



RESEARCH DIVISION

Bridging Continents

The African-Born Community
in Boston

August 2024



City of Boston
Planning Department

Disclaimer

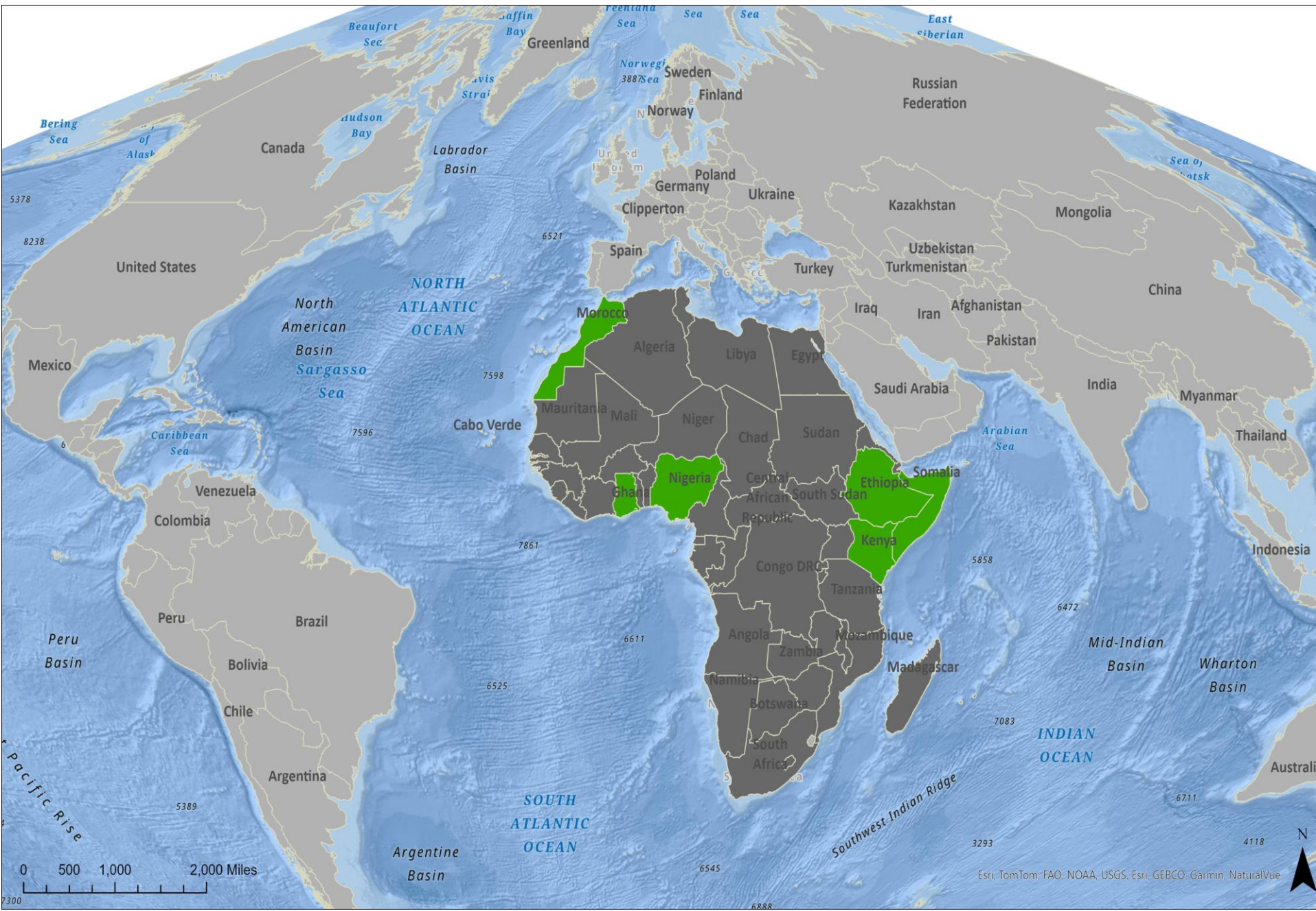
- Data are primarily from the **American Community Survey (ACS)**.
- These data contain **statistical error** due to a **sample size** of **2.5% of households** in the United States.
- **African immigrants** in **Boston** are a **smaller population**, and their estimates have **increased margin of errors**. This **limits** the number of categories estimated.

Exploring Boston's African-Born Population

- 1 Overview of selected African countries
- 2 Boston compared to Massachusetts and the Country
- 3 Demographic profile
- 4 Language and educational attainment
- 5 Labor force participation and household characteristics

