

Puerto Ricans

in
Boston



August 3, 2014 - Mayor Martin Walsh delivers remarks to celebrants at the 47th Annual Puerto Rican Pride Festival at City Hall Plaza. (Mayor's Office photo by Don Harney)

The Boston Planning & Development Agency

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**boston planning &
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.

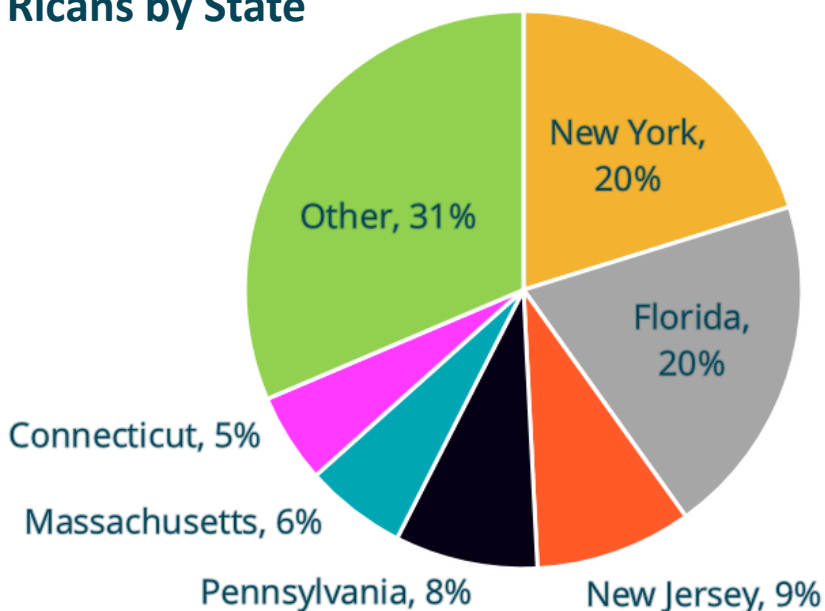
"Latino" includes people who 1. self-describe their ethnicity as "Hispanic or Latino", or 2. were born in Brazil, or 3. who self-describe their ancestry as Brazilian.

After the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States gained control over the island of Puerto Rico as an unincorporated territory. The Jones Act of 1917 granted residents of the island U.S. citizenship. From 1898 to 1945 an estimated 90,000 Puerto Ricans migrated to the continental United States, and settled primarily in New York City. From the end of World War II into the 1950s Puerto Rican migration increased, and seasonal agricultural workers arrived in the Connecticut River Valley. Puerto Ricans first settled in Springfield and Holyoke before arriving in Boston.

By the 1960s Parcel 19 in the South End was home to approximately 1,500 Puerto Ricans, and the area was slated as an urban renewal project. The neighborhood organized the efforts of *Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción* (IBA) and became the developer of what is today *Villa Victoria*, an affordable housing community.

Puerto Rico has recently experienced increased out-migration to the continental United States due to stagnant economic growth and an ongoing debt crisis. The population of Puerto Rico declined from 3.7 million in 2010 to 3.4 million in 2016.¹ In 2015, 5.3 million Puerto Ricans resided in the continental United States.² With an estimated 317,142 Puerto Ricans residing in Massachusetts, the state has the fifth largest Puerto Rican population behind New York, Florida, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Boston residents make up 12 percent of Puerto Rican population in Massachusetts.

Puerto Ricans by State



¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2016 Annual Population Estimate, BPDA Research Division Analysis

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 1-year American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

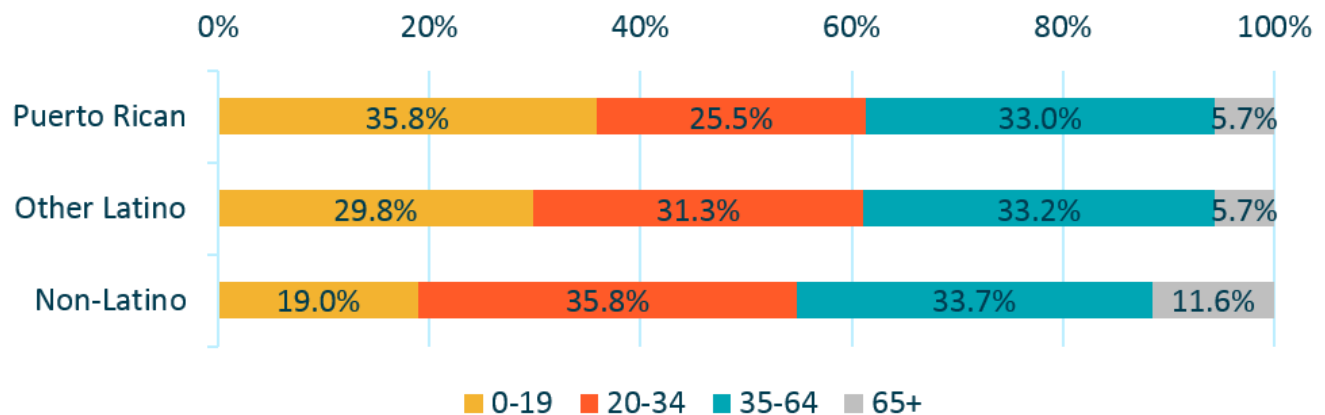
Puerto Ricans in Boston



According to the 2010 Census, Boston was home to 30,506 Puerto Ricans, up slightly from 28,211 in the 2000 Census. The American Community Survey suggests that their population had grown by 2015 to 37,324 (+/-5,057).³ Puerto Ricans are the largest Latino population in the city and make up 28 percent of all Latinos in Boston. Other large Latino populations in Boston include Dominicans (24 percent), Salvadorans (11 percent), Colombians (6 percent), and Mexicans (5 percent). Puerto Ricans can be found in all neighborhoods of Boston, but greater shares live in Dorchester (22 percent), Roxbury (17 percent), and Hyde Park (11 percent).⁴

