

Colombians

in
Boston



Vivian Gutierrez de Pineres, a U.S. Air Guard recruit originally from Colombia, takes the Oath of Allegiance to the United States on July 20, 2016 in Tucson, Arizona, making her a naturalized citizen (U.S. Air Force Photo by Maj. Gabe Johnson, ANG Public Affairs).

The Boston Planning & Development Agency

We strive to understand the current environment of the city to produce quality research and targeted information that will inform and benefit the residents and businesses of Boston. Our Division conducts research on Boston's economy, population, and commercial markets for all departments of the BPDA, the City of Boston, and related organizations.

The information provided in this report is the best available at the time of its publication. All or partial use of this report must be cited.

Citation

Please cite this publication as: Boston Planning & Development Agency Research Division, April 2017

Information

For more information about research produced by the Boston Planning & Development Agency, please see the BPDA Research website: <http://www.bostonplans.org/research-maps/research/research-publications>

Requests

Research inquiries can be made through the BPDA research website: <http://www.bostonplans.org/research-maps/research/research-inquiries>



**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.

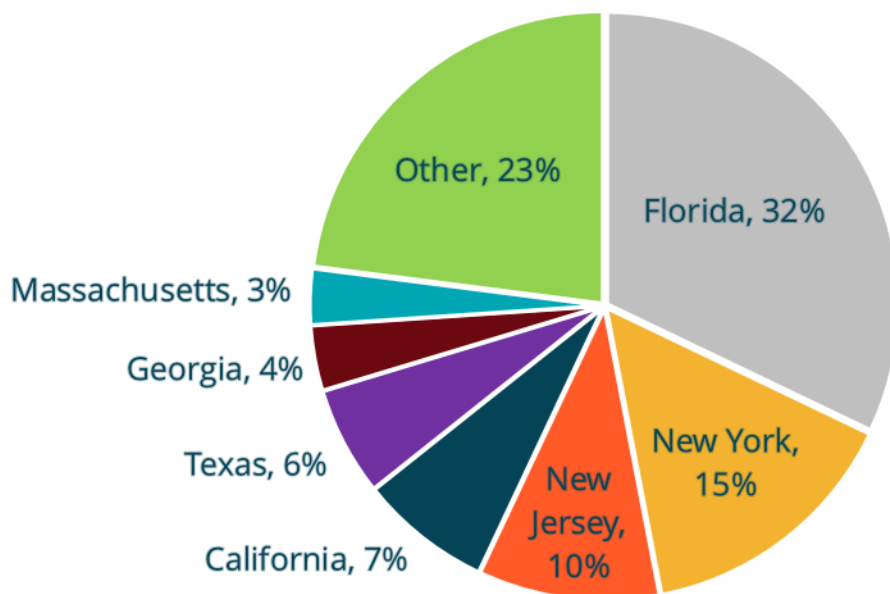
"Latino includes people who 1. self-describe their ethnicity as "Hispanic or Latino", or 2. were born in Brazil, or 3. wo self-describe their ancestry as Brazilian.

Even though Colombians migrated to the United States throughout the 20th century, their migration intensified during certain periods due to changing conditions in the country. In the 1950s, migration increased due to a civil war; in the 1980s, due to drug-related violence; and in the mid-1990s, due to collapsing of social institutions. The 1980s migration was from more rural areas, and the 1990s migration was from more urban areas and consisted of more professionals. As a result, the Colombian population in the United States represents diverse segments of the country's population.

In 2015, 1.1 million people with Colombian origin lived in the United States.¹ With an estimated 33,492 Colombians residing in Massachusetts, the state accounts for 3.1 percent of all Colombians in the country.

Massachusetts has the seventh largest Colombian population. Florida (32.1 percent) and New York (14.9 percent) are states with the largest Colombian populations. In the Northeast, in addition to New York, New Jersey (10.0 percent) has a large Colombian population. Boston is home to 25 percent of Massachusetts' Colombian population.