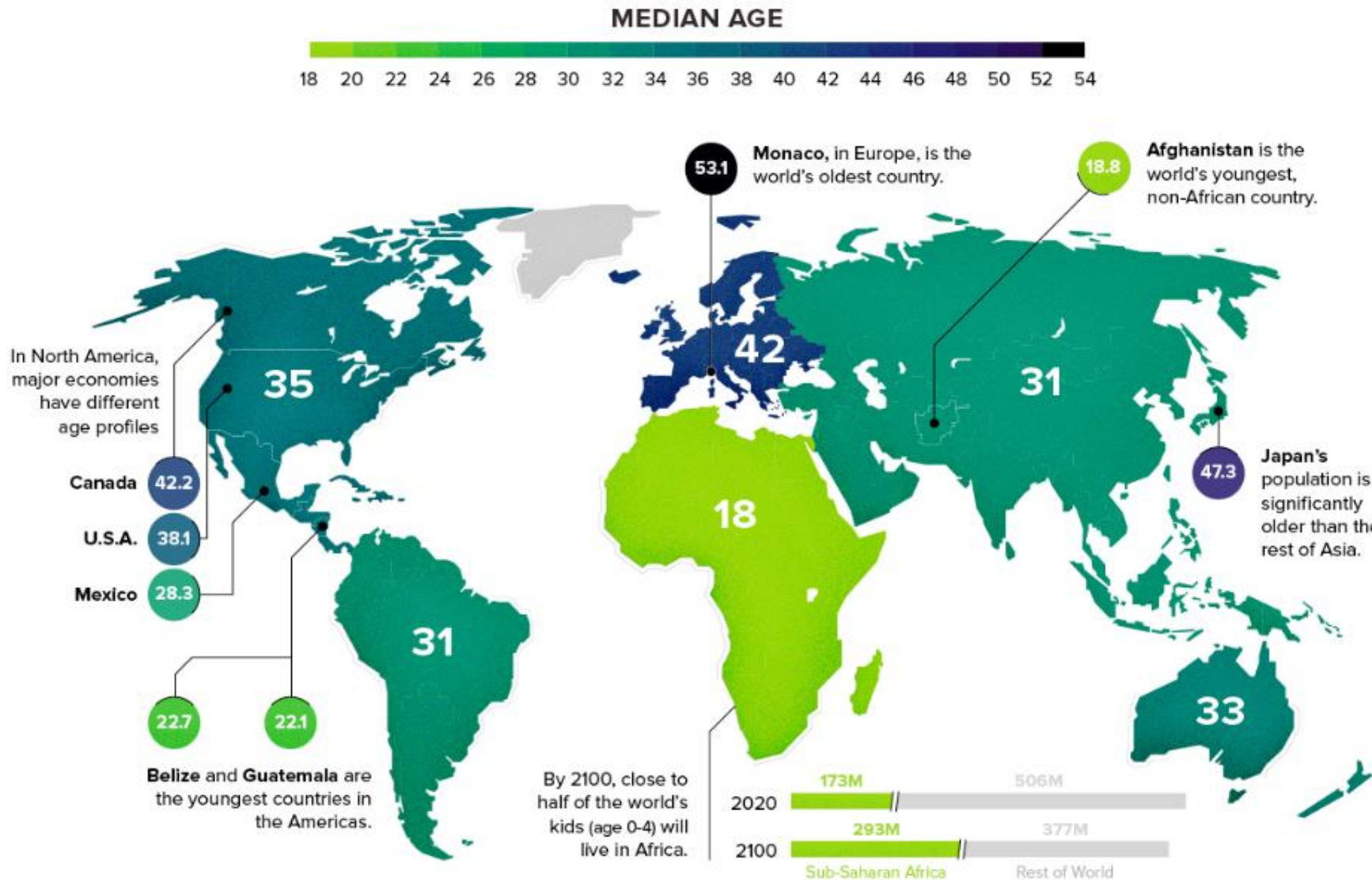
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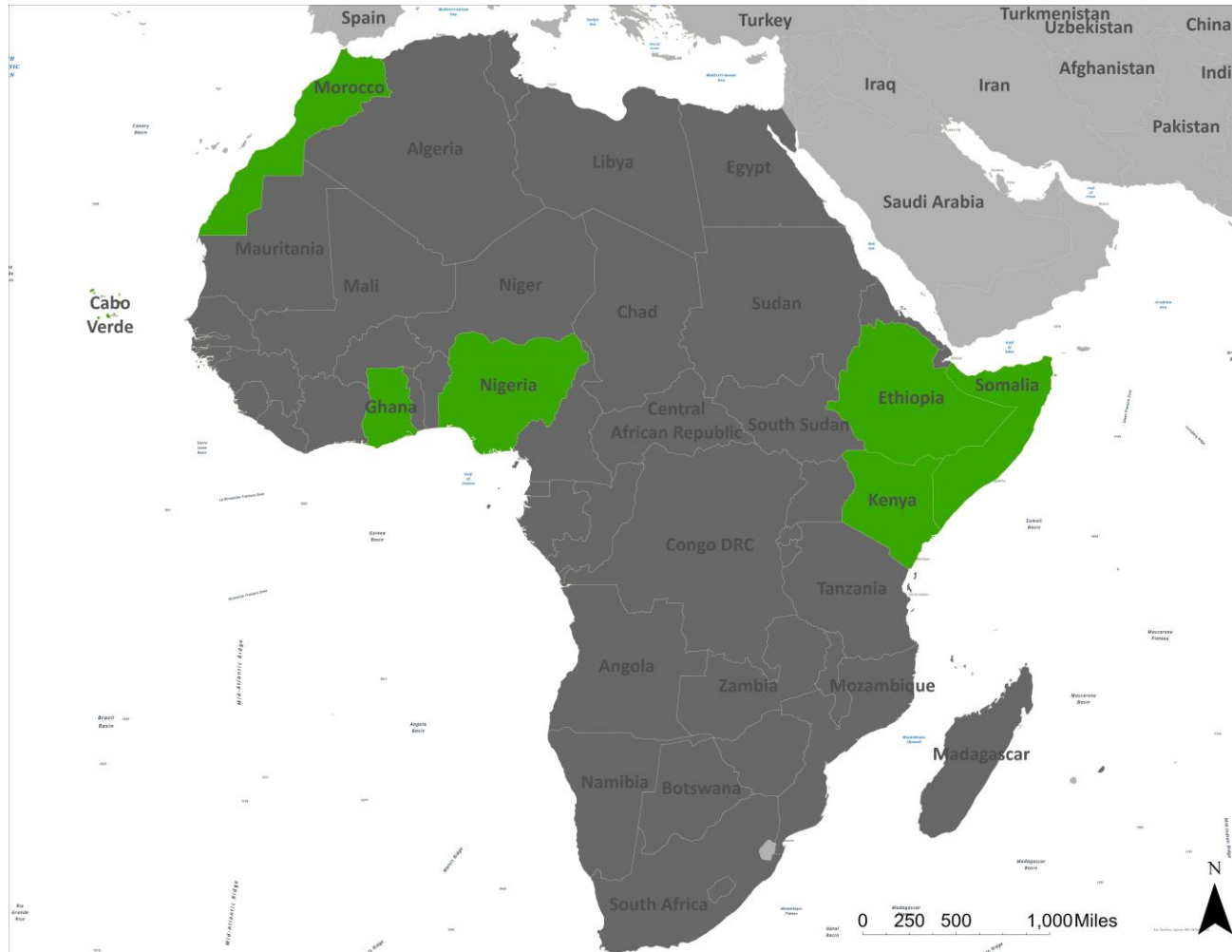
**Africa is the
Second Largest
Continent
(11.6 Million Sq
Mile) or 20% of
Earth's Land**

The World is getting older, but Africa is still **young**

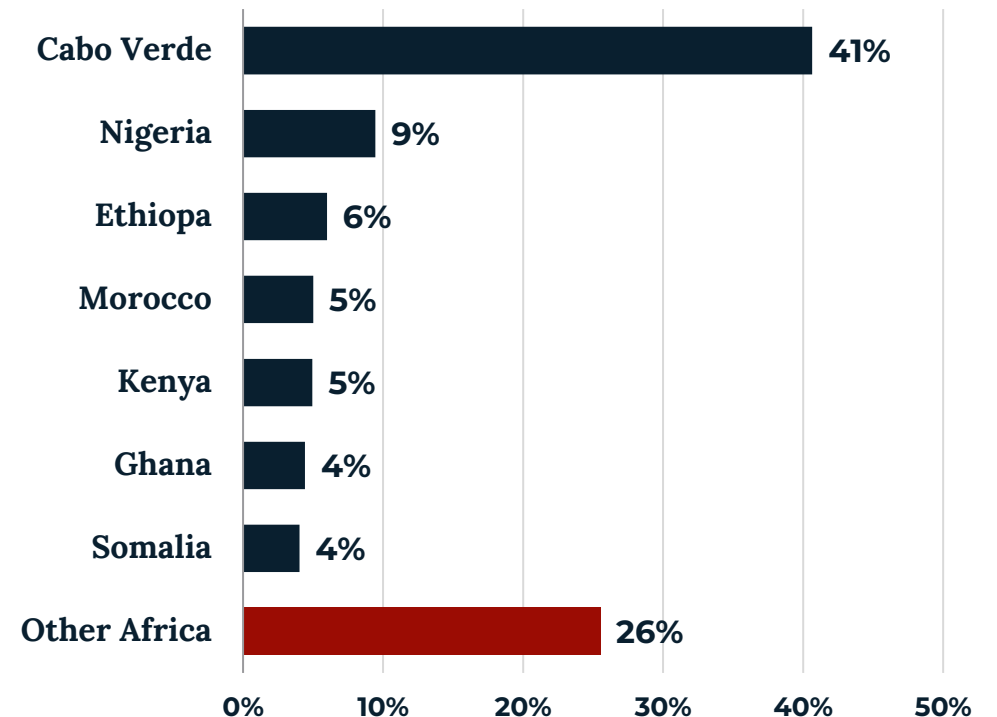


- Most African countries are at the **earlier stage of demographic transition**
- By **2100**, close to **half of the world's population aged 0 to 4** is projected to live in **Africa**.