Puerto Ricans' median age is 27 years, younger than both other Latinos (28) and non-Latinos (32). Over a third of Puerto Ricans are under age 20. Puerto Ricans are evenly split between males and females. Perhaps due to their young age, 63 percent of Puerto Ricans have never married. The majority of Puerto Ricans were born in the continental United States (61 percent), and 37 percent were born in Puerto Rico. Because Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico gain U.S. citizenship at birth, less than one percent are noncitizens. Almost 77 percent of Puerto Ricans speak Spanish at home and almost 72 percent speak English very well. Among younger Puerto Ricans under age 35, 86 percent speak English very well.

Age



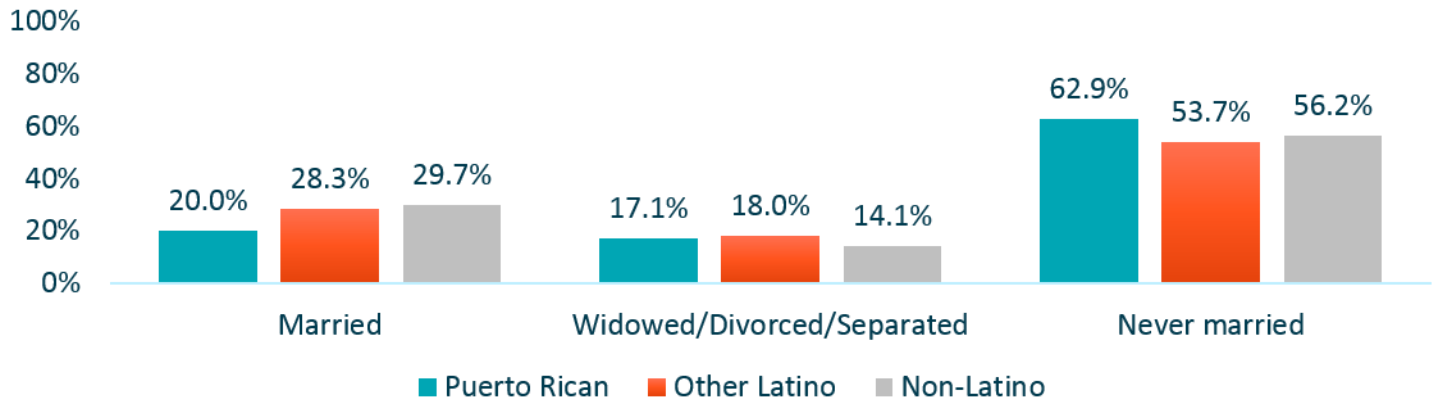
³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 & 2010 Decennial Census, 2015 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

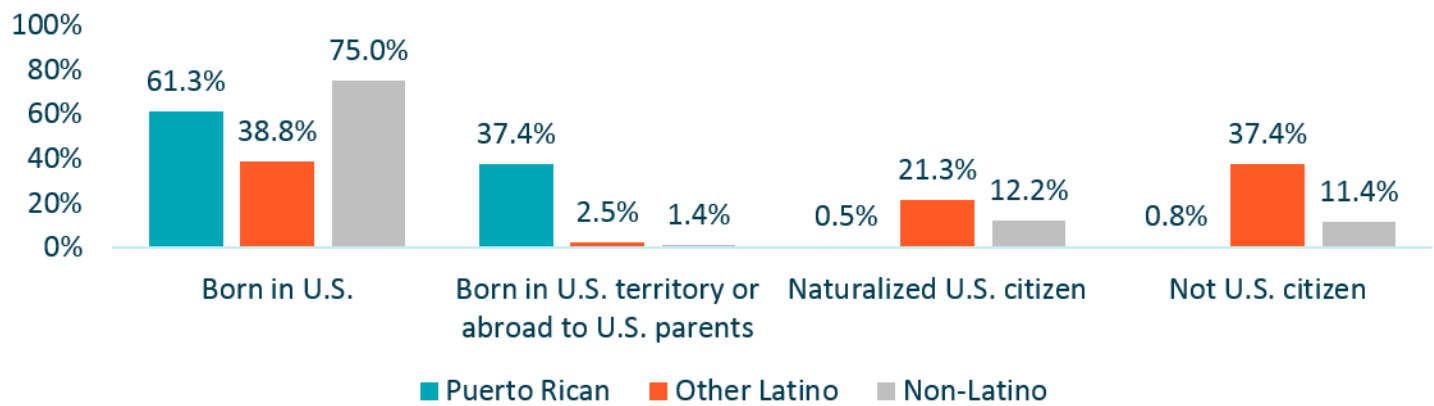
28% of Boston's Latinos are Puerto Rican