Colombians by State



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

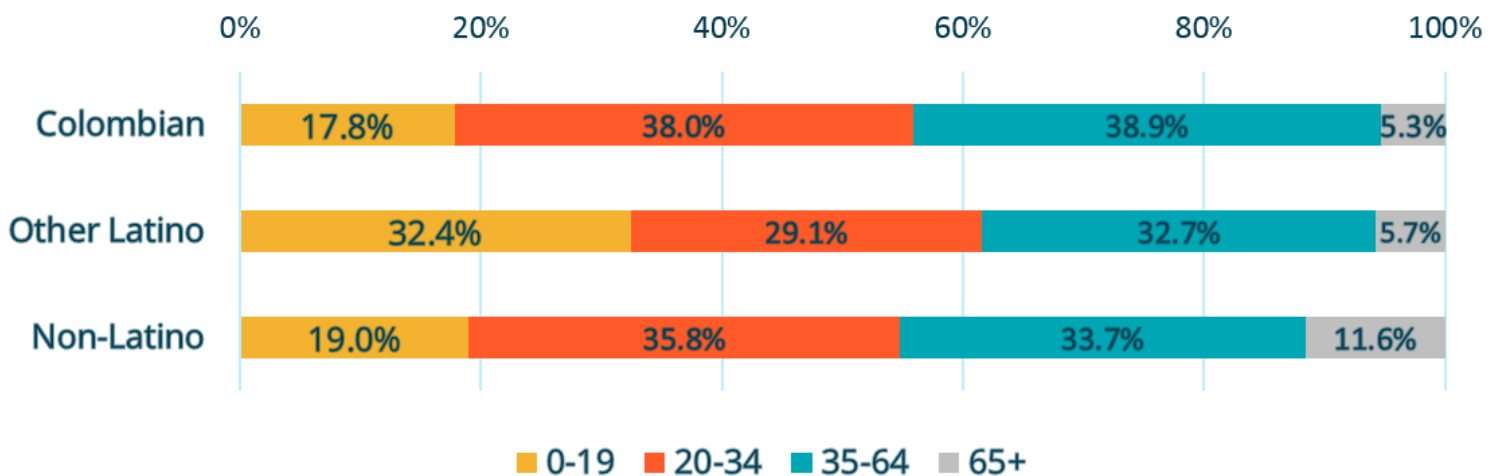
Colombians in Boston



According to the 2010 Census, Boston had 6,649 Colombian residents, up from 4,677 in the 2000 Census. The American Community Survey reports that Boston’s Colombian population grew by 2015 to 8,440 (+/-2,676).² Accounting for 6 percent of all Latinos in Boston, Colombians are the fourth largest Latino population in the city. Other large Latino populations include Puerto Ricans (28 percent), Dominicans (24 percent), Salvadorans (11 percent), and Mexicans (5 percent). Colombians are concentrated in East Boston (61 percent), and smaller shares live in Brighton (4 percent), Dorchester (4 percent), and Hyde Park (4 percent).³

Colombians’ median age of 33 years is older than both other Latinos (27) and non-Latinos (32). Colombians are predominately male (52 percent) compared to other Latinos and non-Latinos, both 48 percent. A higher share of Colombians are married—32 percent. The majority are foreign born (76 percent), and only 34 percent of foreign-born Colombians are naturalized citizens. Nearly 90 percent of Colombians speak Spanish at home, and only 45 percent speak English very well. Among younger Colombians under age 35, 68 percent speak English very well.

Age Distribution



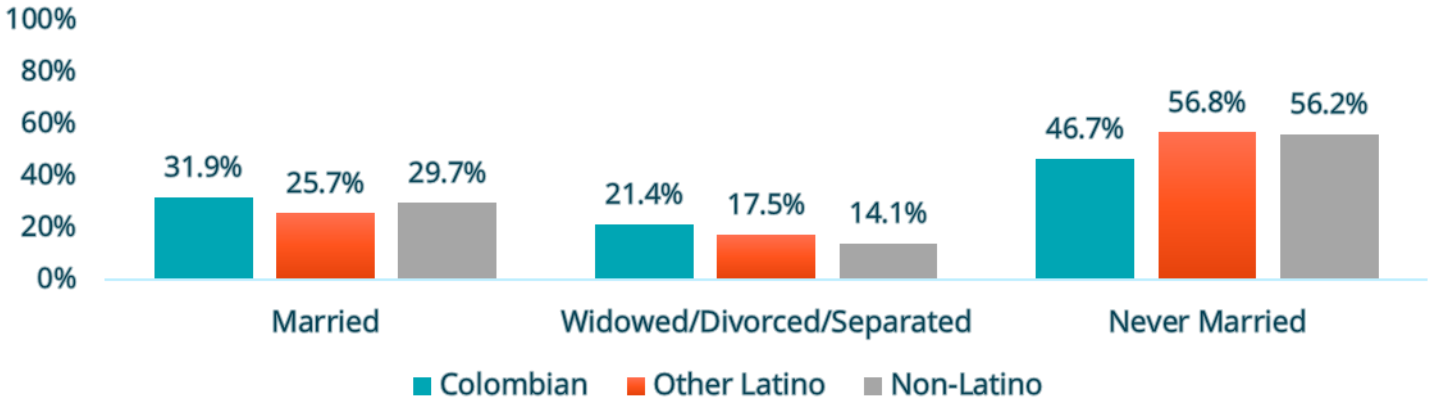
² U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 1-year American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis

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

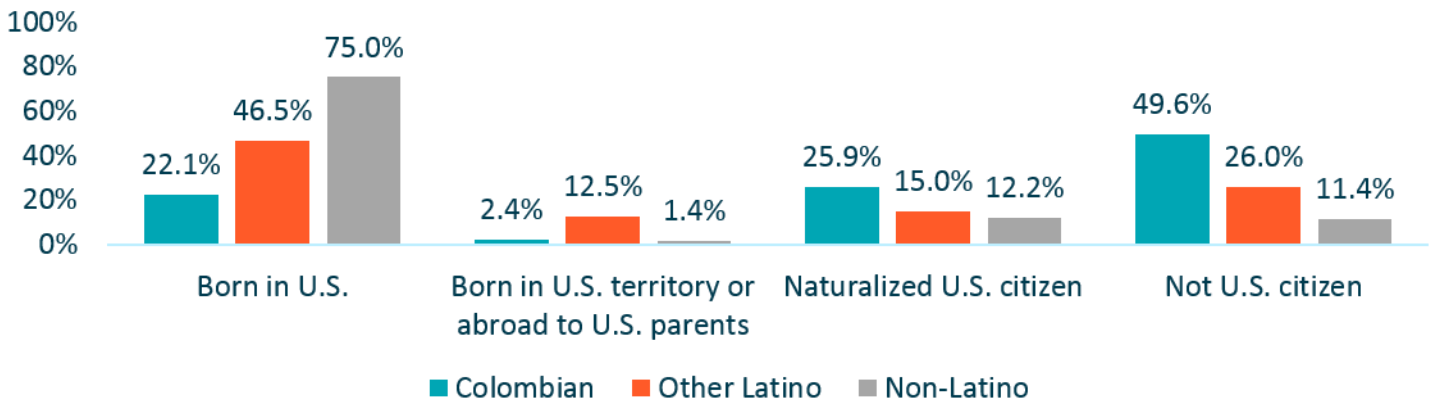
6% of Boston's Latinos are Colombian



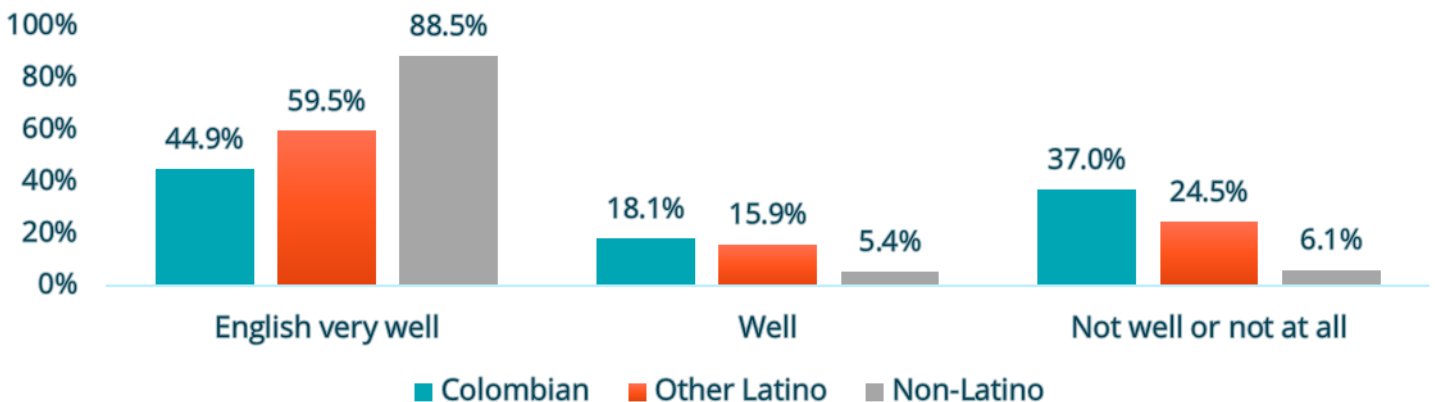
Marital Status (ages 15 and older)



Citizenship

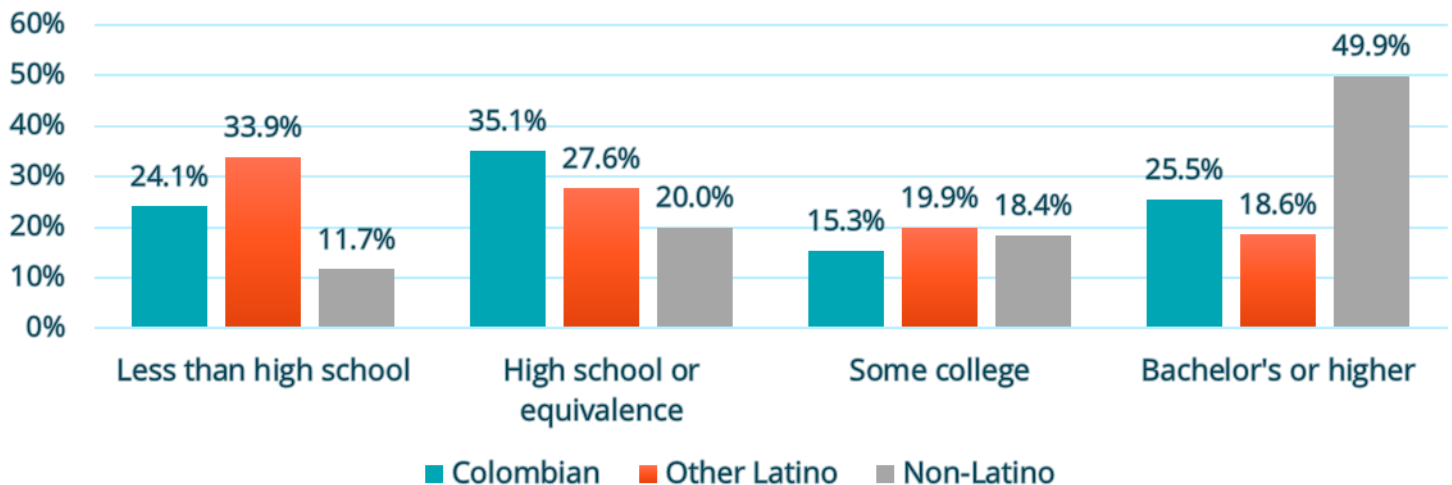


English Proficiency (ages 5 and older)





Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)



Educational Attainment | The educational attainment of Colombians varies widely among individuals. About a quarter of adult Colombians have not completed high school, but another quarter of adult Colombians have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

School Enrollment | Colombians make up about one percent of both Boston residents enrolled in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, and Boston residents enrolled in college or university.