The largest African-Born population in Boston comes from these seven countries



Top Seven African-Born Population by Country



Cabo Verde and Morocco



Population in
Millions and
Growth Rate

- Cabo Verde → 0.6 (1.19%)
- Morocco → 37.1 (0.88%)



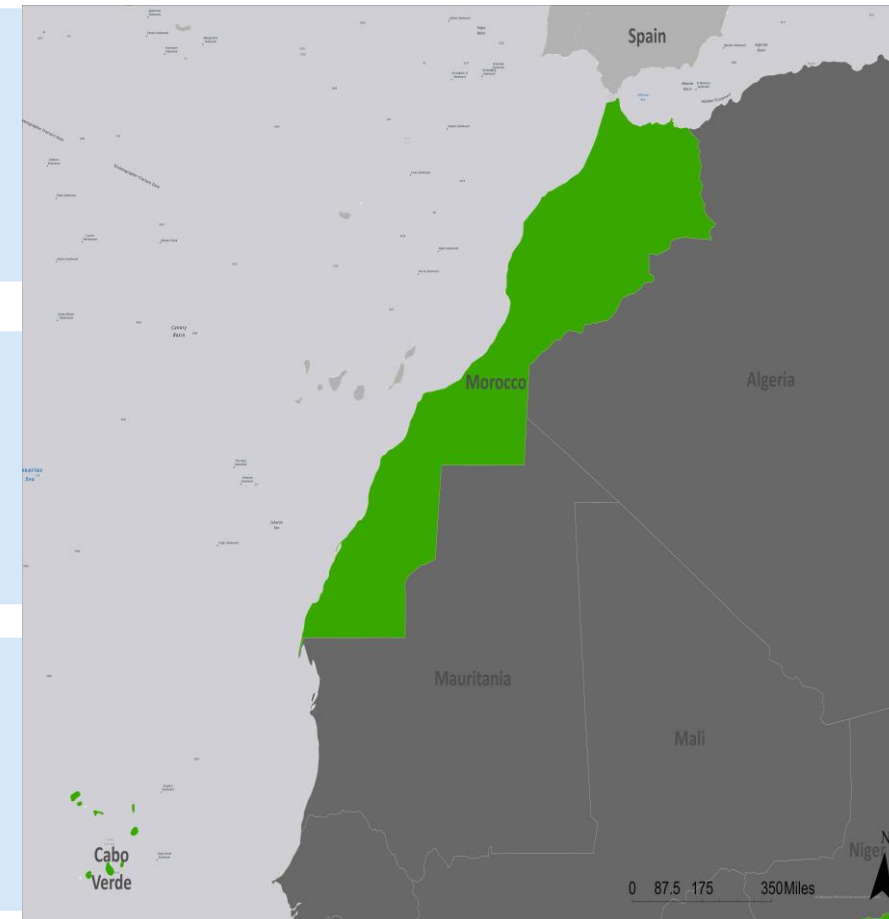
Median
Age

- Cabo Verde → 26.8
- Morocco → 29.1



Religion

- Cabo Verde → 77.3% Roman Catholic
- Morocco → 99% Muslim



Ghana and Nigeria



Population in
Millions and
Growth Rate

- Ghana → 33.8 (2.19%)
- Nigeria → 230.8 (2.53%)



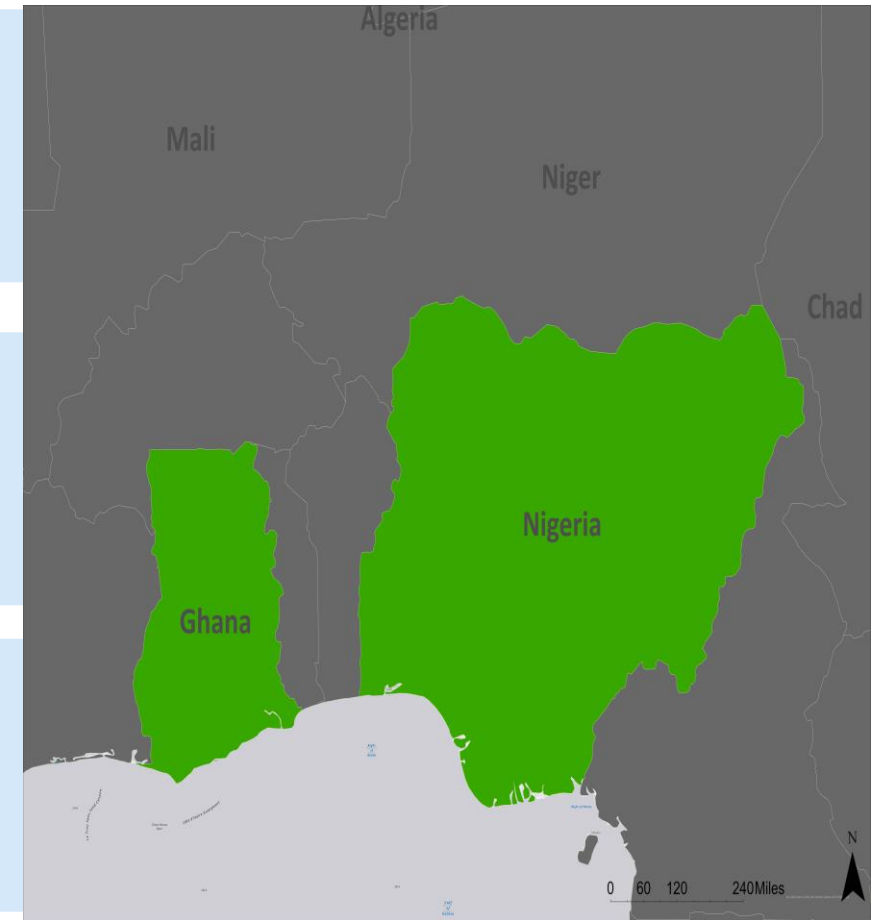
Median
Age

- Ghana → 18.6
- Nigeria → 21.4



Religion

- Ghana → 71.3% Christian
- Nigeria → Over 50% Muslim



Horn of Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia



Population in
Millions and
Growth Rate

- Ethiopia → 116.50 (2.42%)
- Kenya → 57.1 (2.09%)
- Somalia → 12.7 (2.49%)