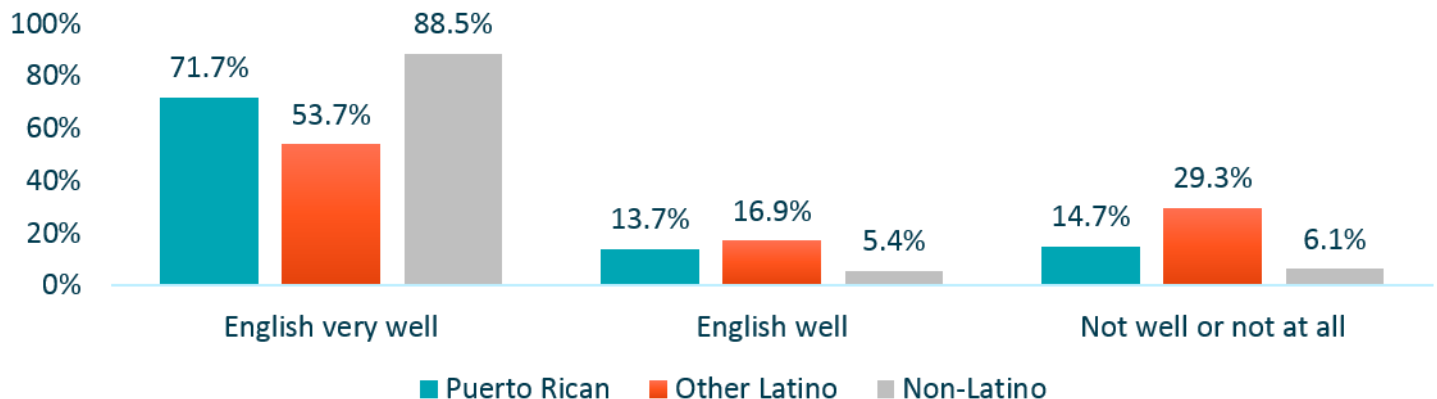
Marital Status (ages 15 and older)



Citizenship

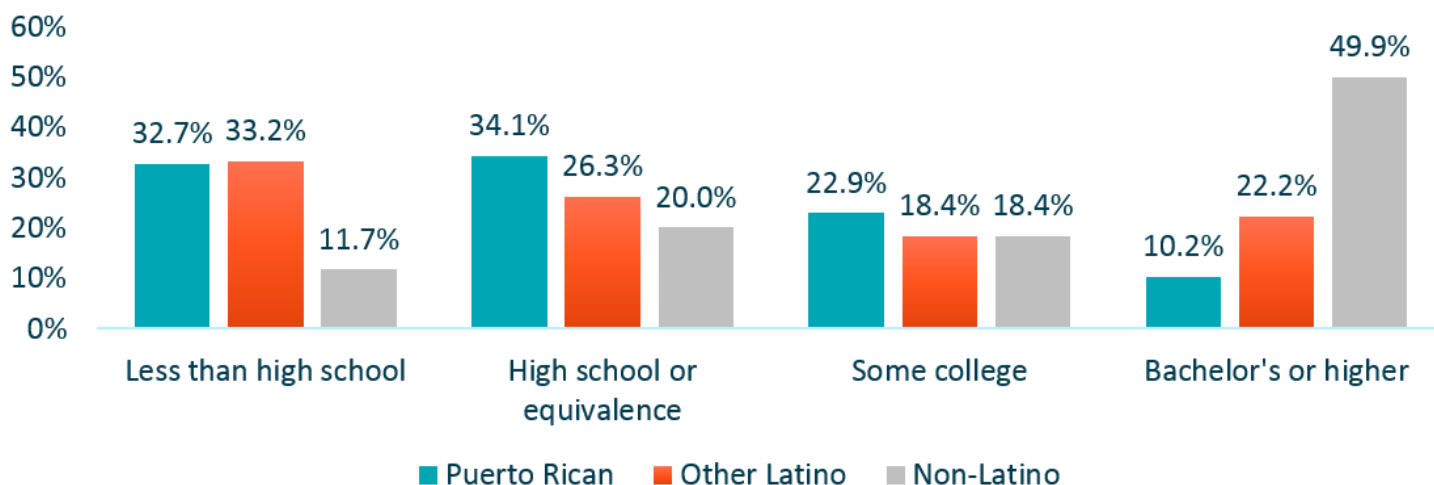


English Proficiency





Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)



Educational Attainment | Similar to other Latinos, approximately one third of adult Puerto Ricans have not completed high school. Only 10 percent of Puerto Rican adults have a Bachelor's or graduate degree, much lower than the 50 percent share for non-Latino adults.

School Enrollment | Puerto Ricans make up 10 percent of Boston residents enrolled in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, but only 3 percent of Boston residents enrolled in college or university.

Labor Force Participation | A lower share (57 percent) of Puerto Ricans age 16 and over participate in the labor force than other Latinos (71 percent) and non-Latinos (68 percent). Labor force participation is higher for Puerto Rican men than women (59 percent vs. 55 percent).

