

Dominicans

in Boston



August 14, 2016 - Scenes from the annual Dominican Parade on Boylston St. in Boston. (Mayor's Office Photo by Jeremiah Robinson)

The Boston Planning & Development Agency

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development agency**

Research Division

Director

Alvaro Lima

Senior Researcher Economist

Matthew Resseger

Research Associate

Kevin Kang

Interns

Ian Whitney
Juan Rodriguez
Cyan O'Garro

Deputy Director

Jonathan Lee

Senior Researcher Demographer

Phillip Granberry

Research Assistants

Kevin Wandrei
Avanti Krovi

Research Manager

Christina Kim

Data Notes

Unless otherwise noted data for this report come from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis.

Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

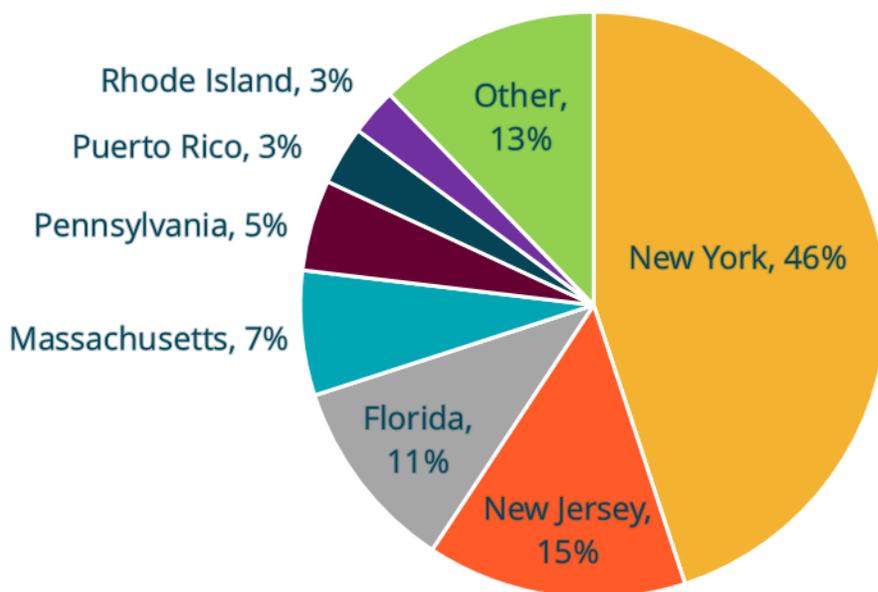
"Latino" includes people who 1. self-describe their ethnicity as "Hispanic or Latino", or 2. were born in Brazil, or 3. who self-describe their ancestry as Brazilian.

When the Dominican population in the United States started rapidly increasing in the 1980s, it was noted for having a circular migratory pattern with a transnational identity. As the Dominican population has developed a more permanent presence in the United States, its native-born population has increased to 45.9 percent in 2015. Dominicans first arrived in New York, Florida, and Massachusetts. Lawrence, which is over 40 percent Dominican, has a slightly larger Dominican population than Boston.

One visible sign of Boston’s large Dominican population is its annual festival that started in 1985. Showing the increased presence of Dominicans in the city, the parade accompanying the festival moved to the streets of downtown Boston in 2015, and the festival is now held on City Hall Plaza every summer.

In 2015, 1.9 million people with Dominican origin lived in the United States.¹ With an estimated 132,864 Dominicans residing in Massachusetts, the state accounts for 7 percent of all Dominicans in the country. Massachusetts has the fourth largest Dominican population behind New York (46 percent), New Jersey (15 percent), and Florida (11 percent). Boston residents make up 24 percent of the Dominican population of Massachusetts.