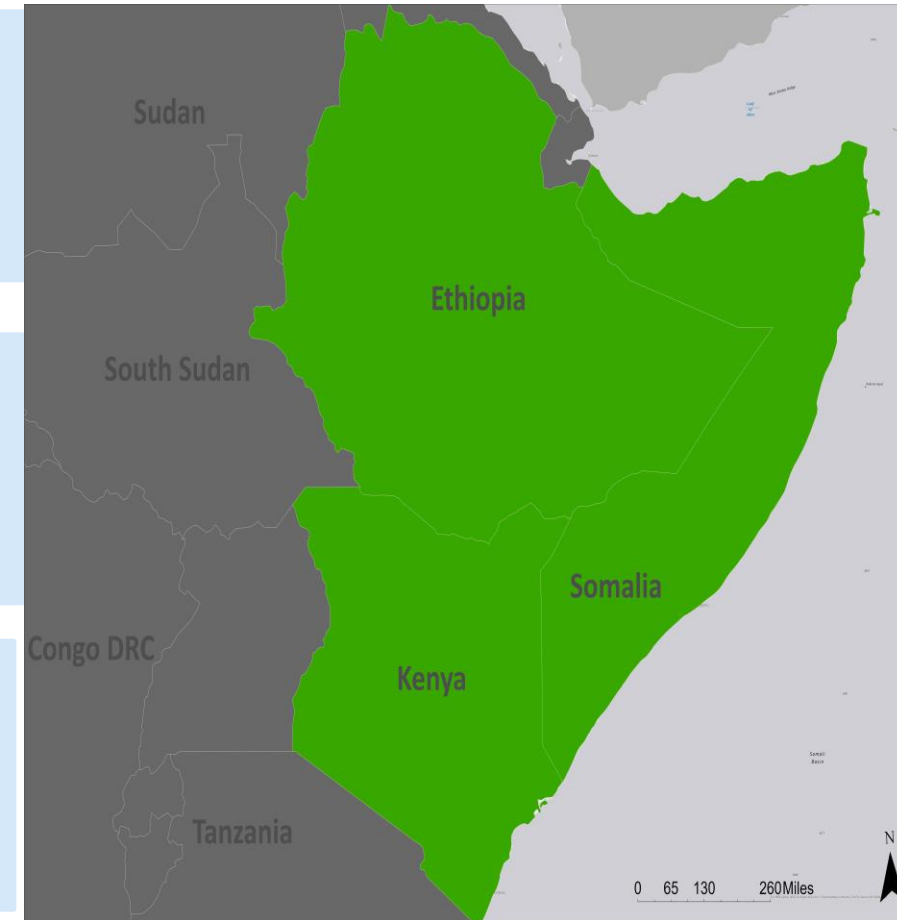
Median
Age

- Ethiopia → 19.8
- Kenya → 20
- Somalia → 18.5



Religion

- Ethiopia → 67% Christian, and 31% Muslim
- Kenya → 86% Christian, and 11% Muslim
- Somalia → 99% Muslim



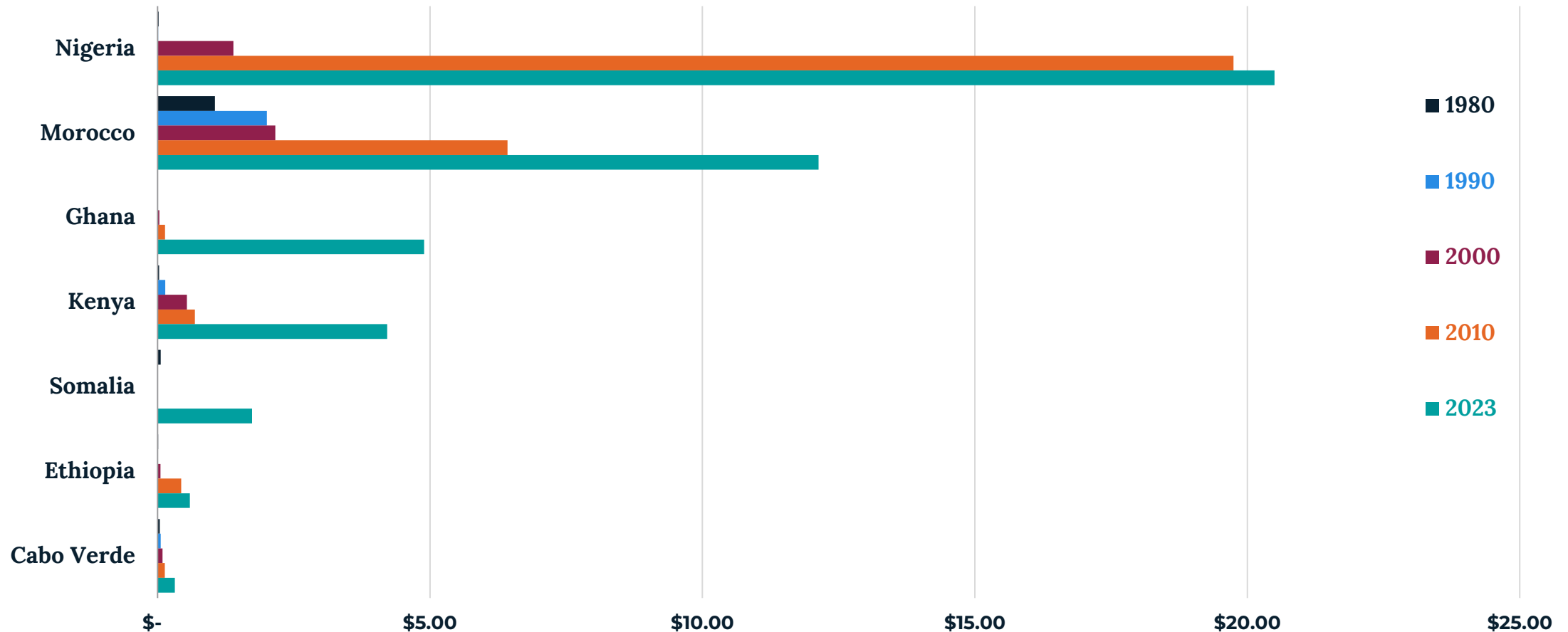
U.S. Established Diplomatic Ties with African Nations Post-Independence, Except Ethiopia (Since 1909)

Country	Colonizer	Diplomatic relation with US
Cabo Verde	Portugal	1975
Morocco	France	1956
Nigeria	Britain	1960
Ghana	Britain	1957
Somali	Britain/Italy	1960
Kenya	Britain	1964
Ethiopia	Never Colonized	1909

- **Colonial ties** influence the **language spoken** at home and English proficiency.
- Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya, **sharing a common colonizer**, exhibit **higher English proficiency** in the ACS survey.

Since 2000, **remittances** to Africa have been **on the rise**, with **Nigeria** experiencing the **largest increase**, followed by **Morocco** and **Ghana**

Global Personal Remittances in Billions, received (Current US\$)



To Sum-up: **Historical** and **Future** Role of Africa

Economy

Africa's large, youthful, and growing population will **drive future global market** and **labor supply**

History

Africa has been **pivotal in human history**, from early evolution to the effects of slavery and colonization

