

imagine
all the
people

Brazilians

CITY OF BOSTON
Martin J. Walsh
Mayor

2019

Brazilians in Massachusetts

"imagine all the people" is a series of publications produced by the Boston Planning and Development Agency for the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Advancement. The series provides a comprehensive profile of the diverse immigrant communities and their numerous social, cultural and economic contributions. It is part of an ongoing effort to celebrate immigrants and gain insight into how they shape our city and state.



THE BOSTON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY RESEARCH DIVISION (BPDA)

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.

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Introduction

Brazil is the largest Latin American country, both in size and population. Its population in 2019 was 210 million making Brazil the sixth most populated country in the world.¹ The World Bank in 2018 ranked Brazil's economy the ninth largest.²

Brazil was a Portuguese colony that gained its independence in 1825. As a result, it is the only Portuguese speaking Latin American country.

Large scale Brazilian migration to the United States is a recent development. In 1980, the U. S. Census Bureau estimated 56,220 Brazilians resided in the United States with 3,160 living in Massachusetts. Economic instability in Brazil during the 1980s facilitated migration to the United States. By 2000, the U.S. Brazilian population increased to 269,841, with 40,785 residing in Massachusetts. In 2017, 680,356 Brazilians lived in the United States with 111,224 residing in Massachusetts.

This report analyzes Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) to compare the Brazilian and Hispanic populations in Massachusetts.³ The Census Bureau does not classify Brazilians as a Hispanic or Latino origin. Brazilians are identified through two ACS variables: place of birth and ancestry. Anyone born in Brazil or born outside of Brazil but having Brazilian ancestry is Brazilian. Hispanics are identified from one of 23 detailed Hispanic origins in the ACS. The ACS views Hispanic origin as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before arriving in the United States.

The smallest geographic area in these data is a Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA). PUMAs are non-overlapping geographies that partition each state into subsections containing at least 100,000 residents. PUMAs may contain multiple cities or towns with populations under 100,000. This limits the usefulness of PUMA-level analysis for cities or towns in Massachusetts such as Framingham and Everett whose populations fall below the 100,000 threshold and whose PUMAs include at least one surrounding city or town.

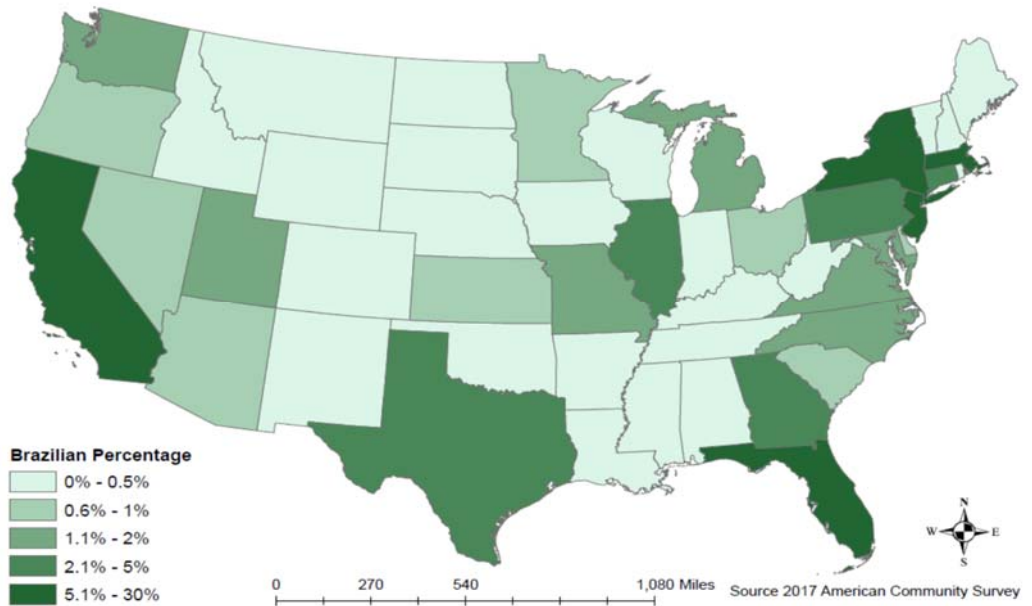


Photo - Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers

Brazilian Population in the U.S.