Dominicans by State and Territory



¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 1-year American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

Dominicans in Boston



According to the 2010 Census, there were 25,648 Dominican residents of Boston, up from 15,066 in the 2000 Census. The American Community Survey suggests that Boston's Dominican population had grown by 2015 to 32,126 (+/-5,116).² Accounting for 24 percent of all Latinos in Boston, Dominicans are the second largest Latino population in the city. Other large Latino populations include Puerto Ricans (28 percent), Salvadorans (11 percent), Colombians (6 percent), and Mexicans (5 percent). Dominicans can be found in all neighborhoods of Boston, but greater shares of Dominicans live in Dorchester (22 percent), Roxbury (19 percent), and Jamaica Plain (13 percent).³

Dominicans' median age is 26 years, younger than other Latinos (29) and non-Latinos (32). Over 36 percent of Dominicans are under age 20. Dominicans are predominately female (59 percent), and are less likely to be married than other groups. The majority of Dominicans are foreign born (58 percent), and 48 percent of the foreign-born Dominicans are naturalized U.S. citizens. Over 92 percent of Dominicans speak Spanish at home; 51 percent also speak English very well. Among younger Dominicans ages 5 to 34, the share who speak English very well is higher: 74 percent.

Age Distribution



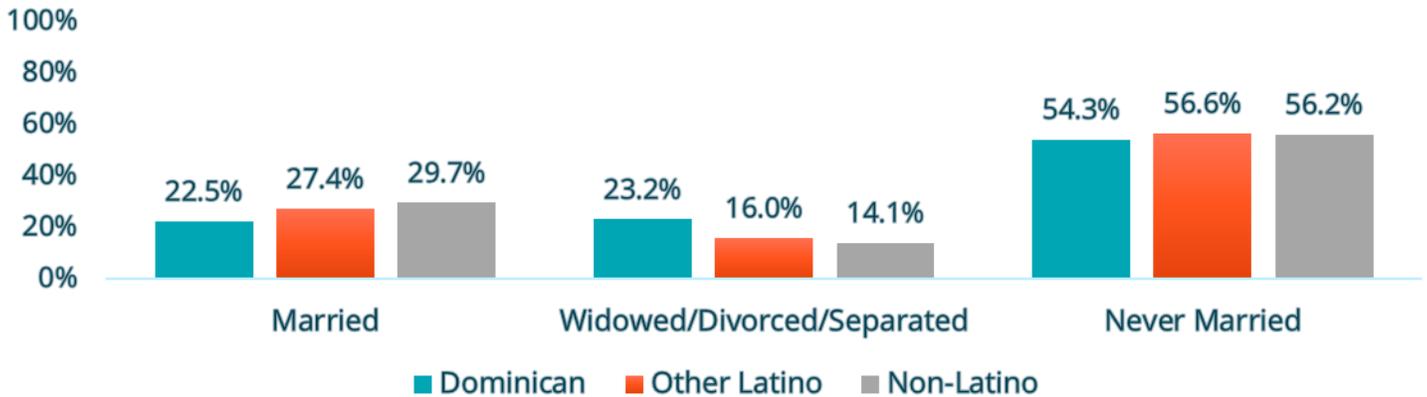
² U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 & 2010 Decennial Census, 2015 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