Labor Force Participation | A much higher share of adult Colombians participate in the labor force—80 percent compared to 66 percent for other Latinos (66 percent) and 68 percent for non-Latinos. Labor force participation is higher for Colombian men than women (82 percent vs. 78 percent).

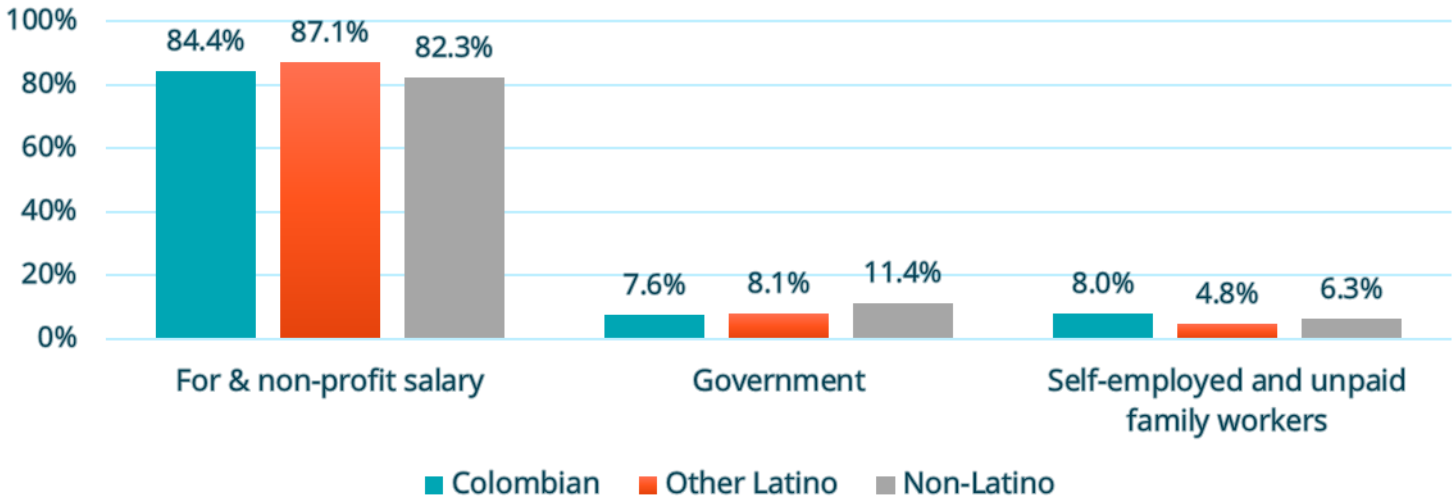
Employment | About 8 percent of employed Colombians are self-employed, a higher share than other groups. Over 57 percent of employed Colombians work in service occupations, and only 8 percent work in managerial and professional occupations.

Commute | A smaller share of Colombians (28 percent) work outside of Suffolk County than other Latinos (30 percent) and non-Latinos (33 percent). Colombians (56 percent) are more likely to travel to work by public transportation than other Latinos (43 percent) or non-Latinos (32 percent).