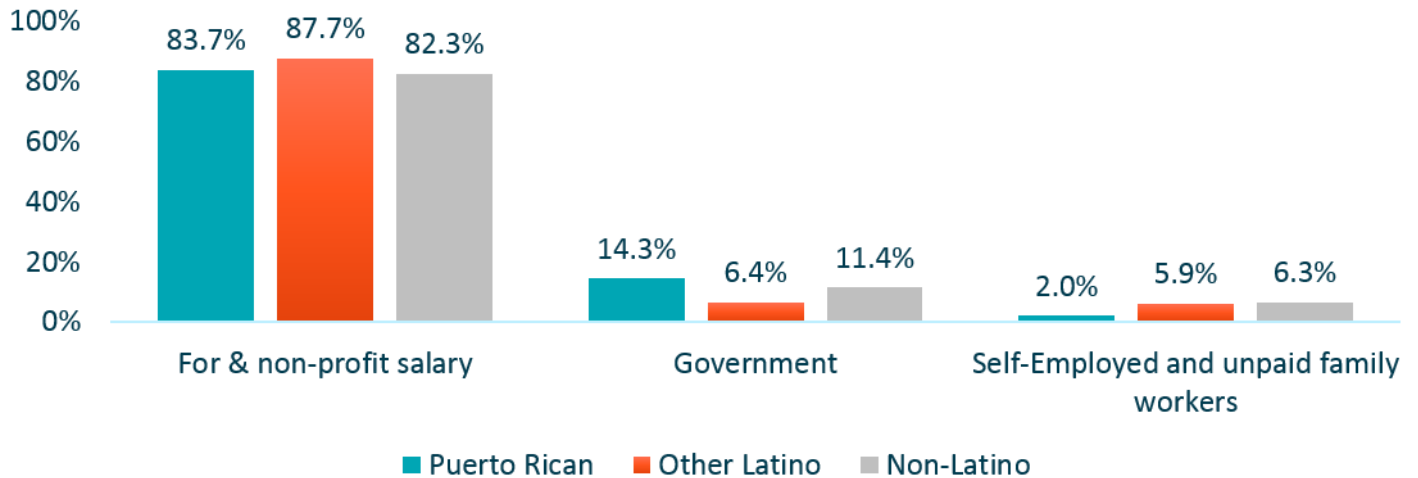
Employment | Over 14 percent of employed Puerto Ricans work for the government, a higher share than other groups. Nearly 30 percent of employed Puerto Ricans work in service occupations, and only 10 percent work in managerial and professional occupations.

Commute | A smaller share of Puerto Ricans (26 percent) work outside of Suffolk County than other Latinos (30 percent) and non-Latinos (33 percent). Puerto Ricans (38 percent) are less likely to use public transportation to travel to work than other Latinos (45 percent) but more likely than non-Latinos (32 percent).