Diversity

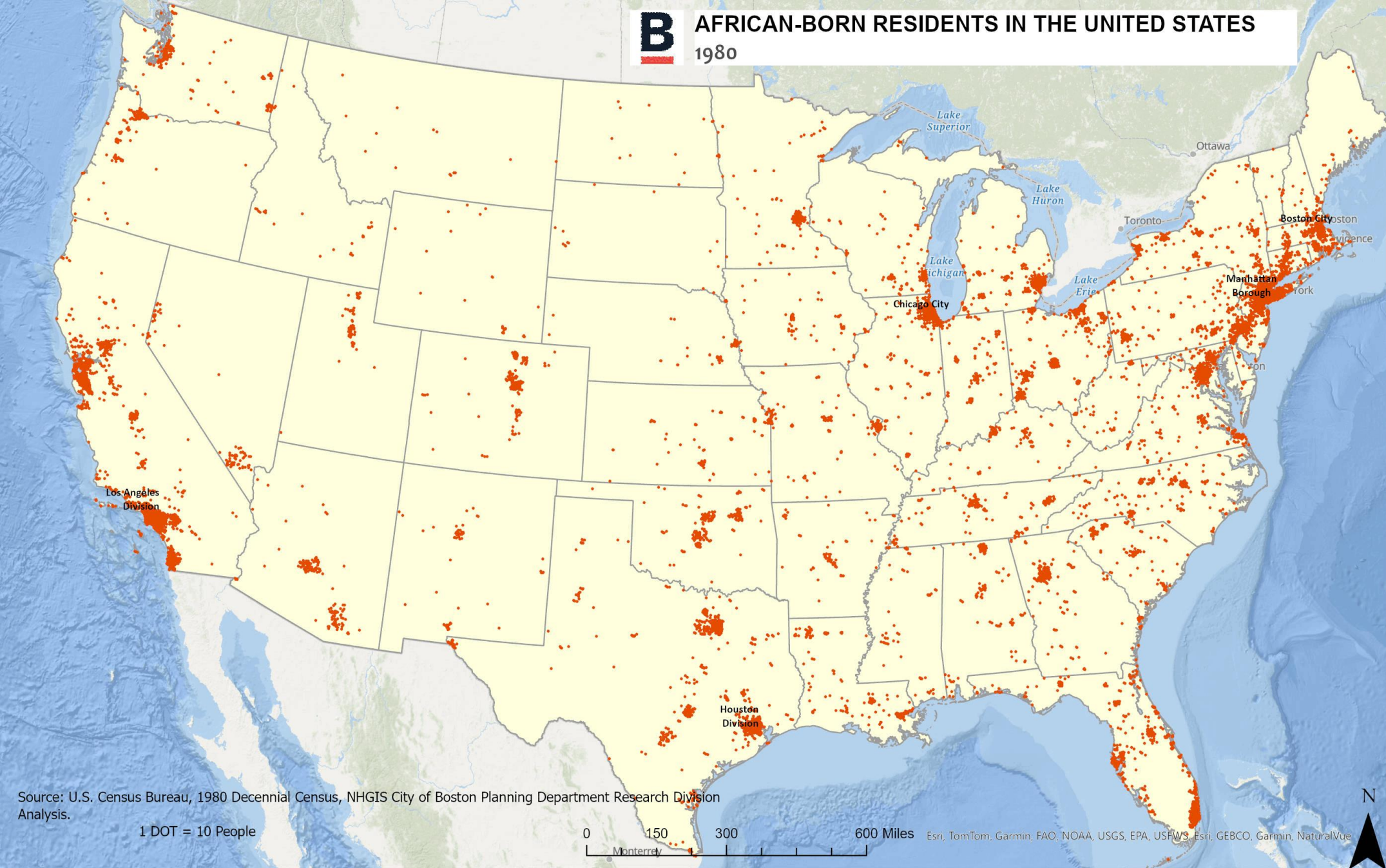
Africa will shape the world by **linking continents** through **its expanding** and **interconnected population**

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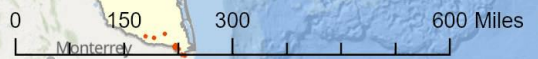
AFRICAN-BORN RESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES 1980



Most African-born residents in U.S. reside in MA, NY, NJ and CA

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 Decennial Census, NHGIS City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis.

1 DOT = 10 People

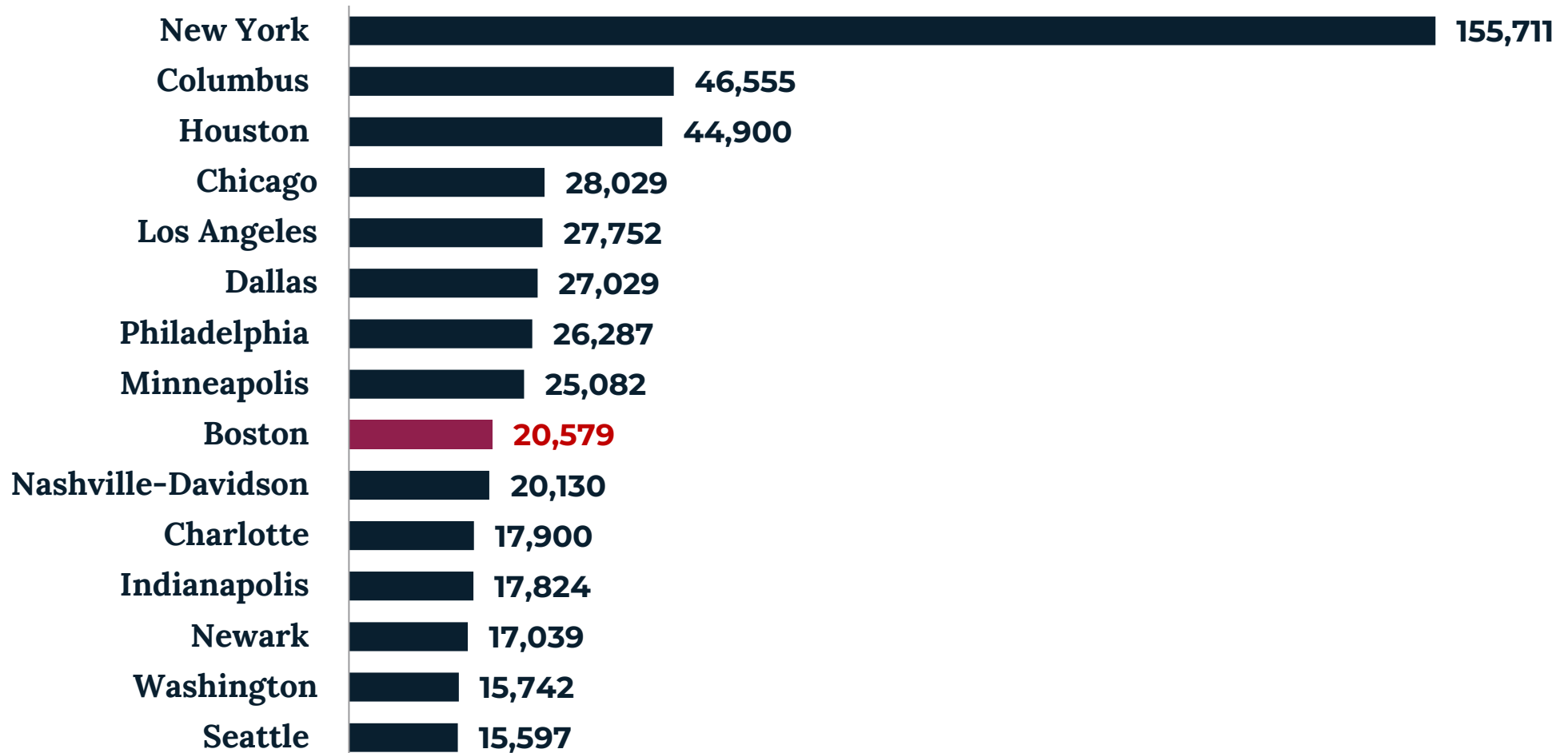


Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS, Esri, GEBCO, Garmin, NaturalVue