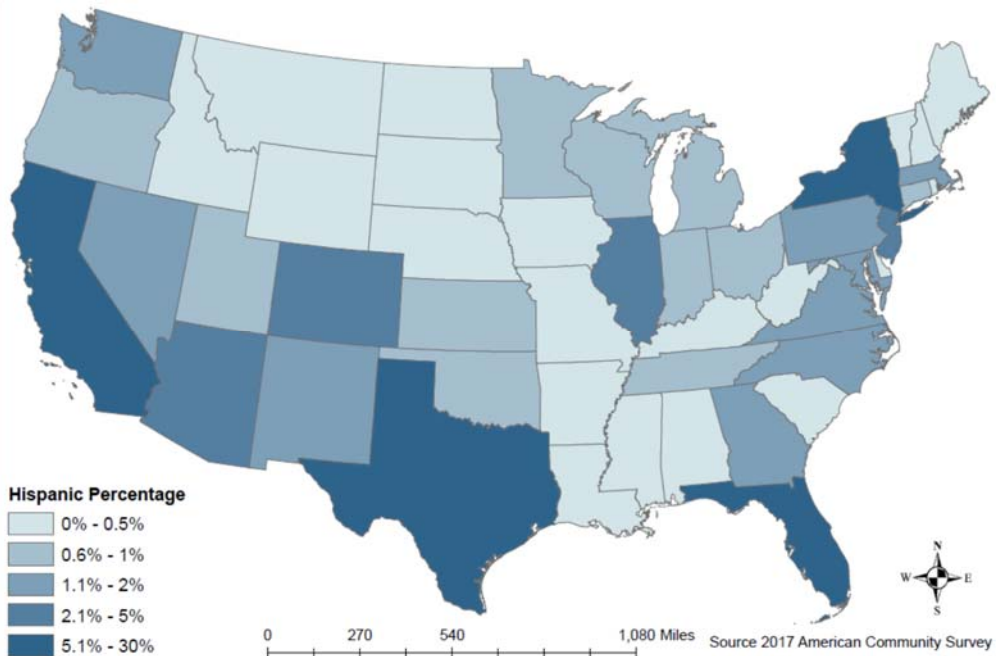
With a Brazilian population of 111,224 in 2017, Massachusetts was home to 16% of all Brazilians in the United States.⁴ Only Florida had a larger Brazilian population according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Brazilians in the United States in 2017



With a Hispanic population of 808,797, Massachusetts was home to only 1% of all Hispanics in the United States. This ranked the Massachusetts Hispanic population 15th among states.

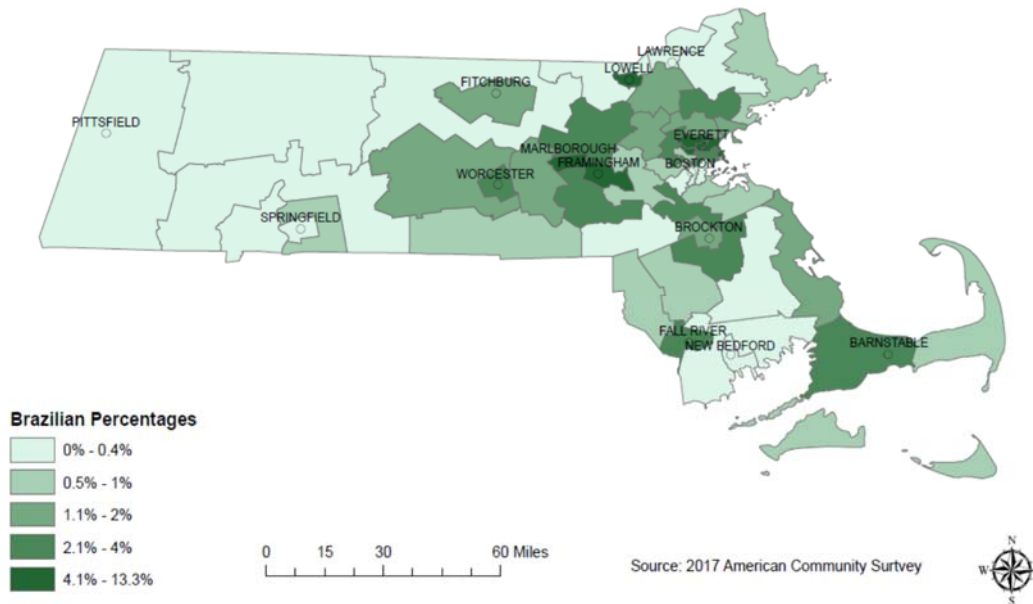
Hispanics the United States in 2017



Brazilian Population in Massachusetts

The Brazilian population is concentrated in Eastern Massachusetts. Over 13% of the state's Brazilians reside in the Framingham, Marlborough, and Natick PUMA. Other PUMAs with larger shares of the state's total Brazilian population are Somerville and Everett (9%), Revere, Chelsea, and Winthrop (7%), Malden and Medford (7%), and Lowell (7%). The City of Boston consists of 5 PUMAs, and these PUMAs contain 6% of the state's total Brazilian population.