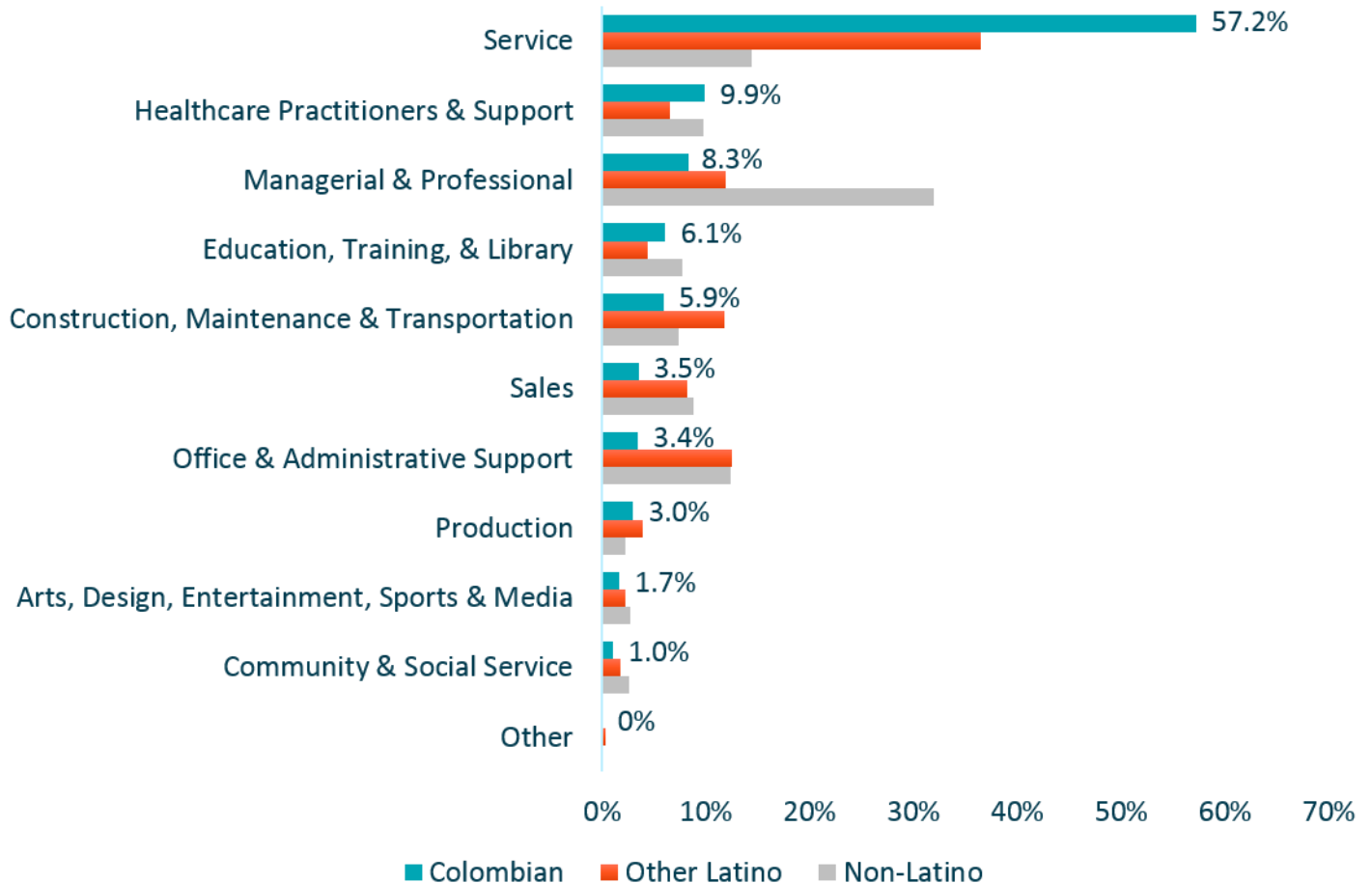


76% of Colombians are employed

Employment Type (ages 16 and older)



Occupations of Employed Workers



Standard of Living

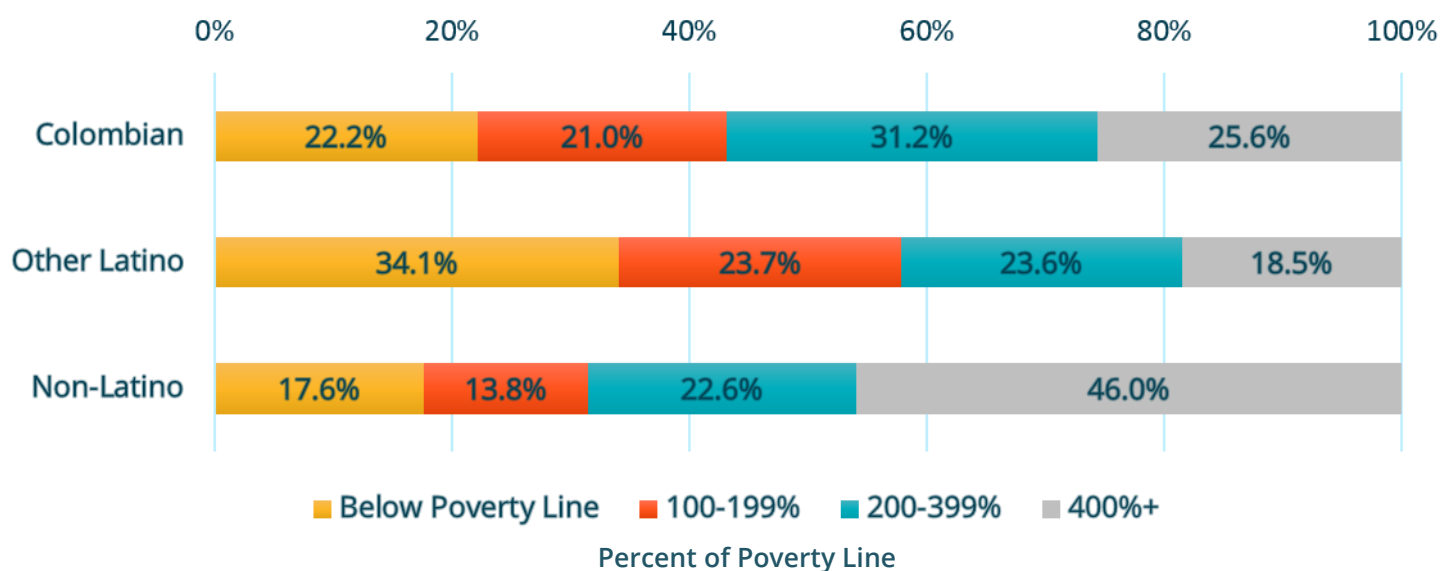


Approximately 22 percent of Colombians live below the Census poverty line, a lower share compared to other Latinos. Only 26 percent of Colombians have achieved a middle class standard of living. A family income four times the poverty line is used as a proxy for a middle-class standard of living. The 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 Colombian-headed households is \$48,903. Despite median incomes that may be considered lower middle class, a high share (14 percent) of Colombians do not have health insurance, perhaps because of the high rate of self-employment.