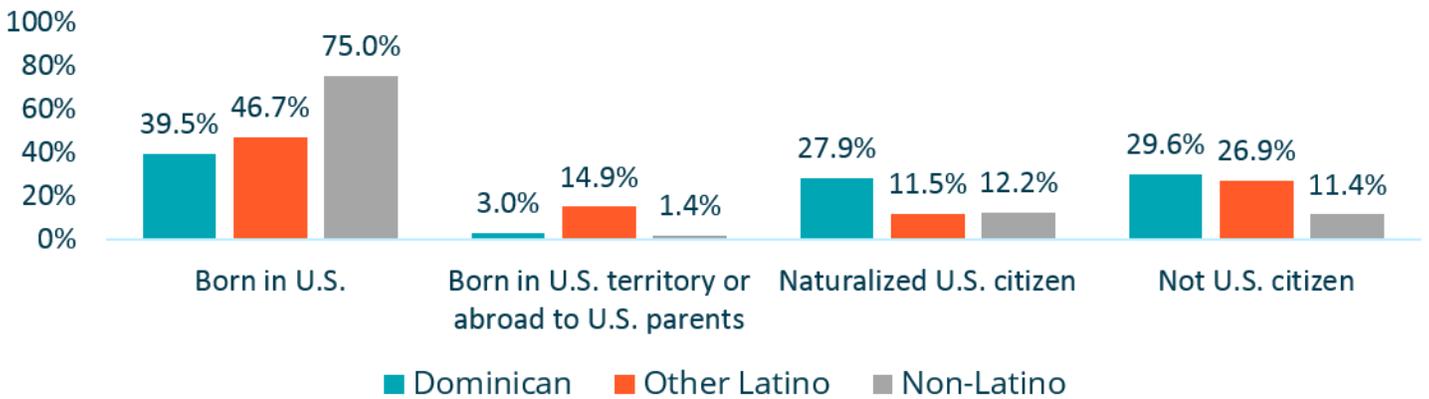
24% of Boston's Latinos are Dominican



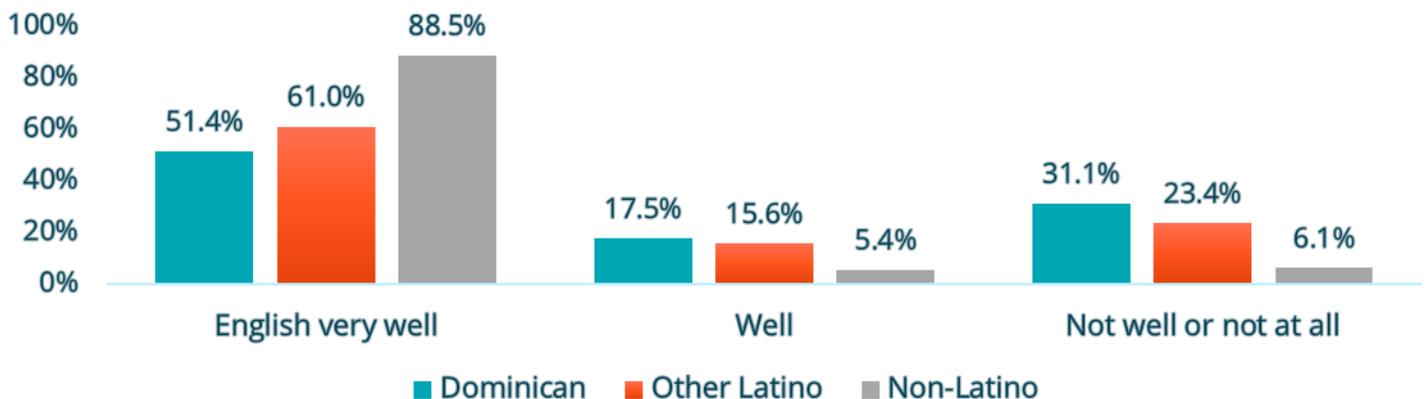
Marital Status (ages 15 and older)