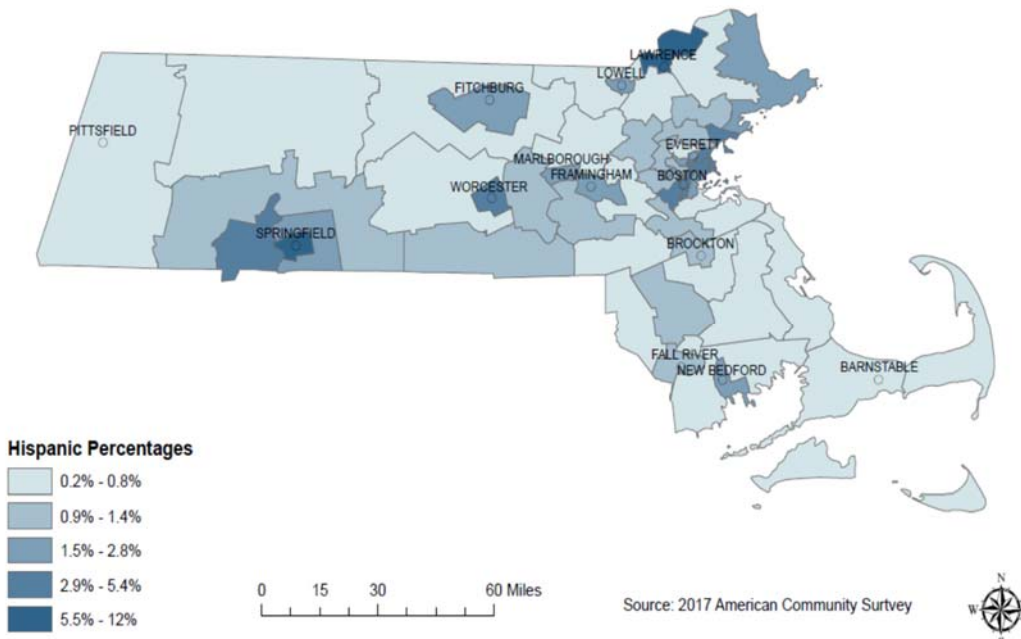
Brazilians in Massachusetts by Public Use Microdata Area in 2017



Brazilians are concentrated in Eastern Massachusetts and other urban centers.

Compared to Brazilians, the Hispanic population is more dispersed across the state. Over 12% of the state's Hispanic population resides in the Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen PUMA. Other PUMAs with large shares of the state's total Hispanic population are Springfield (9%), Revere, Chelsea, and Winthrop (5%), and Worcester (5%). The 5 Boston PUMAs contain 17% of the state's total Hispanic population.

Hispanics in Massachusetts by Public Use Microdata Area in 2017



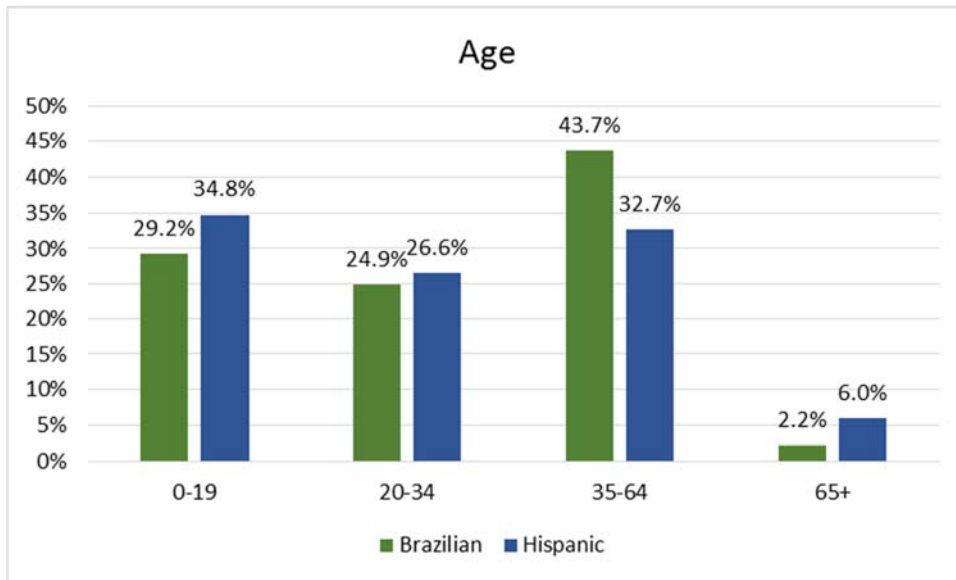
Demographics and Labor Force

Nativity

Due to their more recent migration history, 73% of Brazilians are foreign born, and only 46% of Brazilians are U.S. citizens. The state's Hispanic population is only 30% foreign born and 83% are U.S. citizens in part because the Hispanic population in Massachusetts is 42% Puerto Rican, who are U.S. citizens.

Age Distribution

With a median age of 28 years, the Brazilian population in Massachusetts is younger than the Hispanic population with a median age of 33 years. Both groups have a younger median age than the overall state's median age of 40 years. A larger share of Brazilians are 35 to 64 (44%) compared to Hispanics (33%). In contrast, Hispanics have larger shares of their population age birth to 19 years (35%) and 65 years or older (6%) compared to 29% and 2% respectively for Brazilians.