Colombians are less likely to own their own home (13 percent), than other Latinos (17 percent) and non-Latinos (37 percent).⁴ More than half of Colombian households (53 percent) are housing burdened and pay more than 30 percent of their income in housing costs. Just 46 percent of Colombian households own a car, a lower share than other Latinos (58 percent) and non-Latinos (66 percent).

Approximately 57 percent of Colombian households are families and the average household size is 2.7, larger than the average for non-Latinos, 2.1.

Poverty Rates

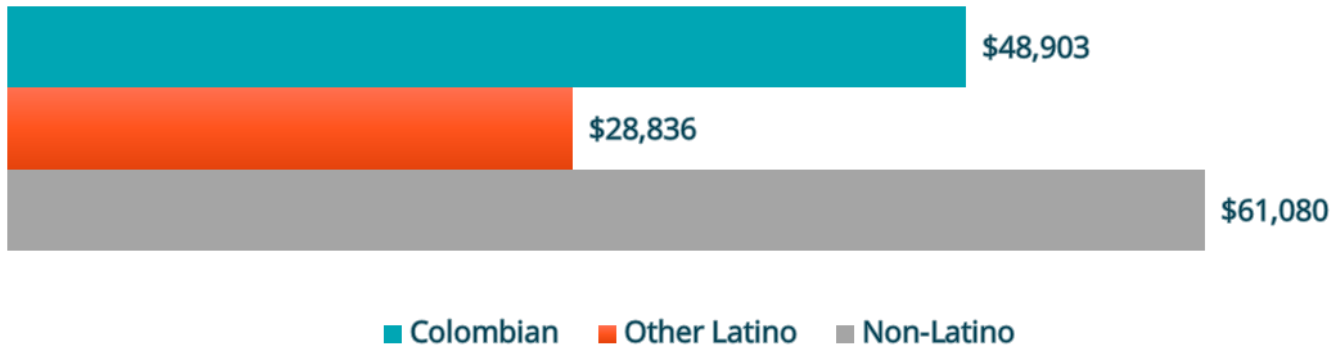


⁴ The ACS excludes households that are vacant, being bought, occupied without rent payment, have no household income or are group quarters when reporting owner/renter costs as a percentage of household income. Therefore, the sum of housing-burdened and non-housing-burdened households may not add exactly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

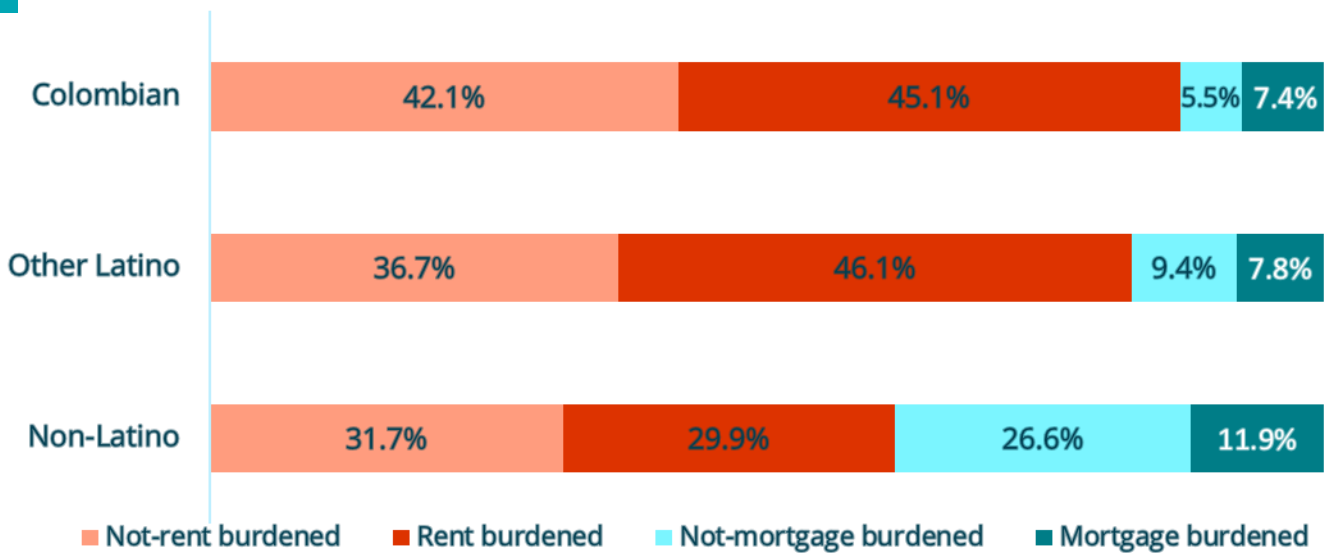
22% of Colombians in Boston live in poverty