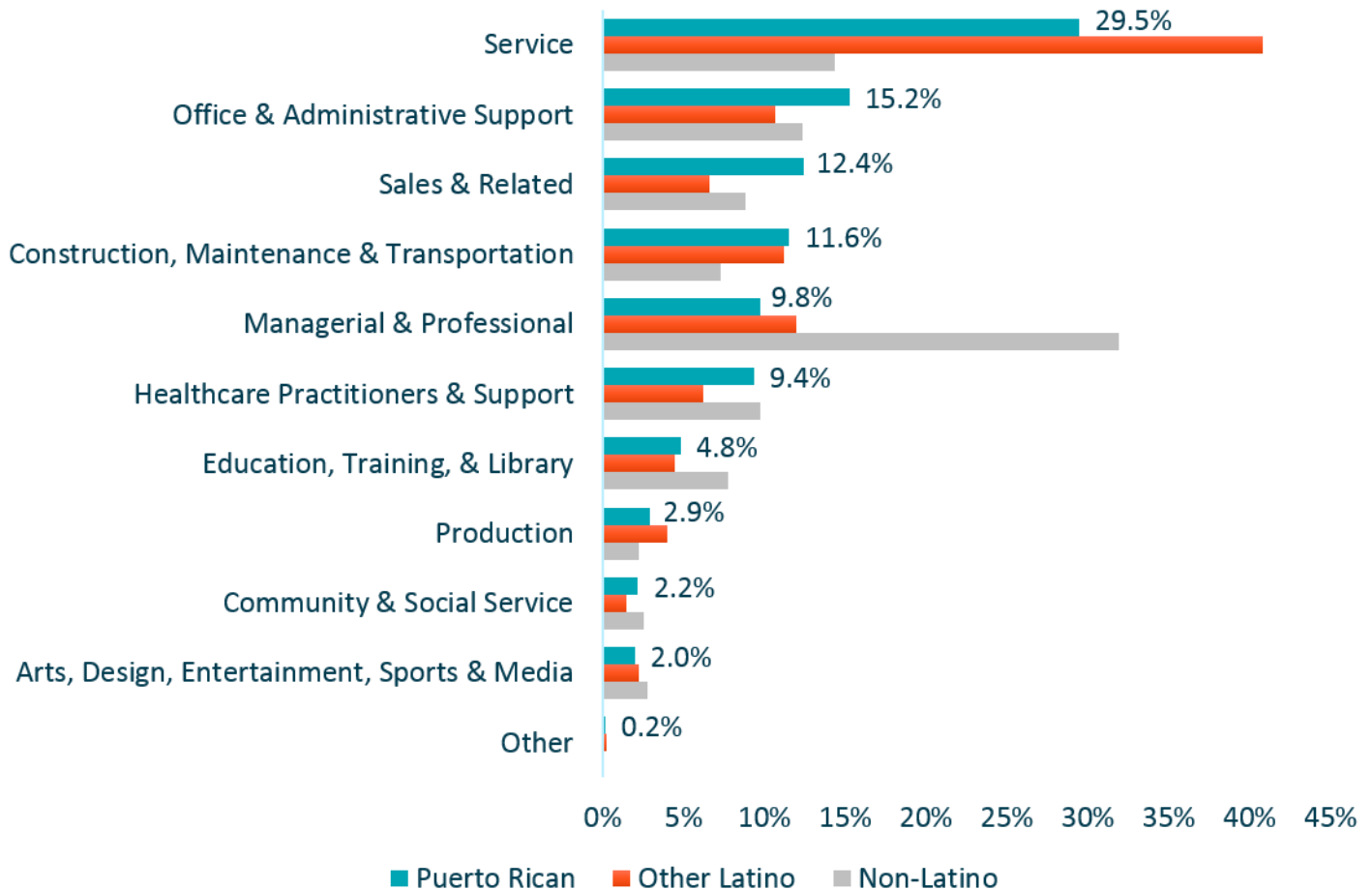


47% of Puerto Ricans are employed

Employment Type (ages 16 and older)



Occupations of Employed Workers



Standard of Living

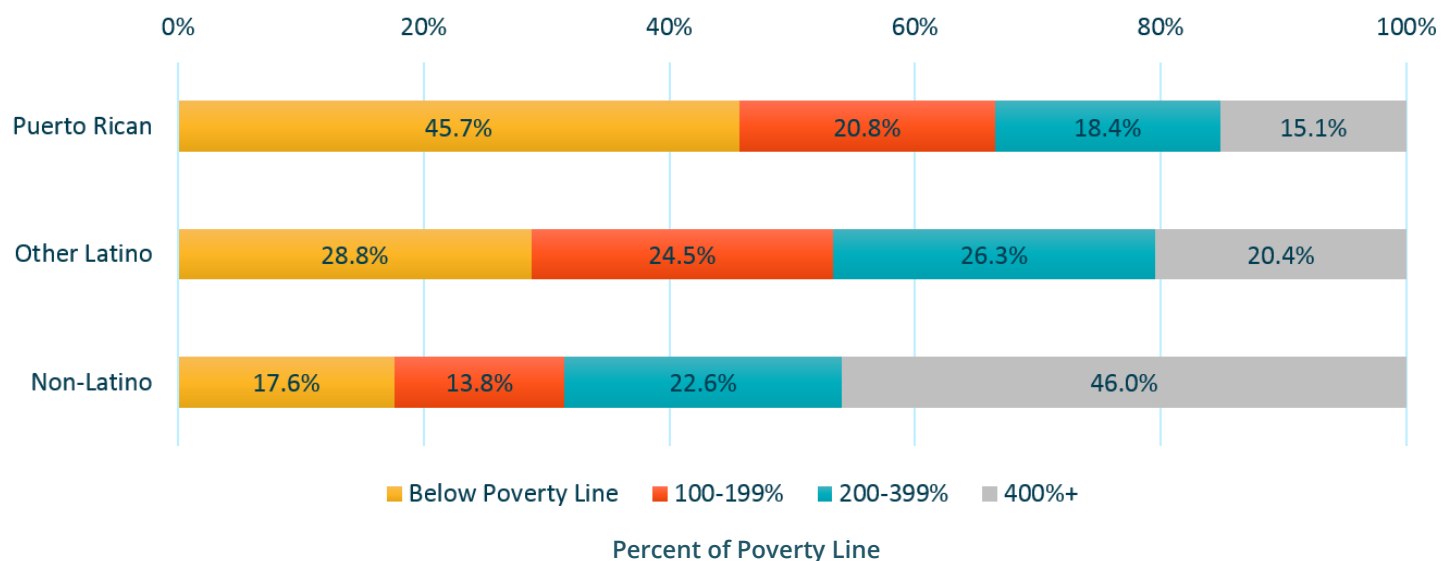


Almost 46 percent of Puerto Ricans live below the Census poverty line, a much higher rate than other groups. Only 15 percent of Puerto Ricans have achieved a middle class standard of living, compared to 20 percent for other Latinos and 46 percent for non-Latinos. A family income four times the poverty 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 about \$15,391, and a middle class income would be \$61,564. The median household income for Puerto Rican-headed households is only \$18,423. Despite their low income, 95 percent of Puerto Ricans have health insurance, a higher share than other Latinos.

Puerto Ricans are less likely to own their home (13 percent) than other Latinos (18 percent) and non-Latinos (37 percent).⁵ Over 56 percent of Puerto Rican households are housing burdened and pay more than 30 percent of their income in housing costs, a higher housing burden rate than other groups. Just 54 percent of Puerto Rican households own a car, a lower share than other Latinos (59 percent) or non-Latinos (66 percent).

Approximately 59 percent of Puerto Rican households are families and the average household size is 2.5, larger than the average for non-Latinos, 2.1.