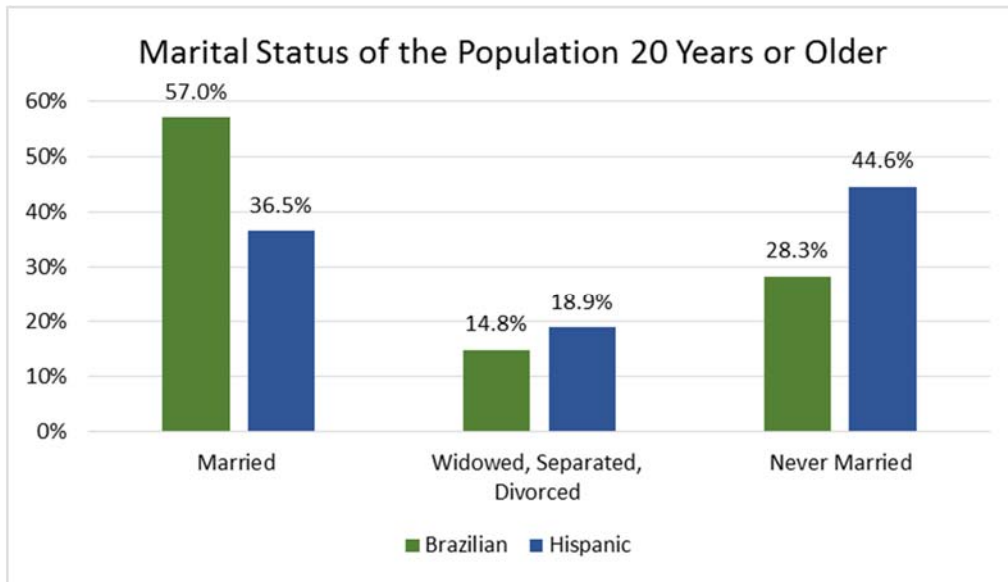


Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

Marital Status

The two populations have a large discrepancy in their marriage rates. This could be influenced by the above nativity and age distributions. Among the population ages 20 years or older, over half (57%) are Brazilians are currently married, while 28% have never married. Among Hispanics, 32% are currently married, while over half (51%) have never married. The marriage rate for Massachusetts is 50%.

Brazilians are on average older and have higher rates of marriage compared to Hispanics.

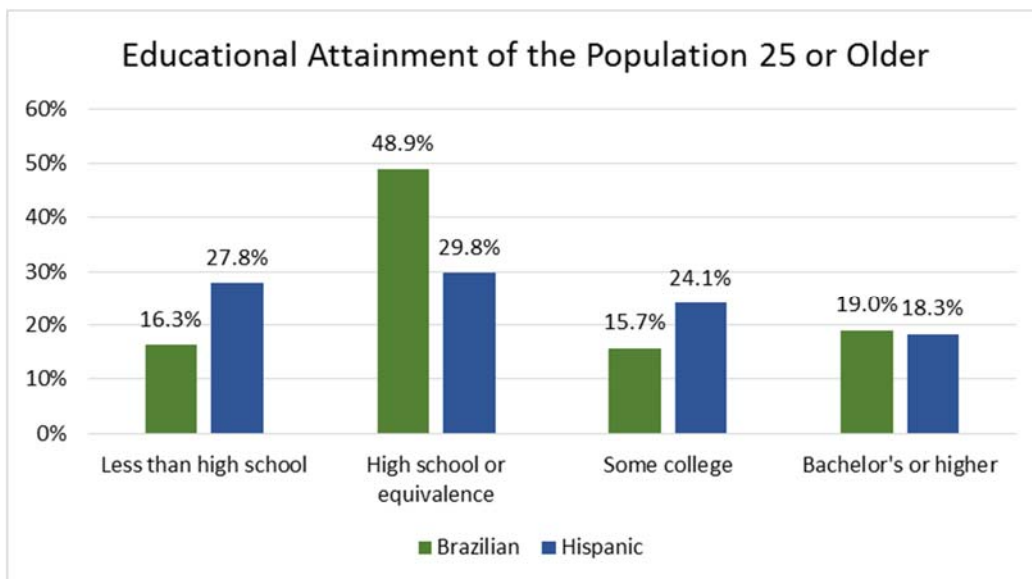


Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

*49% of
Brazilians
ended their
education
with a high
school
diploma*

Educational Attainment

Both Brazilians and Hispanics have large shares of their adult population without a Bachelor’s degree. In Massachusetts, 44% of the general population 25 years or older has at least a Bachelor’s degree. Among adult Brazilians, 19% have at least a Bachelor’s degree while the share is 18% among Hispanics. The biggest difference between Brazilians and Hispanics is among those with high school as their highest level of educational attainment. Nearly half (49%) of Brazilian adults ended their education with a high school diploma compared to 30% of Hispanic adults.