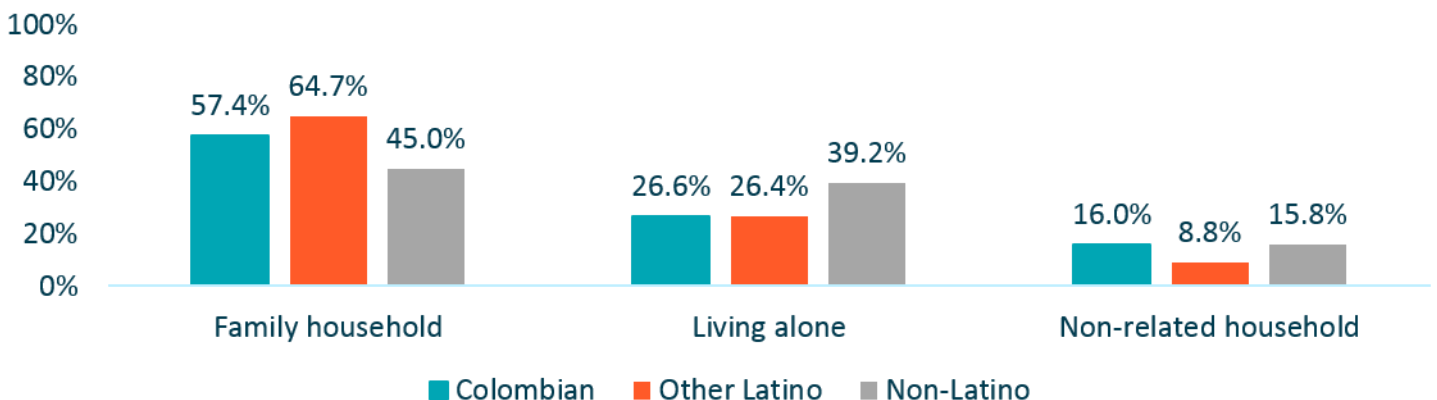
Median Household Income



Tenure and Housing Burden



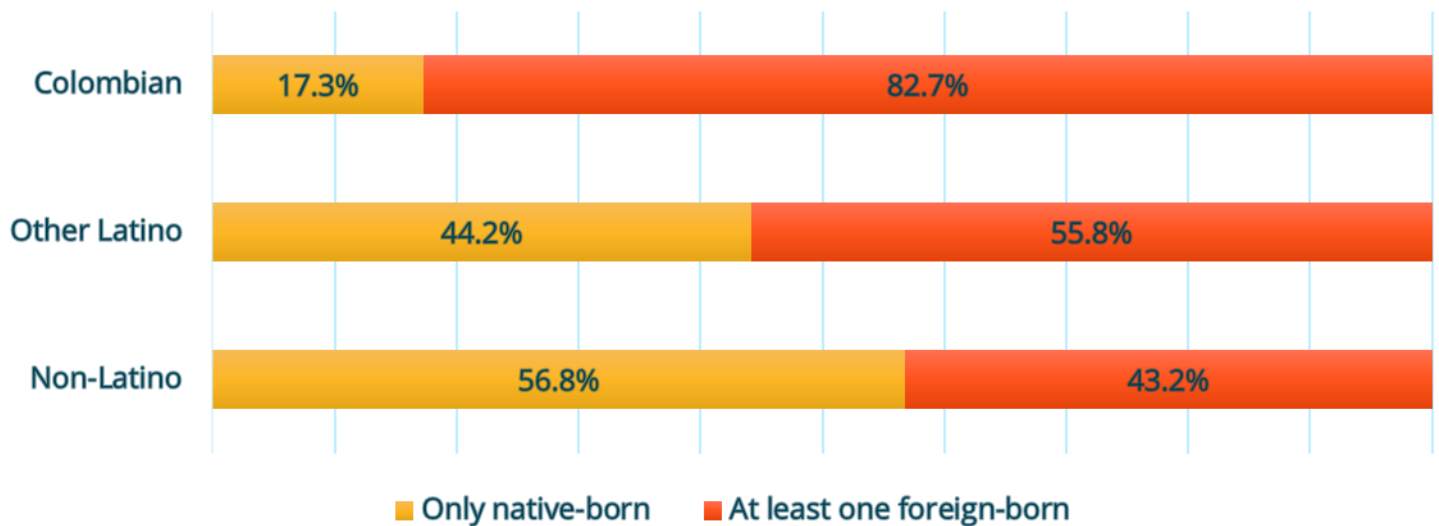
Household Type



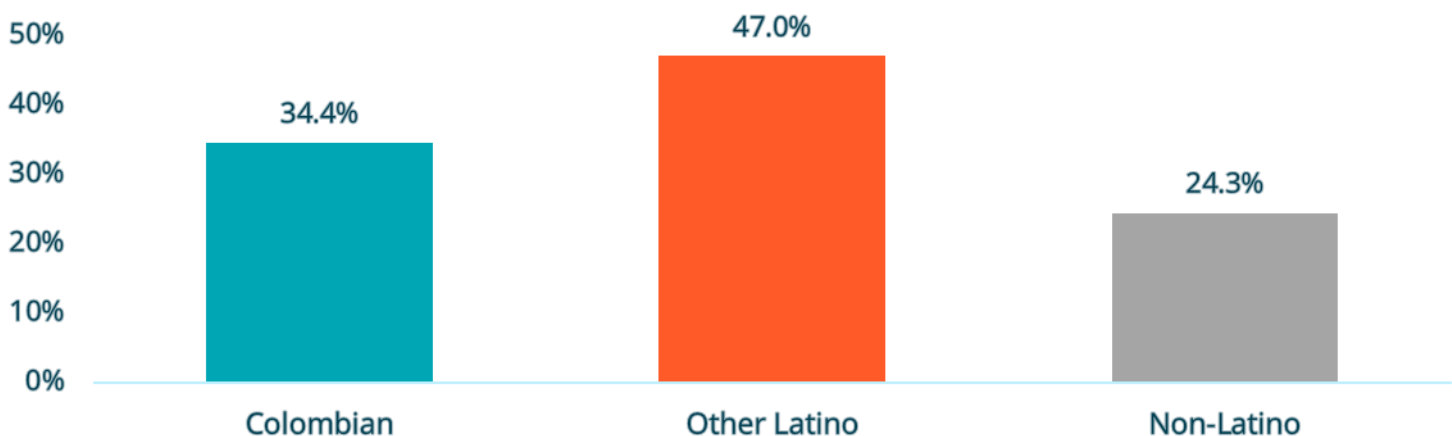
Colombian Children

The 2011-2015 American Community Survey estimates 1,345 Colombian children reside in Boston. A smaller share of Colombian households include children compared to other Latinos– 31 percent compared to 43 percent. Even though 78 percent of Colombian children are native