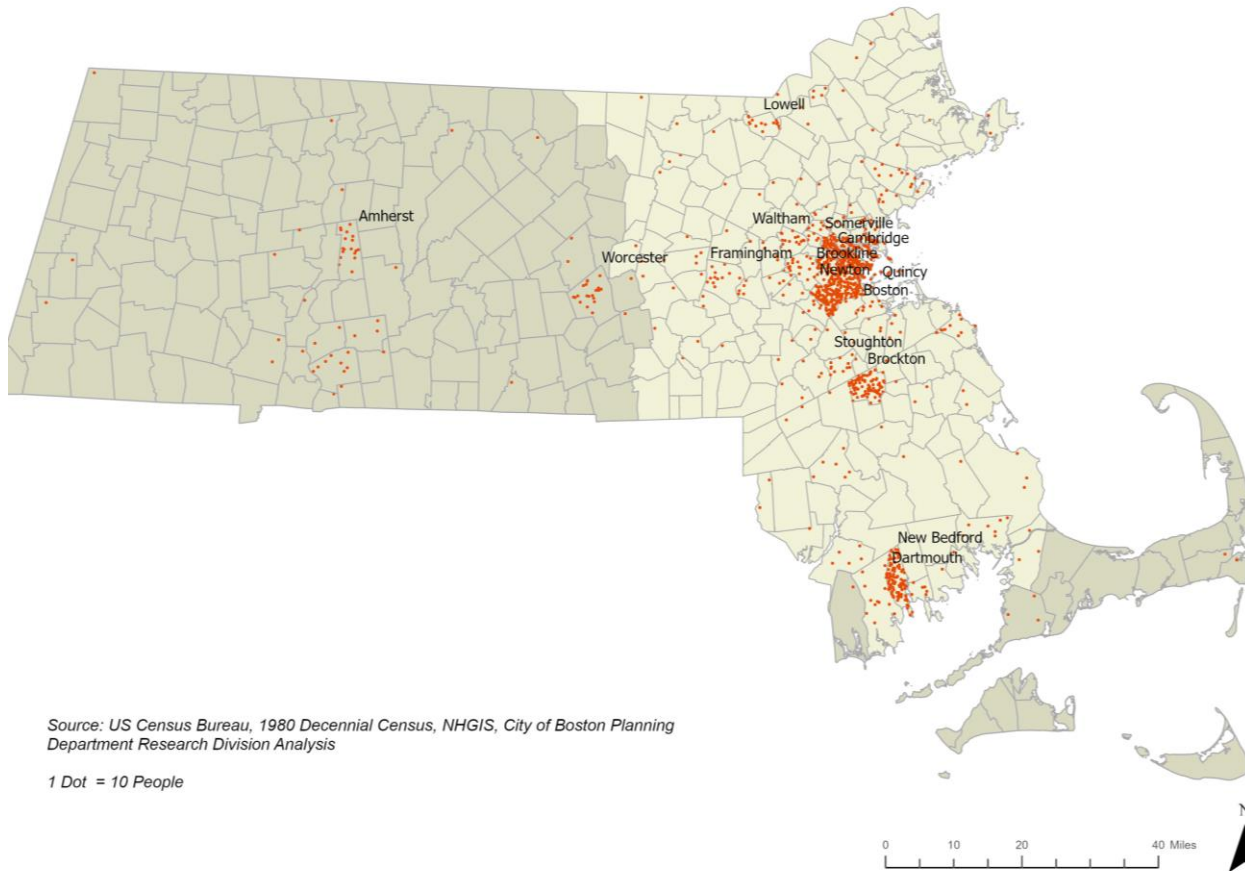
Boston's African-born population is **on the rise**, ranking **9th** among the largest African communities in the U.S

African-Born Population in 2020: Top 15 Cities in the U.S.

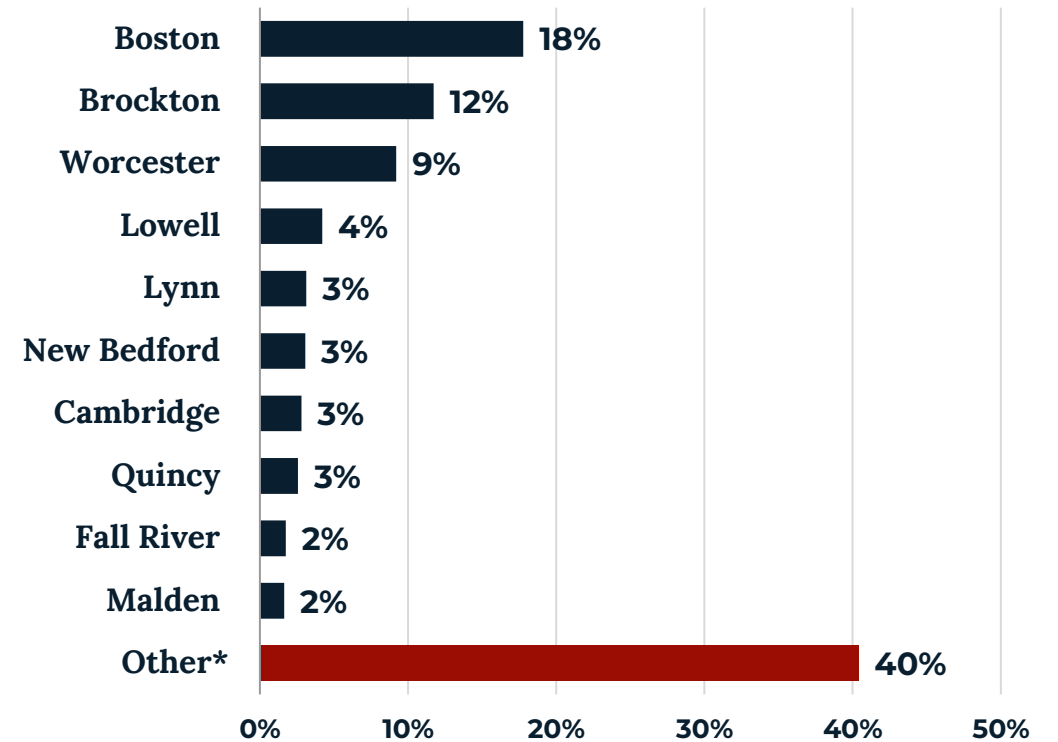


Boston has the largest African-born population in the State, with Brockton and Worcester trailing

