 | 5,915 | 4.2 | 10,731 | 3.7 | 81.4 |
| Over 65 | 5,153 | 3.7 | 10,453 | 3.6 | 102.9 |
| Total | 141,043 | 100.0 | 287,549 | 100.0 | 103.9 |
| Median age | 21.2 | | 23.7 | | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

Massachusetts: Composition of Male Latino Population by Age for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Under 16 years old | 27,378 | 40.0 | 49,663 | 34.9 | 81.4 |
| 16-24 | 13,801 | 20.2 | 27,685 | 19.4 | 100.6 |
| 25-34 | 11,610 | 17.0 | 29,633 | 20.8 | 155.2 |
| 35-44 | 6,687 | 9.8 | 17,460 | 12.3 | 161.1 |
| 45-54 | 4,117 | 6.0 | 9,000 | 6.3 | 118.6 |
| 55-64 | 2,660 | 3.9 | 4,885 | 3.4 | 83.6 |
| Over 65 | 2,133 | 3.1 | 4,137 | 2.9 | 94.0 |
| Total | 68,386 | 100.0 | 142,463 | 100.0 | 108.3 |
| Median age | 20.3 | | 23.1 | | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.

Massachusetts: Composition of Female Latino Population by Age for 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | | 1990 | | 1980-1990 % change |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | |
| Under 16 years old | 26,125 | 36.0 | 47,472 | 32.7 | 81.7 |
| 16-24 | 14,676 | 20.2 | 27,357 | 18.9 | 86.4 |
| 25-34 | 13,045 | 18.0 | 29,700 | 20.5 | 127.7 |
| 35-44 | 7,844 | 10.8 | 18,314 | 12.6 | 133.5 |
| 45-54 | 4,692 | 6.5 | 10,081 | 6.9 | 114.9 |
| 55-64 | 3,255 | 4.5 | 5,846 | 4.0 | 79.6 |
| Over 65 | 3,020 | 4.2 | 6,316 | 4.4 | 109.1 |
| Total | 72,657 | 100.0 | 145,086 | 100.0 | 99.7 |
| Median age | 22.2 | | 24.3 | | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 and 1990.