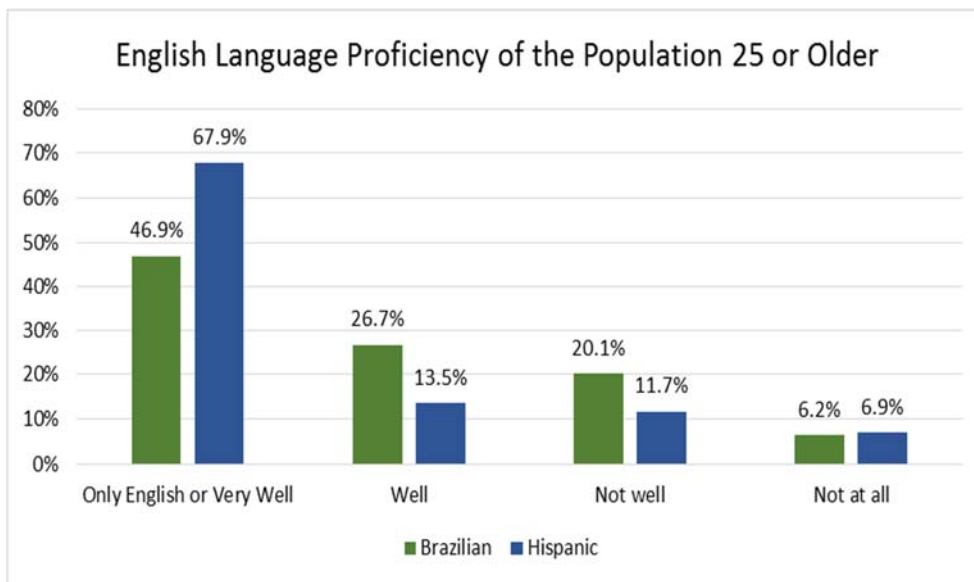
Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

English Proficiency

Less than half (47%) of Brazilians speak only English or speak it very well compared to 68% of Hispanics.

Limited English proficiency and lower educational attainment can limit a person's ability to succeed in the labor force. Nearly 60% of both Brazilian and Hispanic adults have at least a high school education and English proficiency, defined as speaking English very well or well. Only 7% of Brazilian adults have less than a high school education and limited English proficiency compared to 14% for Hispanic adults.

Less than half of Brazilians speak English very well.



Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis



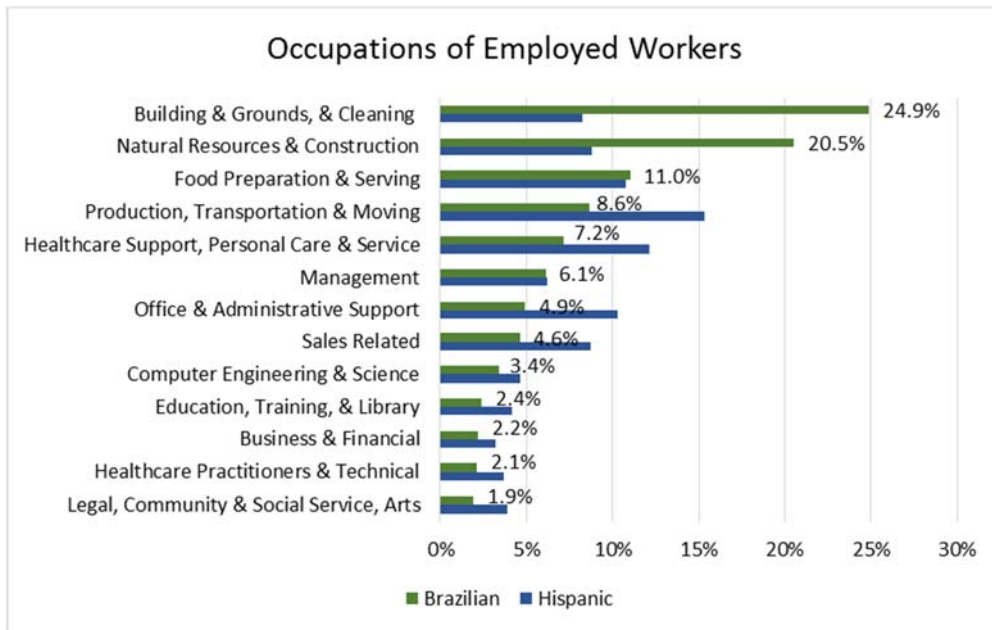
Photo: Brazilian Worker Center

Employment and Occupational Distribution

Brazilians and Hispanics differ in their labor force participation. Nearly 82% of Brazilians age 20 or older are in the labor force compared to only 70% of Hispanics. Both of these rates are higher than 68% for all workers in the state. The share of Brazilians workers age 20 or older who are employed part-time is 21% compared to 25% for Hispanics. The share of the general population is 22%.

Brazilians and Hispanics also differ in their occupational distribution. A quarter (25%) of all employed Brazilians work in building & grounds, and cleaning occupations compared to 8% for Hispanic workers. A large share of Brazilians work in natural resources, construction, & maintenance occupations (21%) compare to 9% for Hispanic workers. Hispanics are more likely to work in production, transportation & moving occupations (15%) compared to 9% of Brazilian workers. In addition, 10% of Hispanics work in office & administrative support occupations compared to 5% of Brazilian workers. As a comparison to the entire Massachusetts labor force, 12% of employed workers are in management occupations, compared to only 6% for both Brazilian and Hispanic workers.