born, 83 percent have at least one foreign-born parent. Colombian children are less likely to live in poverty (34 percent), and over 99 percent of Colombian children have health insurance.

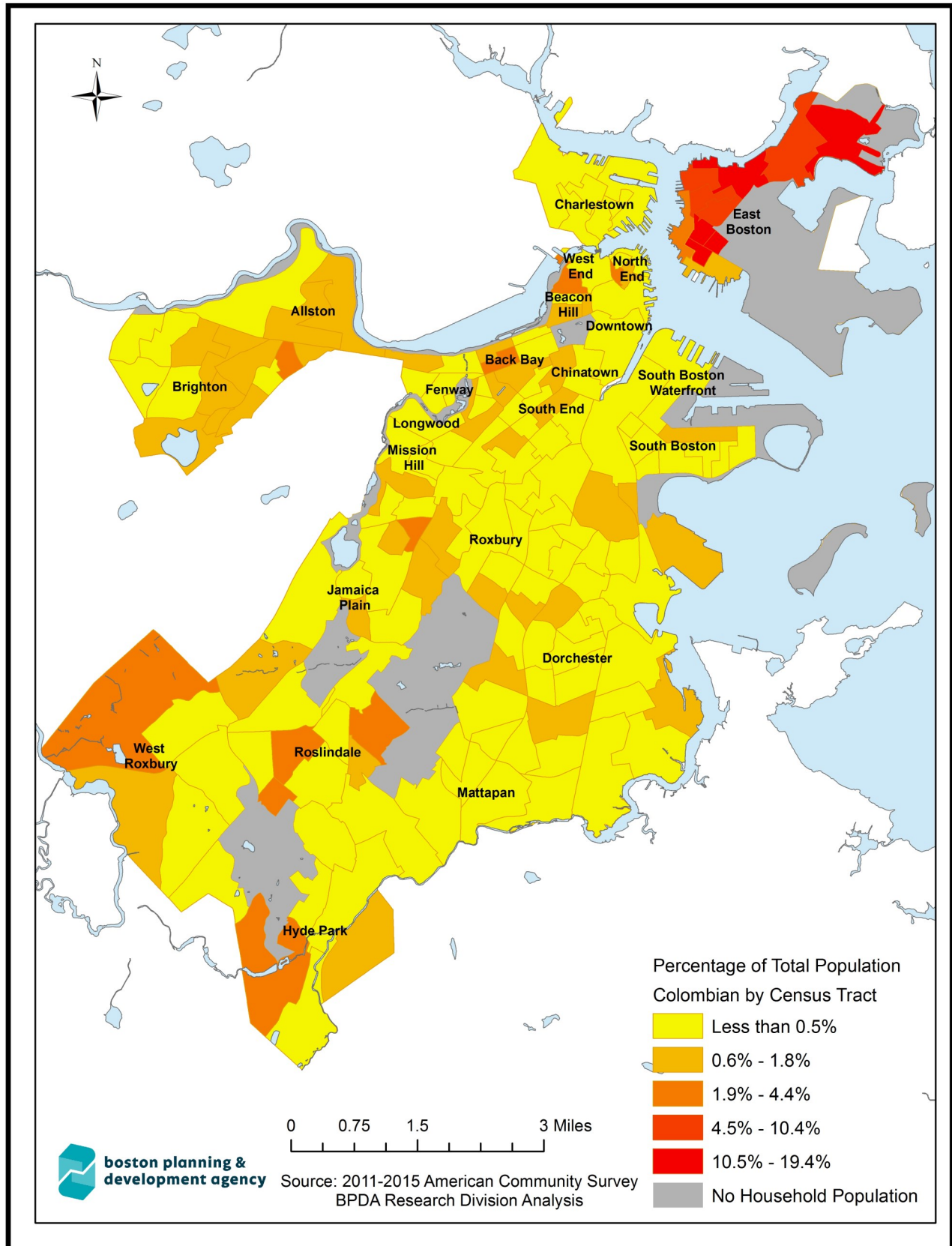
Parent Nativity



Child Poverty



Map of Colombians in Boston



Latinos in Boston

Puerto Ricans

Dominicans

Salvadorans

Colombians

Mexicans

Guatemalans

Brazilians



**boston planning &
development agency**

**Research Division
June, 2017**