Citizenship

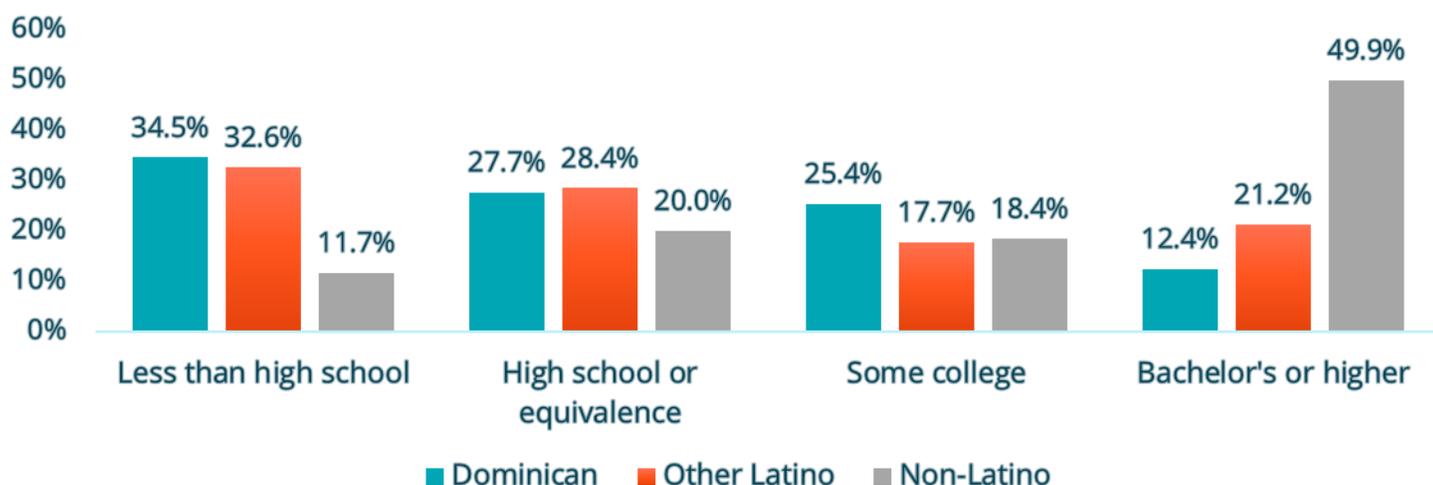


English Proficiency (ages 5 and older)





Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)



Educational Attainment | Many Dominican adults have low levels of educational attainment. Almost 35 percent lack a high school education and only 12 percent have a Bachelor's degree.

School Enrollment | Dominicans make up 11 percent of Boston residents enrolled in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, but only 4 percent of Boston residents enrolled in college or university.

Labor Force Participation | Almost 68 percent of Dominicans ages 16 and older participate in the labor force, similar to the rates for other groups. Labor force participation is higher for Dominican men than women (71 percent vs. 65 percent).

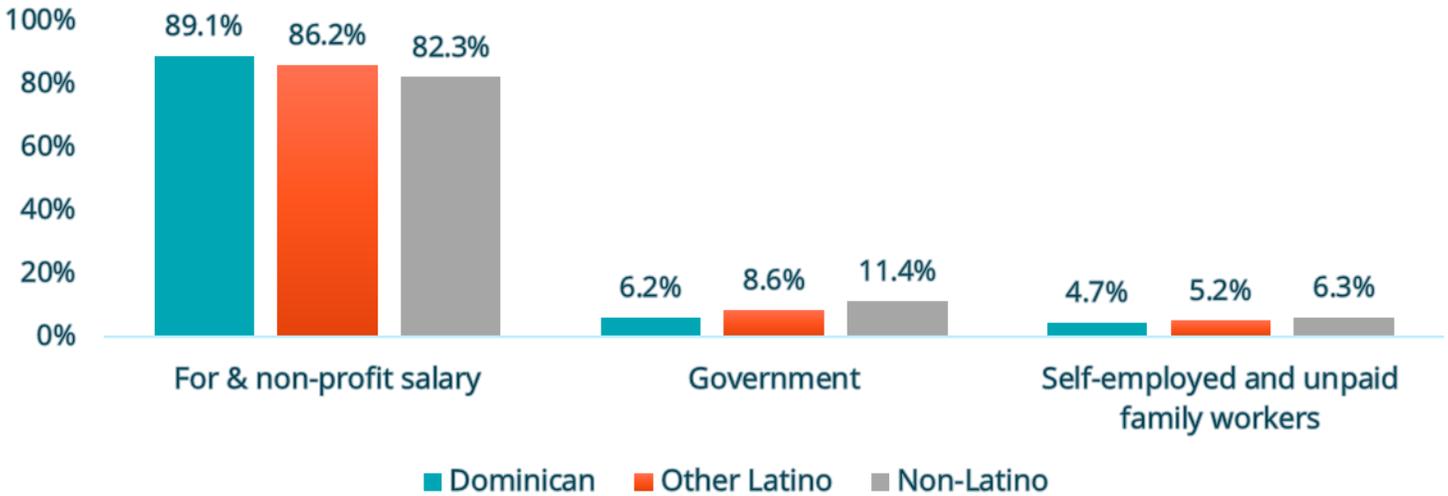
Employment | Almost 90 percent of employed Dominicans work in private sector payroll jobs. Over 42 percent of employed Dominicans work in service occupations. In contrast, only 8 percent of Dominicans work in managerial and professional occupations.

Commuting | A smaller share of Dominicans (27 percent) work outside of Suffolk County than other Latinos (30 percent) and non-Latinos (33 percent). Dominicans are more likely than non-Latinos to take public transportation to work (43 percent compared to 32 percent). Similar shares of Dominicans and non-Latinos (45 percent) travel to work in an automobile.