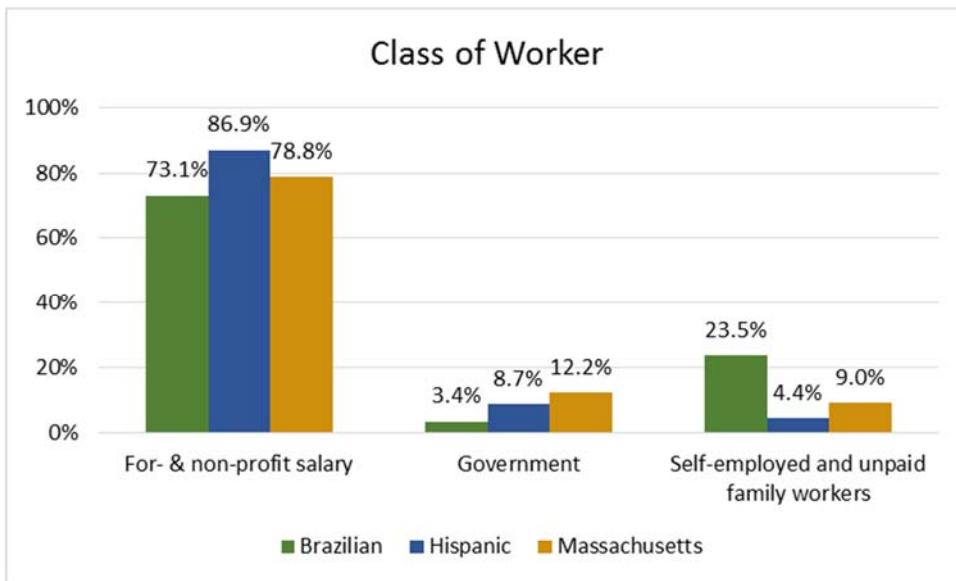




A large share of Brazilians are self-employed (24%) which is much higher than the Hispanic rate (4%).

Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

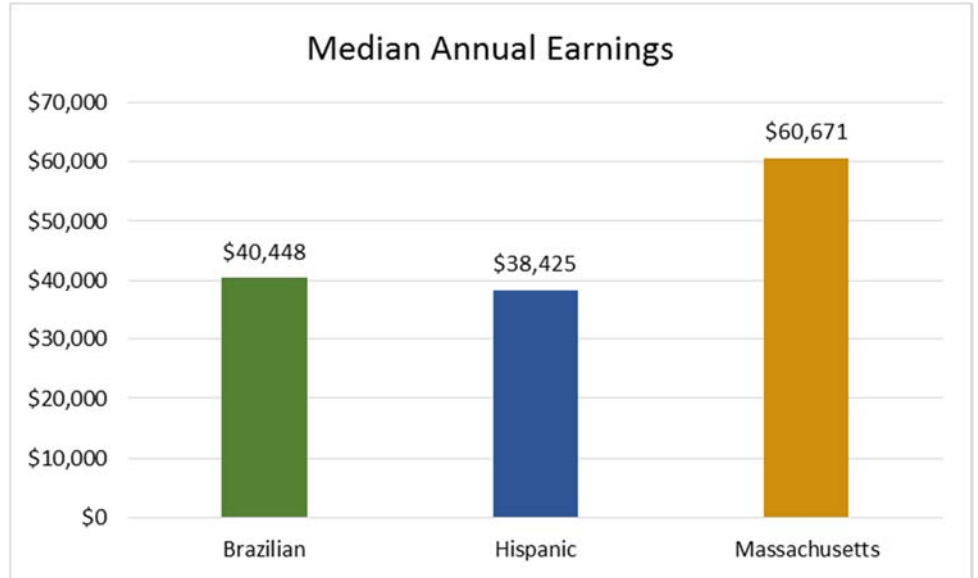
Approximately 24% of all Brazilian workers are self-employed compared to only 4% of Hispanic workers. This share of self-employed Brazilians is striking as only 9% of all Massachusetts workers are self-employed. As a result of their increased share of self-employed workers, smaller shares of Brazilians find employment in the for- and non-profit (73%) and government (3%) sectors compared to Hispanics: 87% of whom work in the for- and non-profit and 8% in government sectors.



Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

Individual Median Annual Earnings

Median annual earnings – wages and salary income plus self-employment income – for all full-time, year-round Massachusetts workers are \$60,671. Full-time Brazilian workers earn \$40,448 compared to \$38,425 for Hispanic workers.



Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

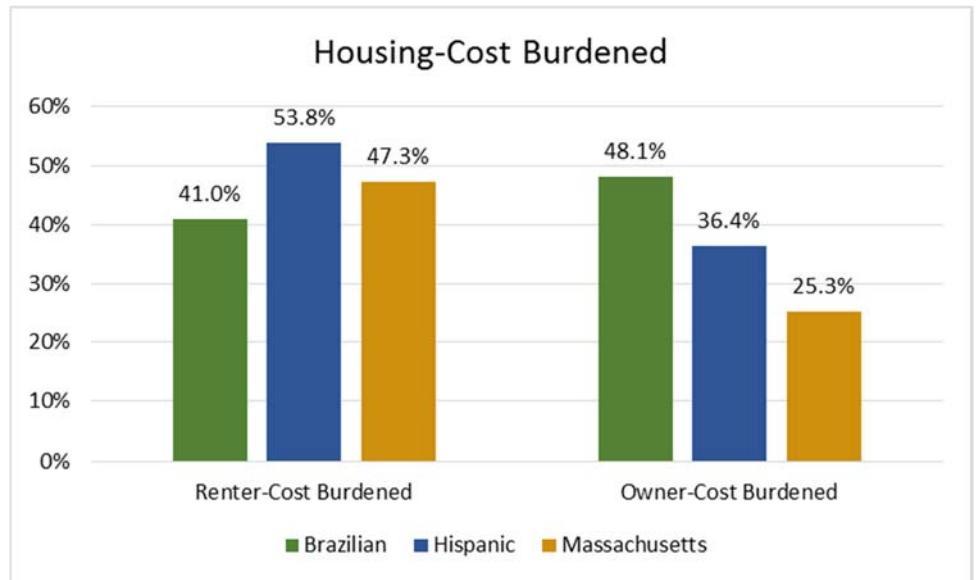
Poverty

Despite the fact that Brazilians and Hispanics full-time workers have relatively similar annual earnings, Brazilians have a smaller share of their population (9%) living below the federal poverty threshold⁵ compared to 25% of Hispanics. For comparison, 10% of the Massachusetts population lives below this poverty threshold. In contrast, approximately 32% of Brazilians have achieved a middle-class standard of living, compared with 26% of all Hispanics. A family income four times the poverty level is used as a proxy for a middle-class standard of living. The actual income needed to achieve this standard depends on the size and composition of the family. For a two-person family in 2018, a middle-class income would be at least \$65,840.⁶

Housing

Both Brazilians and Hispanics have lower homeownership rates. In Massachusetts, 62% of households are owner occupied. This share is 28% for Brazilians and 26% for Hispanics. This means that 72% of Brazilian households and 74% of Hispanic households are renters.

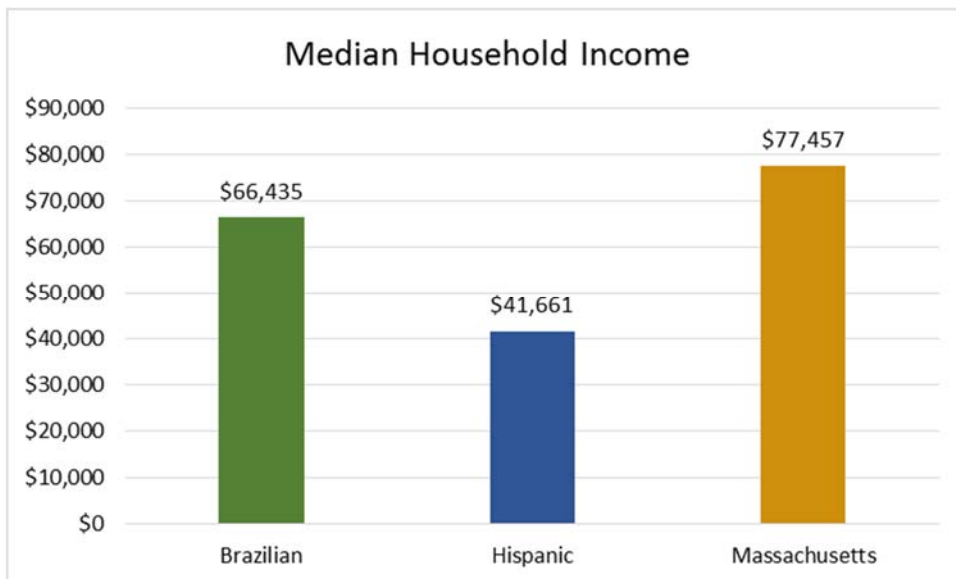
Massachusetts is a state with higher housing costs. A household is housing-cost burdened if it spends more than 30% of its income on housing. For the state, 47% of renter-occupied households are housing-cost burdened, while 25% of owner-occupied households are housing-cost burdened. Among renter households, 41% of Brazilian households are renter cost-burdened compared to 54% of Hispanic households. Among owner-households, 48% of Brazilian households are housing-cost burdened compared to 37% of Hispanic households.



Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

Median Household Income

Even though Brazilians and Hispanics have similar household sizes (2.9 persons per household), their median household income is dissimilar. Household income is the combined gross income of all household members who are 15 years or older. Brazilian households earn \$66,435 compared to \$41,661 for Hispanic households. For the state the median income for all households is \$77,457. Brazilian households have more adults who are full-time wage earners than Hispanic households and this increases their household income.



Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

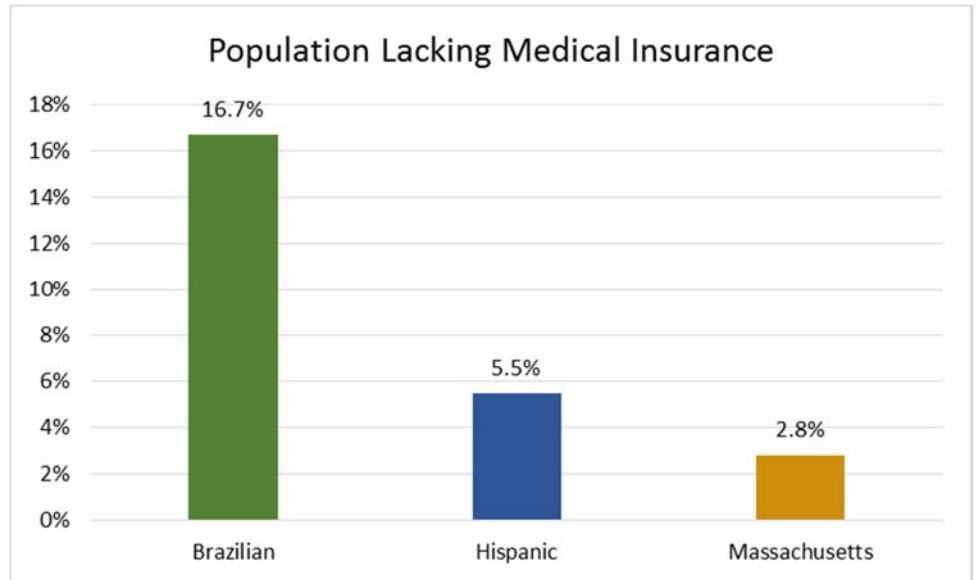
Median household income for Brazilians is about \$10,000 less than the state median.

Internet Access

Another difference between Brazilian and Hispanic households is their access to high-speed internet service such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL service. For all of Massachusetts, 90% of households have this service. For Brazilians, 89% have high-speed internet service in their homes, compared to 81% for Hispanic households.

Medical Insurance

In 2006, Massachusetts was the first state to pass legislation aimed at achieving universal medical insurance coverage. As a result, less than 3% of the state's population lack access to medical insurance coverage. These rates are higher for Brazilians and Hispanics. Nearly, 17% of Brazilians lack medical insurance coverage. The share for Hispanics without medical insurance is 6%.



Source: 2017 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

Economic Impact

Brazilians and Hispanics contribute to the state economy through their labor and consumer spending. The total value of their economic contributions is estimated using a Regional Economic Model (REMI) that calculates the value of goods and services consumed on each dollar spent.⁷ Brazilians in Massachusetts generated total expenditures of \$2.1 billion in 2017. These annual expenditures contributed over \$2.2 billion to the gross state product and generated \$189 million in state income and sales taxes. In total, these expenditures supported over 23,400 jobs in the Massachusetts economy. Hispanics in Massachusetts generated total expenditures of \$11.2 billion in 2017. These annual expenditures contributed over \$11.8 billion to the gross state product and generated \$1 billion in state income and sales taxes. In total, these expenditures supported over 126,000 jobs in the Massachusetts economy.

1. U.S. Census Bureau. World Population Clock. Retrieved August 28, 2019 from URL: <https://www.census.gov/popclock/world>.

2. World Development Indicators, The World Bank. Retrieved August 28, 2019 from URL: <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/gdp-ranking>.

3. U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (ACS), 2017, 1-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).

4. The Brazilian government released estimates of the Brazilian Community worldwide in 2015 based on information presented by their consulates on the number of Brazilians residing in their respective jurisdictions. For the United States, 1.4 million Brazilians were in the country. The Boston Consulate estimates 350,000 Brazilians living in their jurisdiction.

Retrieved August 28, 2019 from URL:

<http://www.brasileirosnomundo.itamaraty.gov.br/a-comunidade/estimativas-popacionais-das-comunidades/Estimativas%20RCN%202015%20-%20Atualizado.pdf>.

5. Following the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically in Massachusetts. U.S. Census Bureau (2019).

6. Calculations by Families USA based on data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved August 28, 2019 from URL: <https://familiesusa.org/product/federal-poverty-guidelines>.

7. 2017 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis, Regional Economic Model, Inc. (REMI) calculations.

End Notes

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Foreign Born in Boston

Dominicans

Chinese

Haitians

Salvadorans

Vietnamese

Jamaicans

Cape Verdeans

Colombians

Indians

Guatemalans

Trinidadians & Tobagonians

Irish

Hondurans

Brazilians

Barbadians



MAYOR'S OFFICE
FOR IMMIGRANT
ADVANCEMENT

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