Individual Poverty Rates

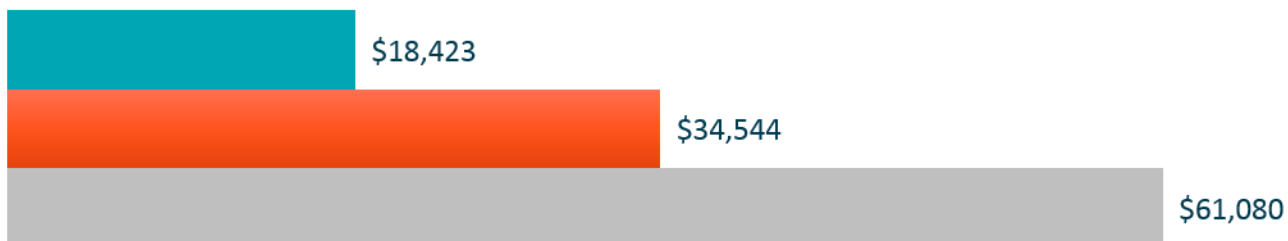


⁵ The ACS excludes households that are vacant, being bought, occupied without rent payment, have no household income or are group quarters when reporting owner/renter costs as a percentage of household income. Therefore, the sum of housing-burdened and non-housing-burdened households may not add exactly to the total number of homeowners/renters.

46% of Puerto Ricans in Boston live in poverty

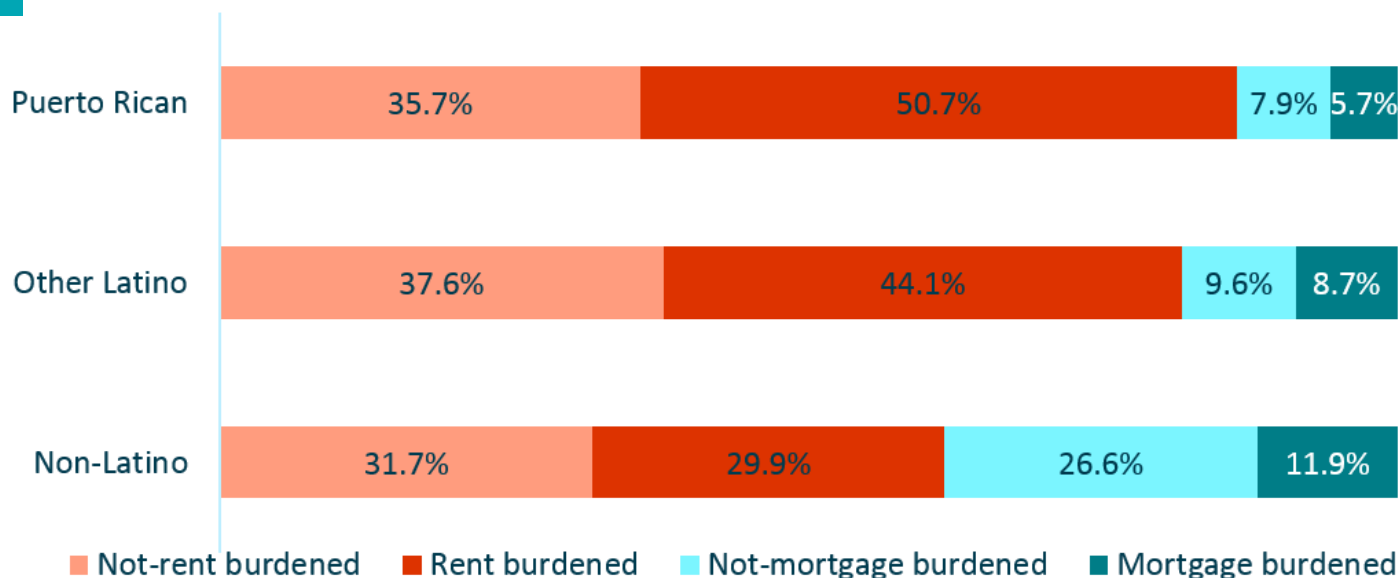


Median Household Income



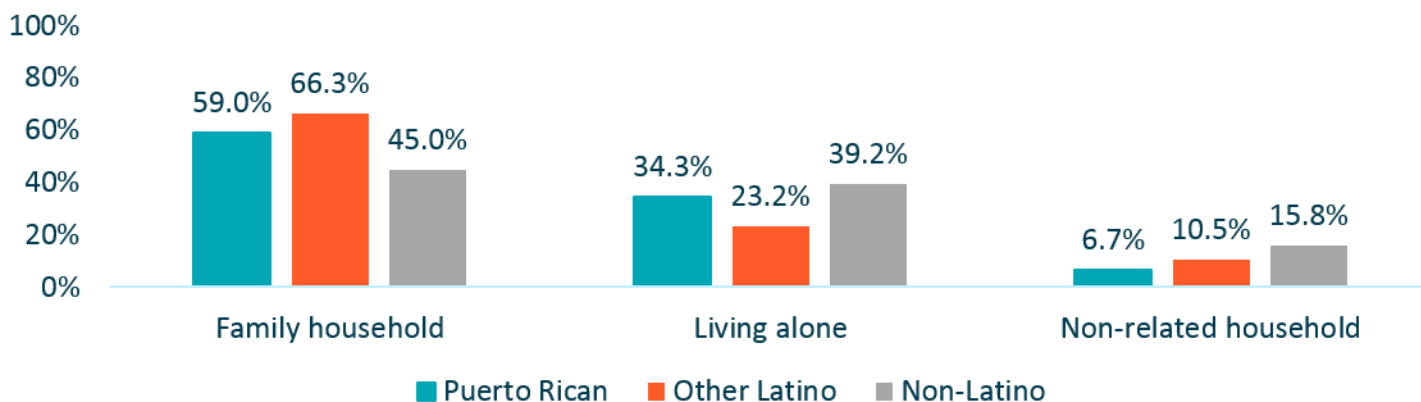
■ Puerto Rican ■ Other Latino ■ Non-Latino