58% of Dominicans are employed

Employment Type (ages 16 and older)



Occupations of Employed Workers



Standard of Living



Dominicans in Boston struggle economically. Over 40 percent of Dominicans live below the Census poverty line, and only 8 percent of Dominicans have achieved a middle class standard of living, compared to 23 percent for other Latinos and 46 percent for non-Latinos. A family income four times the poverty line is used as a proxy for a middle-class standard of living. The actual income needed to achieve this standard depends on family composition. For a two-person family in 2015, the poverty line is \$15,391, and a middle class income would need to be at least \$61,564. The median household income for Dominican-headed households is only \$21,100. Despite their low income, 94 percent of Dominicans have health insurance.

Dominicans are less likely to own their home (8 percent), than other Latinos (19 percent) and non-Latinos (37 percent).⁴ More than 52 percent of Dominican households are housing burdened and pay more than 30 percent of their income in housing costs, a higher housing burden rate than other groups. About 62 percent of Dominican households own a car, a higher share than other Latinos (56 percent), but lower than non-Latinos (66 percent).

Approximately 75 percent of Dominican households are families and the average household size is 2.8 larger than the average for non-Latinos, 2.1.

Individual Poverty Rates

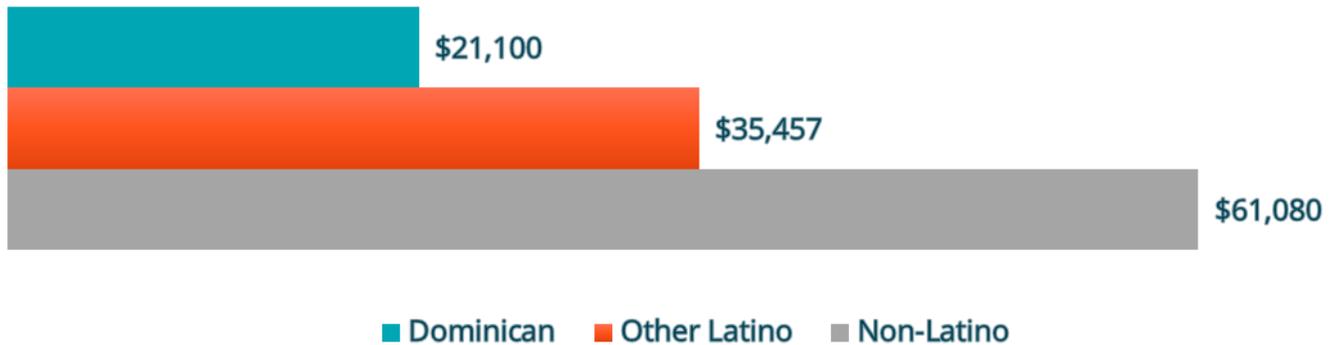


⁴The ACS excludes households that are vacant, being bought, occupied without rent payment, have no household income or are group quarters when reporting owner/renter costs as a percentage of household income. Therefore, the sum of housing-burdened and non-housing-burdened households may not add exactly to the total number of homeowners/renters.