B AFRICAN-BORN RESIDENTS IN MASSACHUSETTS 1980

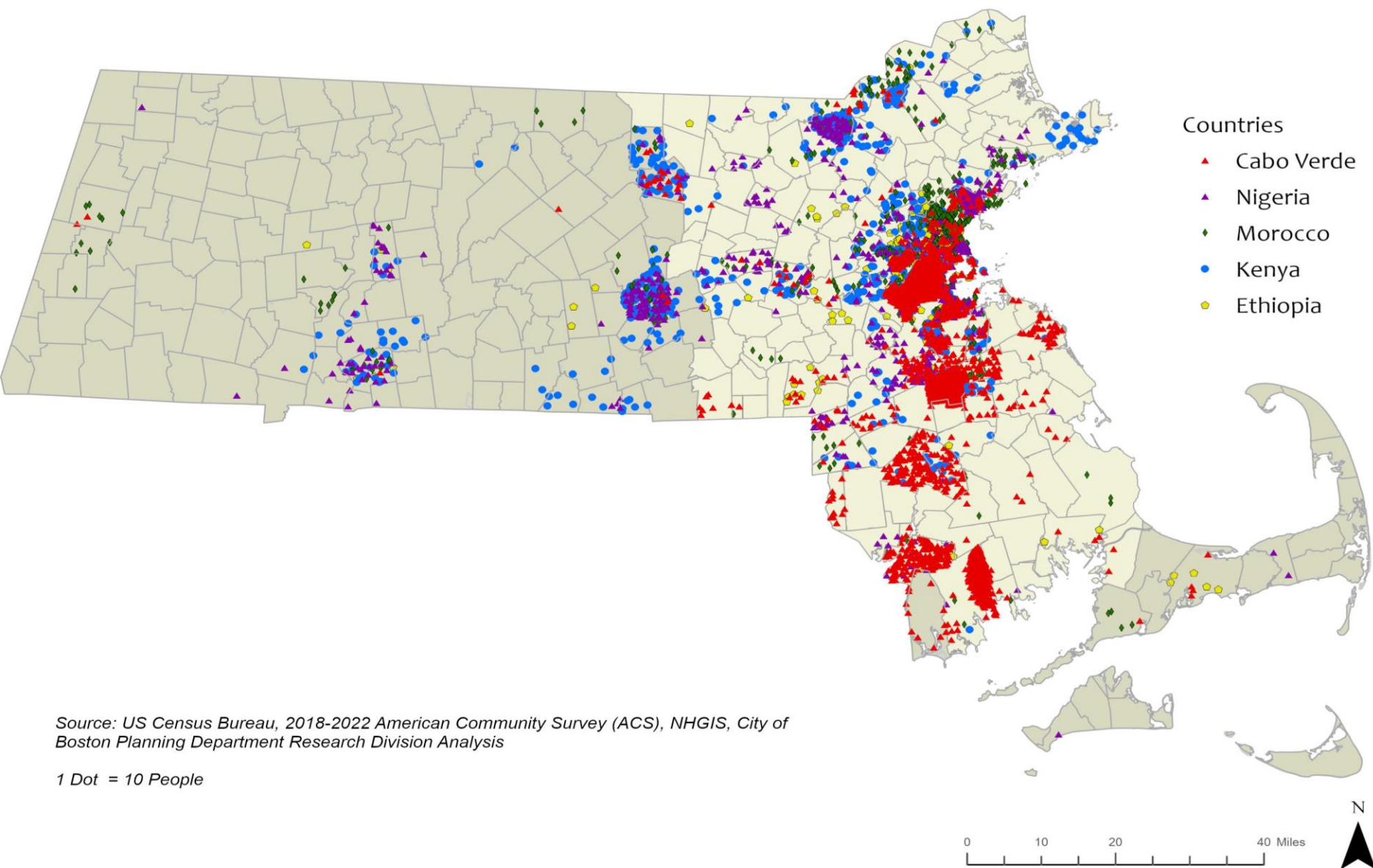


Share of African-born Population by County Subdivisions



B AFRICAN-BORN RESIDENTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

ACS 2018-2022



Most African-born residents live in Eastern Massachusetts

Source: US Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS), NHGIS, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

1 Dot = 10 People

Boston ranks among the **top two county subdivisions** with the **highest share** of people born in **all listed countries**, and is the **leading area** for individuals born in **Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Somalia**

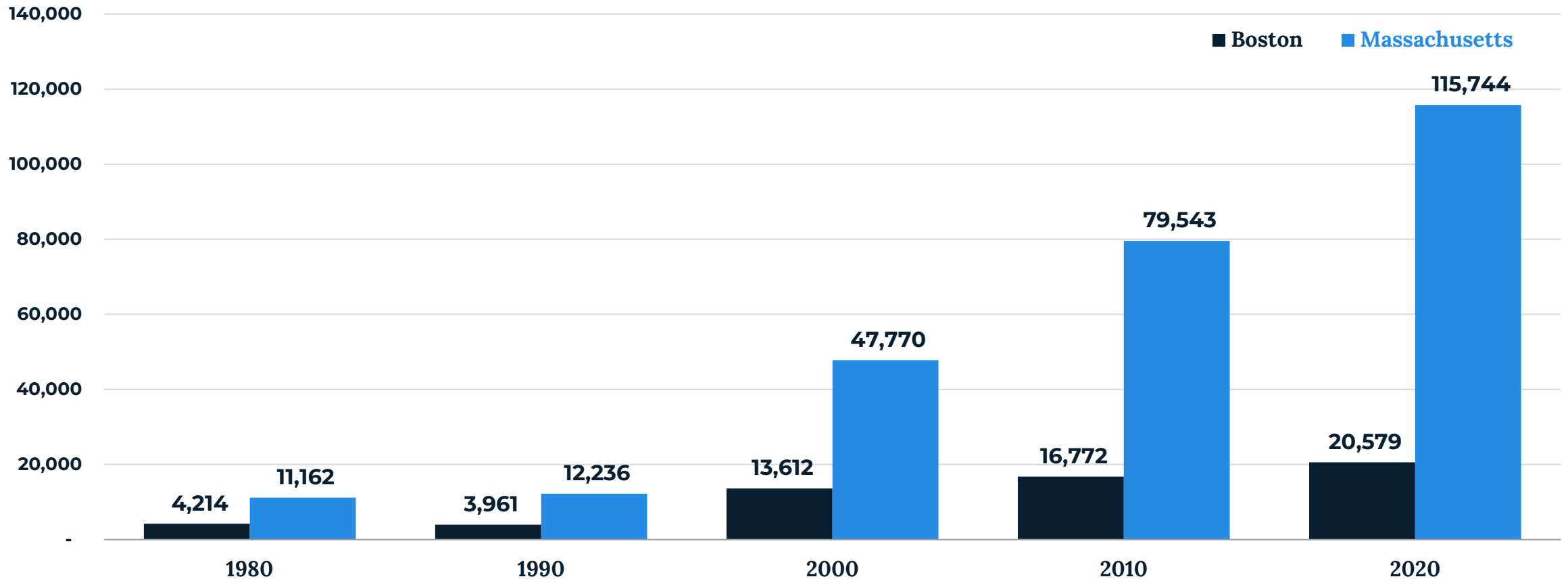
African Born Population by County Subdivision in Massachusetts

	Cabo Verde	Morocco	Ghana	Nigeria	Somalia	Ethiopia	Kenya
Boston	27%	11.7%	6.2%	18.8%	61.5%	27.8%	10.8%
Lynn	*	3.5%	0.8%	9.7%		*	2.4%
Worcester	*	3.1%	49.5%	8.4%	12.8%	*	10.9%
Lowell	*	1.7%	1%	6.5%	1.3%	*	17.3%
Brockton	36.9%	*	*	5.5%	*	*	4.40%
Springfield	*	1.3%	1.9%	2.2%	15.1%	*	1.9%
Cambridge	*	1.7%	1.6%	1.4%	*	27.3%	*
Malden	*	5.6%	0.4%	0.1%		14.2%	
Revere	*	12%	*	*	*	*	*
Total in MA	32,354	8,562	12,327	8,842	1,406	5,467	8,746