Tenure and Housing Burden



■ Not-rent burdened ■ Rent burdened ■ Not-mortgage burdened ■ Mortgage burdened

Household Type

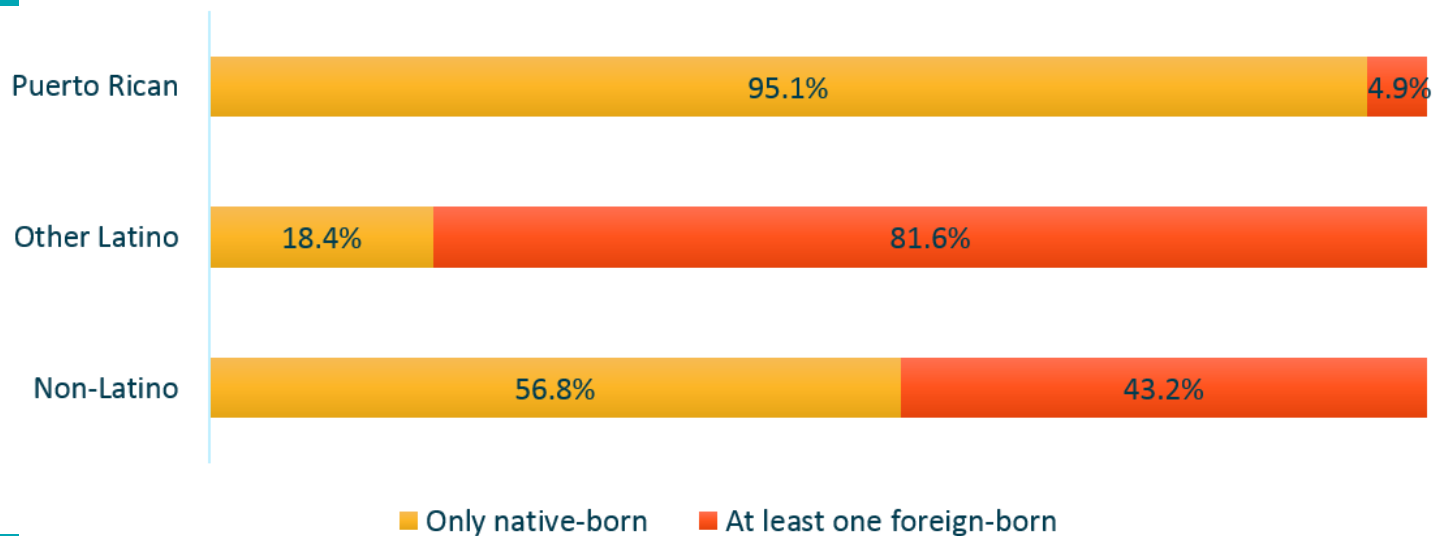


■ Puerto Rican ■ Other Latino ■ Non-Latino

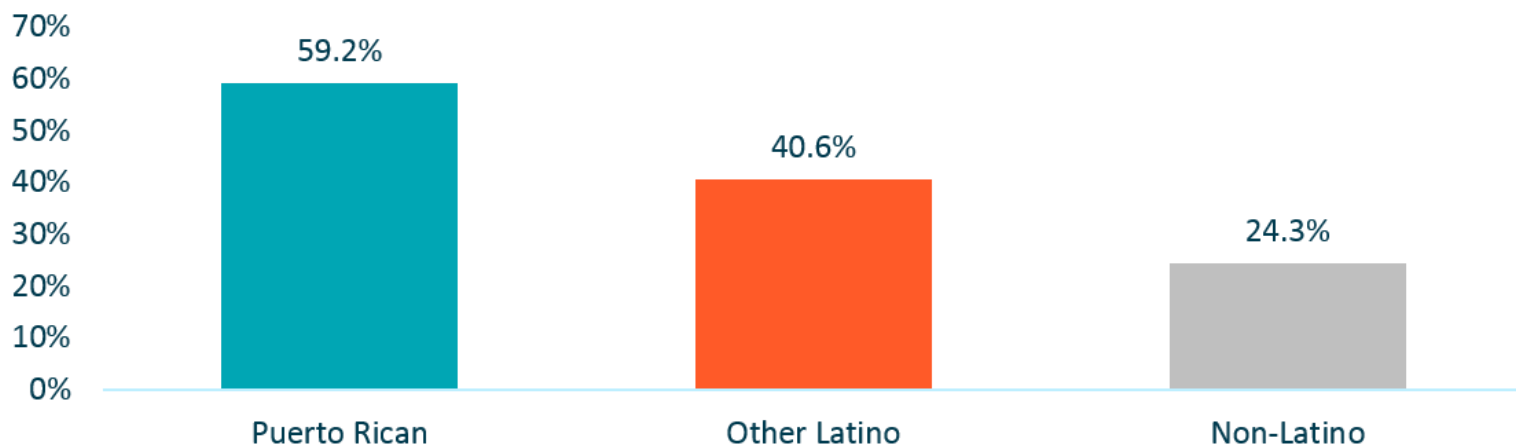
Puerto Rican Children

The 2011-2015 American Community Survey estimates 10,710 Puerto Rican children reside in Boston. Similar to other Latino groups, 42 percent of Puerto Rican households include children, much higher than the 20 percent of non-Latino households that include children. Almost all Puerto Rican children and their parents are native-born U.S. citizens who were born either