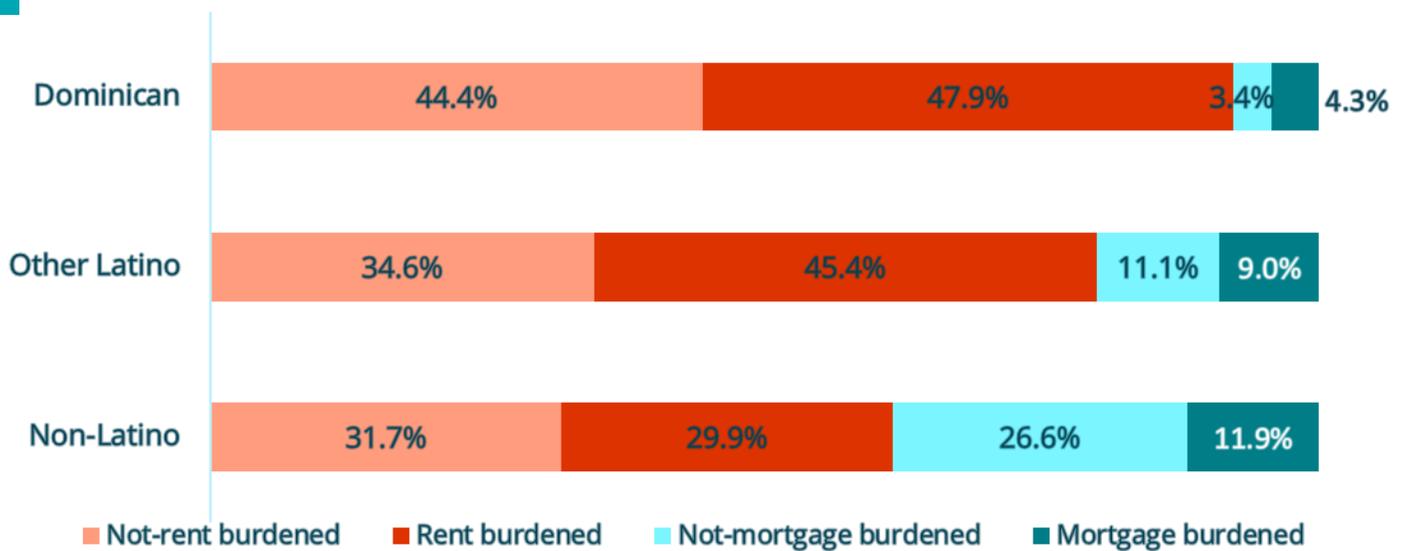
41% of Dominicans in Boston live in poverty



