# Boston's Immigration, Foreign Born Population and Language Spoken 1990-2000 trends 2000 

Boston Redevelopment Authority

## Trends in Immigration and Language Spoken at Home:

Over $25 \%$ of Boston's population is foreign born today, up from $20 \%$ in 1990.

- Almost half of the foreign born residents (48.5\%) entered the U.S. in the past 10 years; they represent $12.5 \%$ of the residents of Boston.
- Nearly half of the foreign born residents (47.6\%) came from Latin America, followed by Asia (24\%), Europe (17.5\%), and Africa (9\%).

One in ten residents of the city is a naturalized citizen, up from one in fourteen ten years ago.

- About $16 \%$ of the residents are not citizens, up from about $13 \%$ in 1990.

Today, one-third of Boston's residents speak a language other than English, up from $25.6 \%$ in 1990; and over $16 \%$ do not speak English very well compared to 13\% in 1990.

- Almost $14 \%$ of the residents speak Spanish, compared to less than $10 \%$ ten years ago; and over $6 \%$ speak an Asian language, up from a little more than $4 \%$ in 1990.
- About half of those who speak Spanish do not speak English very well; while about two-thirds of those who speak an Asian language do not speak English very well.

Almost $30 \%$ of the people in Boston did not live here in 1995; about the same percentage as ten years previously.

- On the other hand, nearly half of the residents of the city lived in the same house five years before the 2000 census.
- Less than half of the people in the city (47.4\%) were born in Massachusetts compared to more than $51 \%$ in 1990 .


## 1. NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH



| Subject | $\mathbf{1 9 9 0}$ <br> number | \% <br> share | $\mathbf{2 0 0 0}$ <br> number | \% <br> share |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Total population |  |  |  |  |
| Native population | $\mathbf{5 7 4 , 2 8 3}$ | $\mathbf{1 0 0}$ | $\mathbf{5 8 9 , 1 4 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 0 0}$ |
| Born in United States | 459,686 | 80.0 | 437,305 | 74.2 |
| Born in state of residence | 294,360 | 76.4 | 418,146 | 71.0 |
| Different state | 144,404 | 25.1 | 279,411 | 47.4 |
| Born outside United States | 20,922 | 3.6 | 198,735 | 23.5 |
|  |  |  |  | 3.3 |
| Foreign-born population | 114,597 | 20.0 | 151,836 | 25.8 |
| Entered the U.S.past 10 yrs | 63,365 | 11.0 | 73,670 | 12.5 |
| Naturalized citizen | 39,453 | 6.9 | 56,681 | 9.6 |
| Not a citizen | 75,144 | 13.1 | 95,155 | 16.2 |

## 2. REGION OF BIRTH OF FOREIGN BORN



| Subject | 2000 <br> number | $\%$ <br> share |
| :--- | ---: | ---: |
| Total (excluding born at sea) |  |  |
|  | 151,831 | 100 |
| Europe | 26,535 | 17.5 |
| Asia | 36,435 | 24.0 |
| Africa | 13,612 | 9.0 |
| Oceania | 364 | 0.2 |
| Latin America(1) | 72,207 | 47.6 |
| Northern America(2) | 2,678 | 1.8 |
|  |  |  |

1 - Caribbean, Central America including Mexico, and South America
2 - North America, Canada, Greenland, Bermuda, St. Pierre \& Miquelon Is.

## 3. LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

| Subject | $\begin{array}{r} 1990 \\ \text { number } \end{array}$ |  | Subject | $\begin{array}{r} 2000 \\ \text { number } \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \% \\ \text { shar } \end{array}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | share |  |  |  |
| Persons 5 years and over | 538,511 | 100 | Population 5 years and over | 557,376 | 100 |
| English only | 400,756 | 74.4 | English only | 371,185 | 66.6 |
| Speak a language other than Enc | 137,755 | 25.6 | Language other than English | 186,191 | 33.4 |
| Speak English not very well | 69,590 | 12.9 | Speak English less than very well (3) | 91,062 | 16.3 |
| Speak Spanish | 51,233 | 9.5 | Spanish | 75,711 | 13.6 |
| Speak English not very well | 27,619 | 5.1 | Speak English less than very well | 36,310 | 6.5 |
| Speak Asian or Pacific Is. langua | 23,911 | 4.4 | Asian and Pacific Island languages | 34,765 | 6.2 |
| Speak English not very well | 15,646 | 2.9 | Speak English less than very well | 22,157 | 4.0 |
|  |  |  | Other Indo-European languages | 67,706 | 12.1 |
|  |  |  | Speak English less than very well | 29,682 | 5.3 |



4. RESIDENCE 5 YEARS AGO


Note: (3) "Do not speak very well" is equivalent to "speak less than very well"

| Subject | $\mathbf{1 9 8 5}$ <br> number | $\%$ <br> share | $\mathbf{1 9 9 5}$ <br> number | \% <br> share |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Persons 5 years and over | $\mathbf{5 3 8 , 5 1 1}$ | $\mathbf{1 0 0}$ | 557,376 | $\mathbf{1 0 0}$ |
| Same house | 257,536 | 47.8 | 266,242 | 47.8 |
| Different house in U.S. | 244,214 | 45.3 | 249,805 | 44.8 |
| Same state | 171,597 | 31.9 | 176,868 | 31.7 |
| Same county | 128,445 | 23.9 | 124,778 | 22.4 |
| Different county | 43,152 | 8.0 | 52,090 | 9.3 |
| Different state | 72,617 | 13.5 | 72,937 | 13.1 |
| Lived abroad $(4)$ | 36,761 | 6.8 | 41,329 | 7.4 |

Note:
(4) Census Bureau changed "Lived abroad in 1985" to "Lived Elsewhere in 1995".