in the mainland U.S. or in Puerto Rico. However, 5 percent of Puerto Rican children have a foreign-born parent (a parent born outside of the U.S. or Puerto Rico). In contrast, 82 percent of other Latino children have a foreign-born parent. Puerto Rican children are likely to live in poverty (59 percent), but over 99 percent of Puerto Rican children have health insurance.

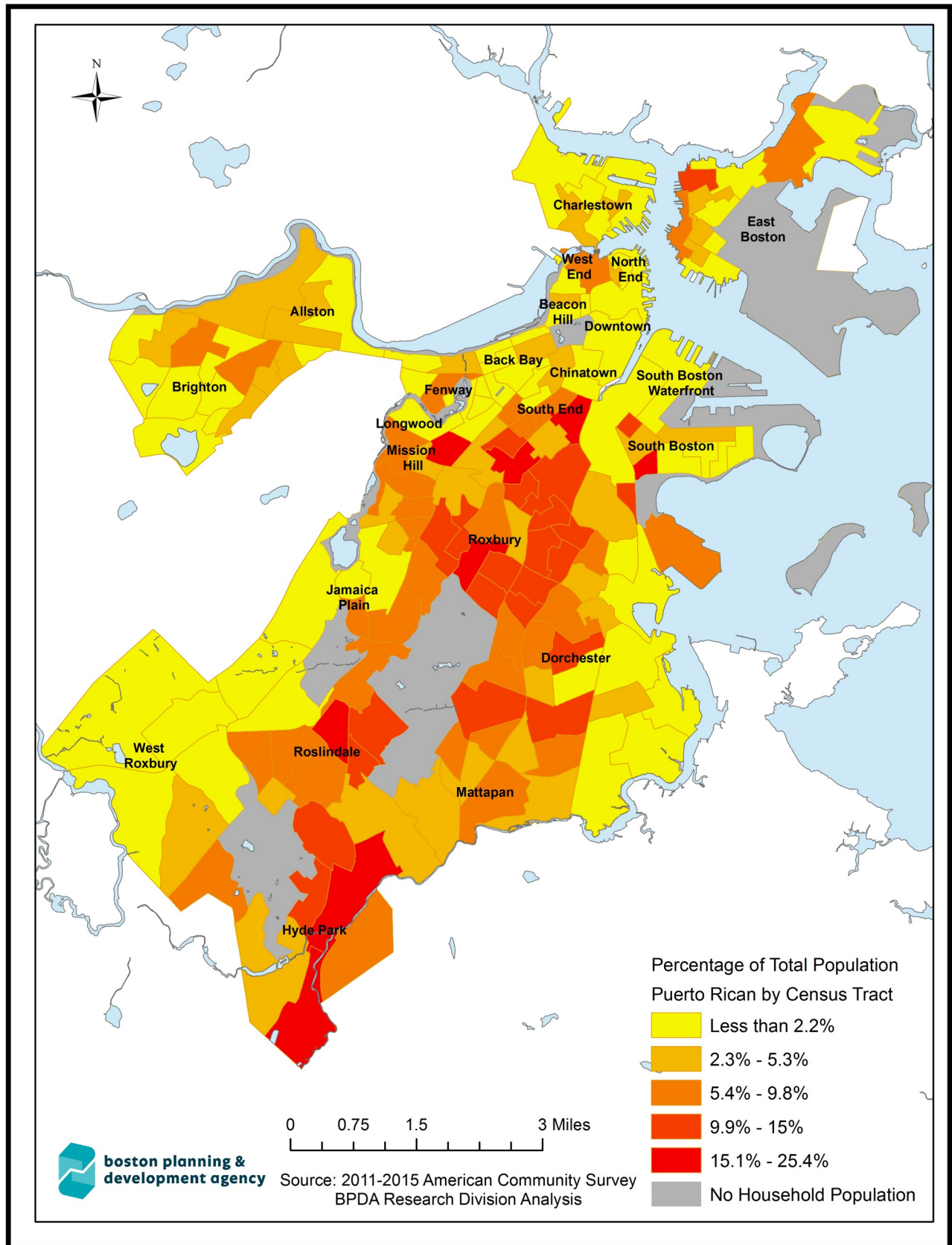
Parent Nativity



Child Poverty



Map of Puerto Ricans in Boston



Latinos in Boston

Puerto Ricans

Dominicans

Salvadorans

Colombians

Mexicans

Guatemalans

Brazilians



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