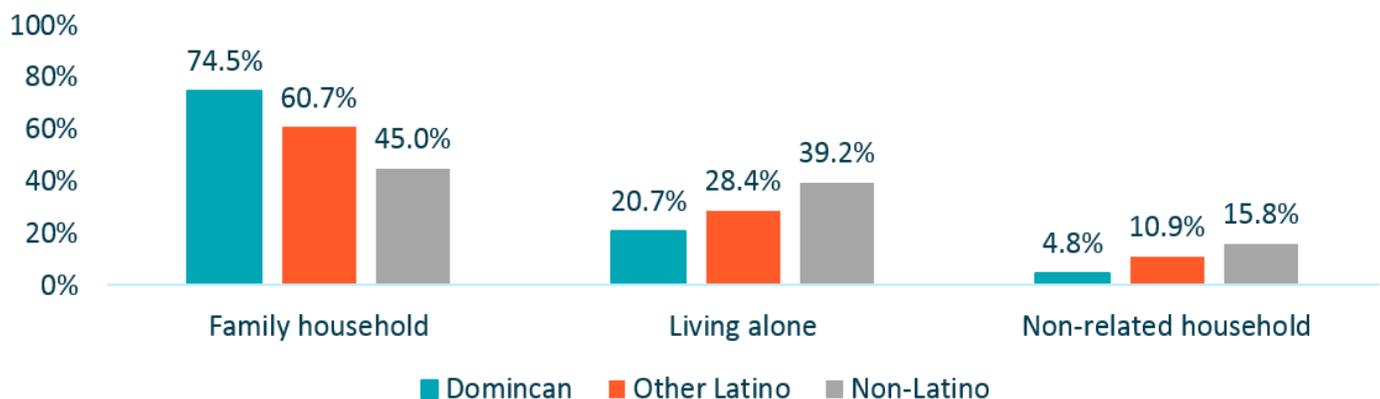
Median Household Income



Tenure and Housing Burden



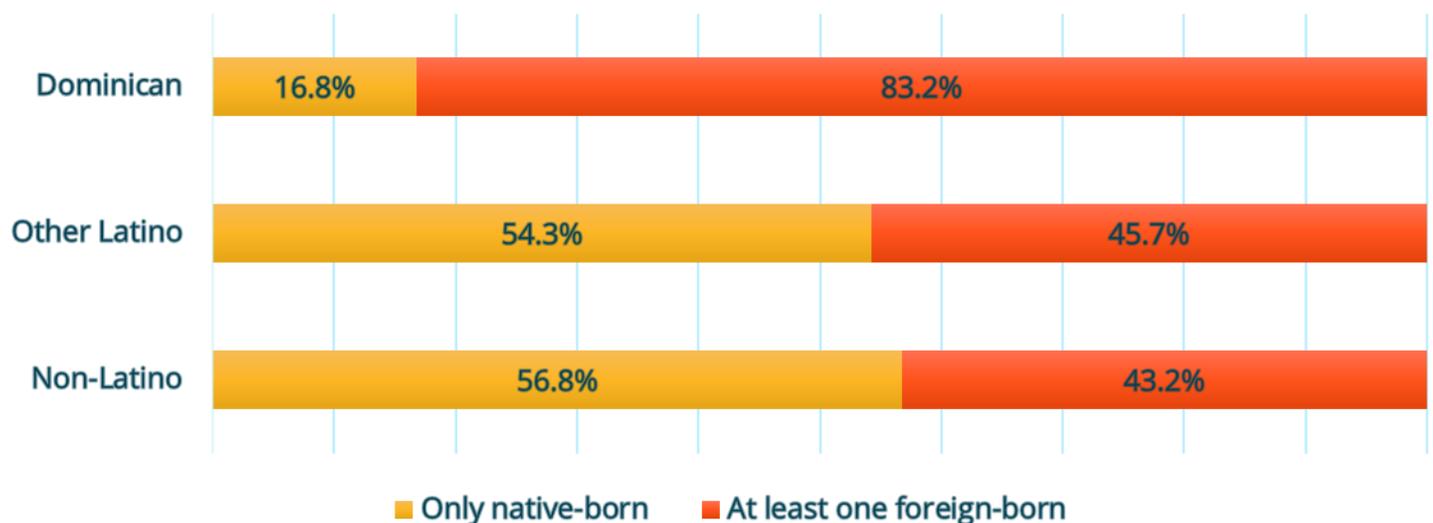
Household Type



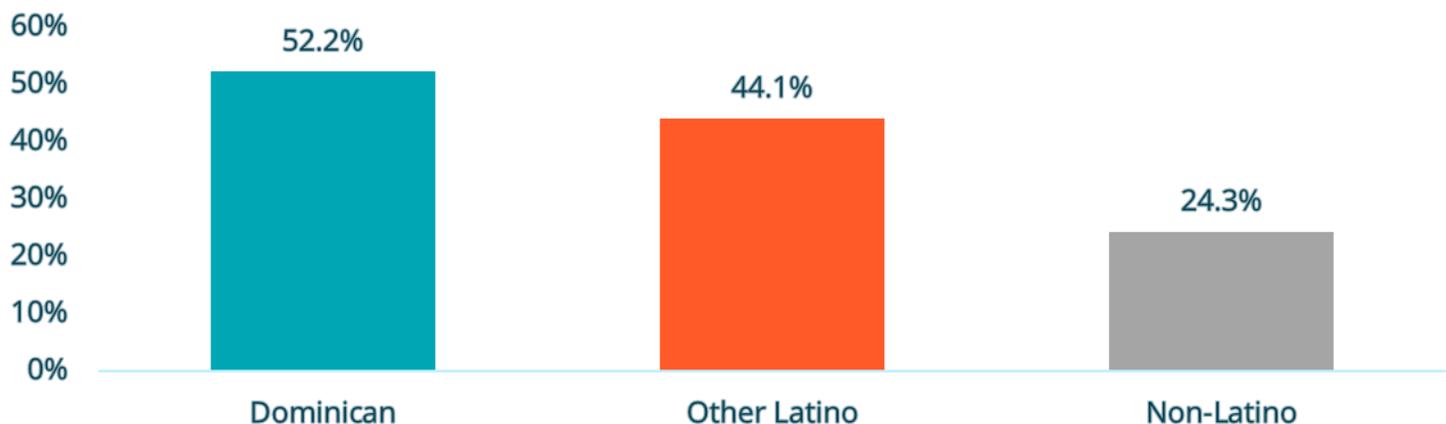
Dominican Children

The 2011-2015 American Community Survey estimates 10,093 Dominican children reside in Boston. Almost 51 percent of Dominican households include children, a higher share than other Latinos (39 percent) and non-Latinos (20 percent). Even though 83 percent of Dominican children are native born, 83 percent of them have at least one foreign-born parent. Dominican children are more likely to live in poverty (52 percent), but over 99 percent of Dominican children in Boston have health insurance.

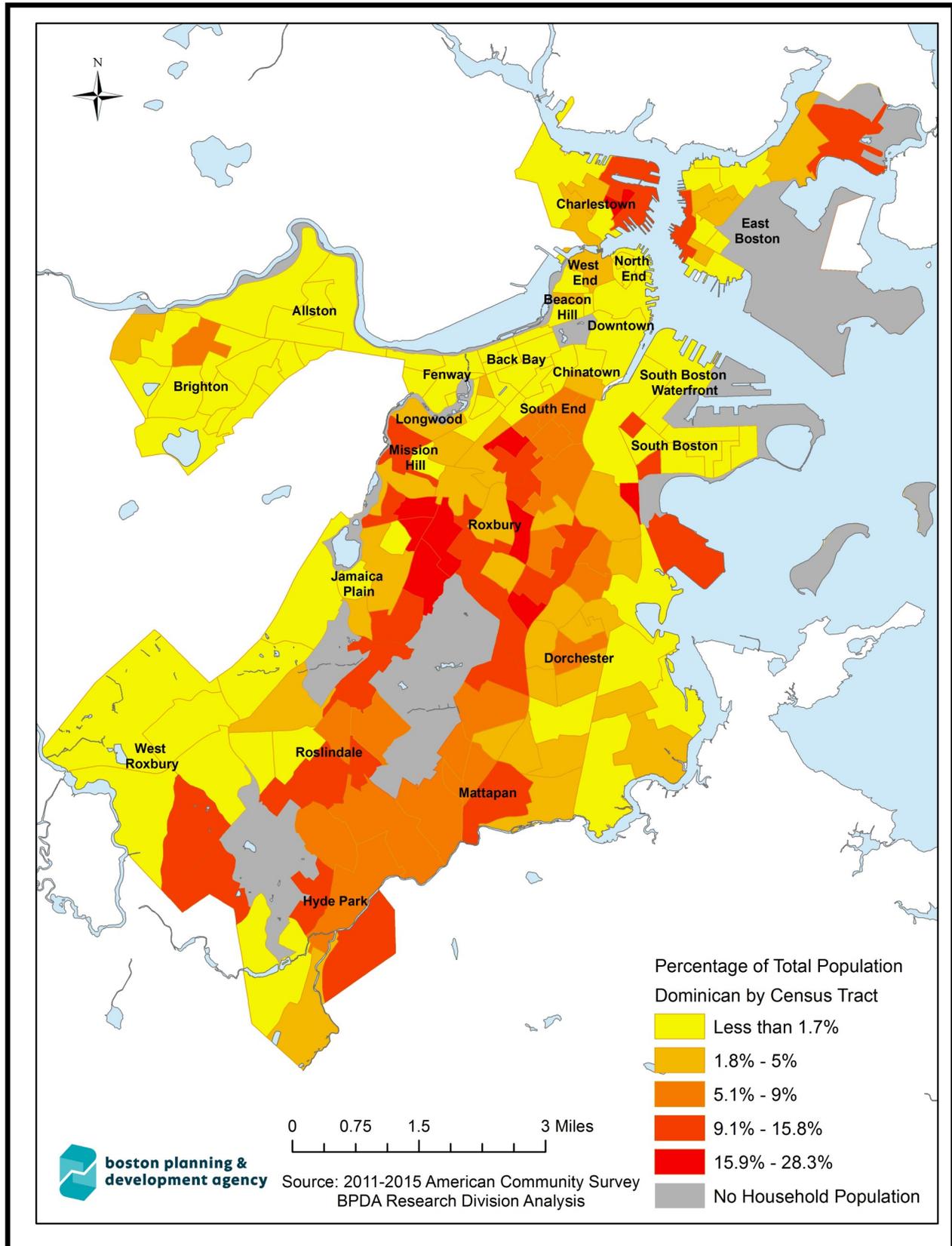
Parent Nativity



Child Poverty



Map of Dominicans in Boston



Latinos in Boston

Puerto Ricans

Dominicans

Salvadorans

Colombians

Mexicans

Guatemalans

Brazilians



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**Research Division
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