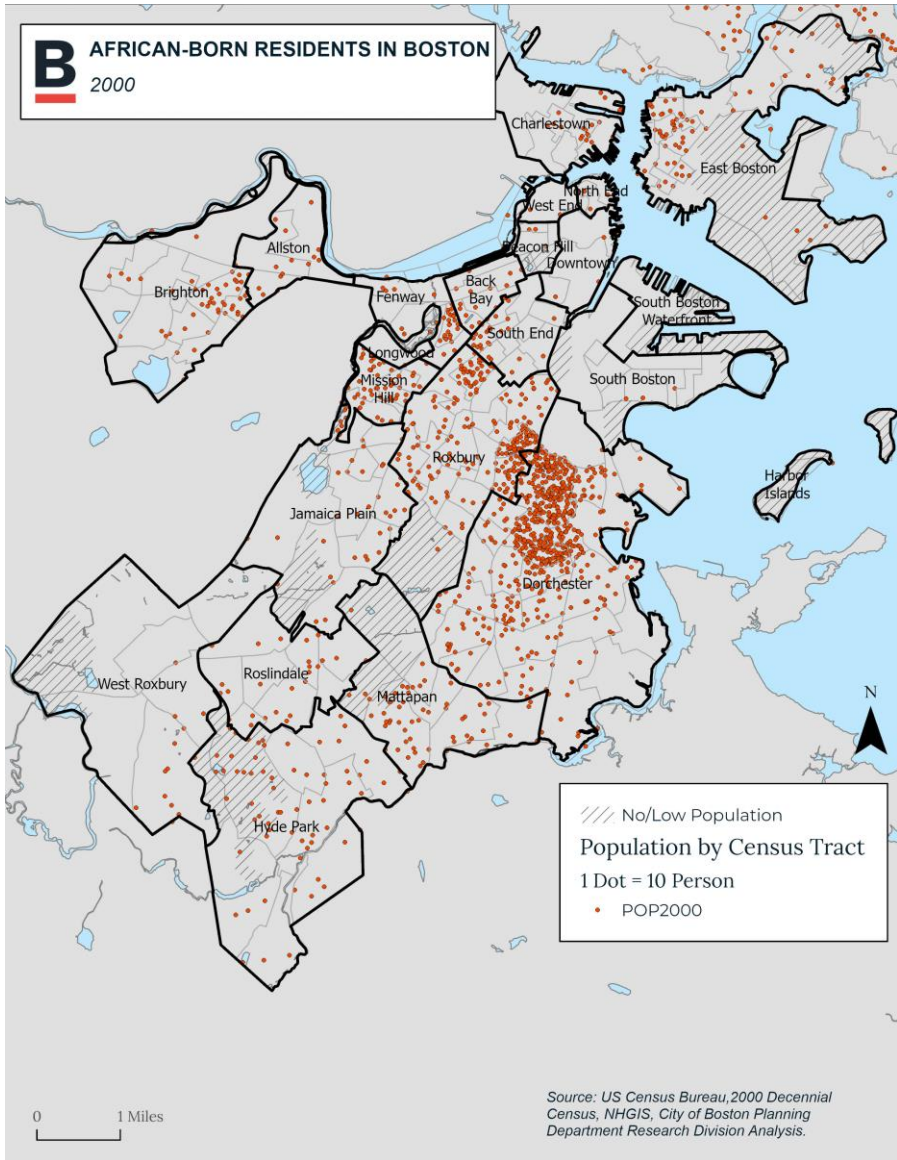
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis. * Population below 1 percent

Between 1980 and 2020, **Boston's** African-born population **increased nearly fivefold**, while **Massachusetts** saw a **more than tenfold** rise

Growth of the African-Born Population in Boston and Massachusetts (1980- 2020)

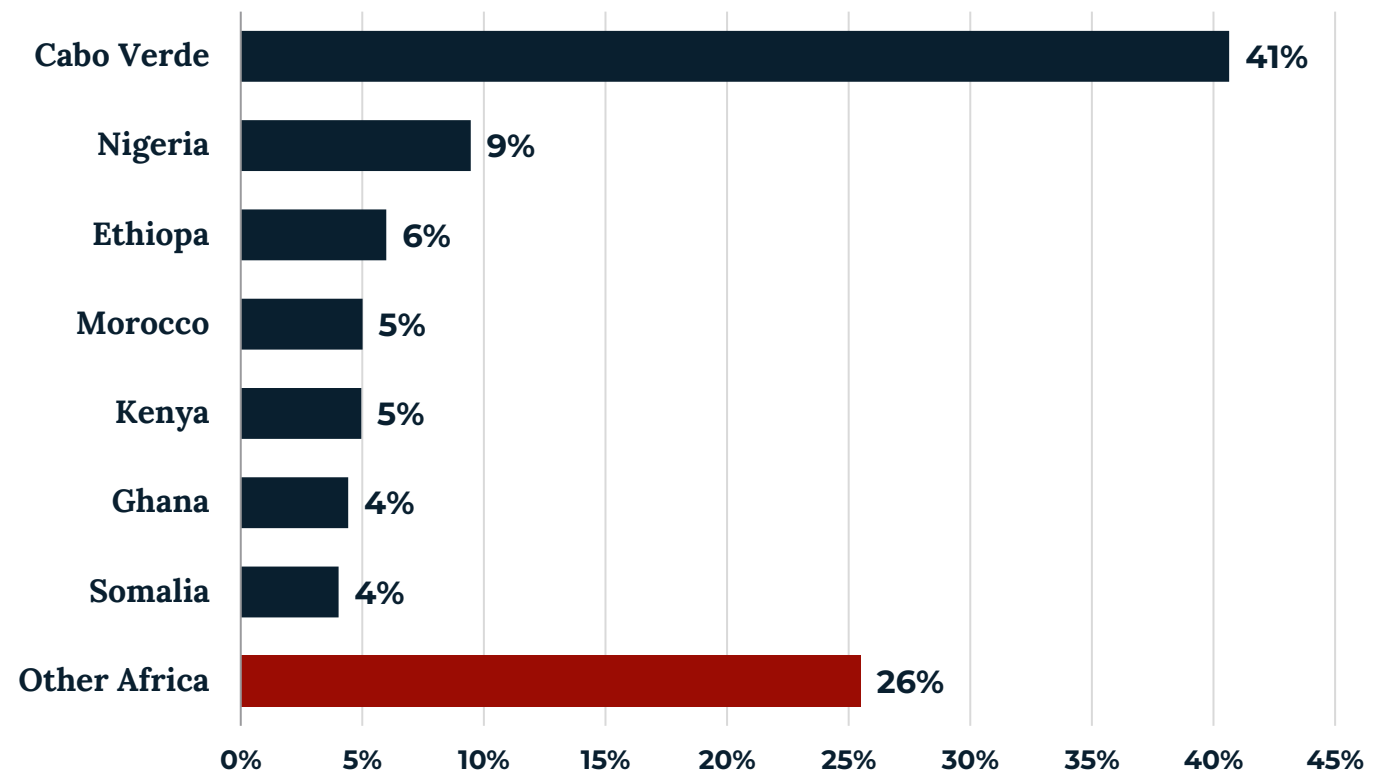


Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis.

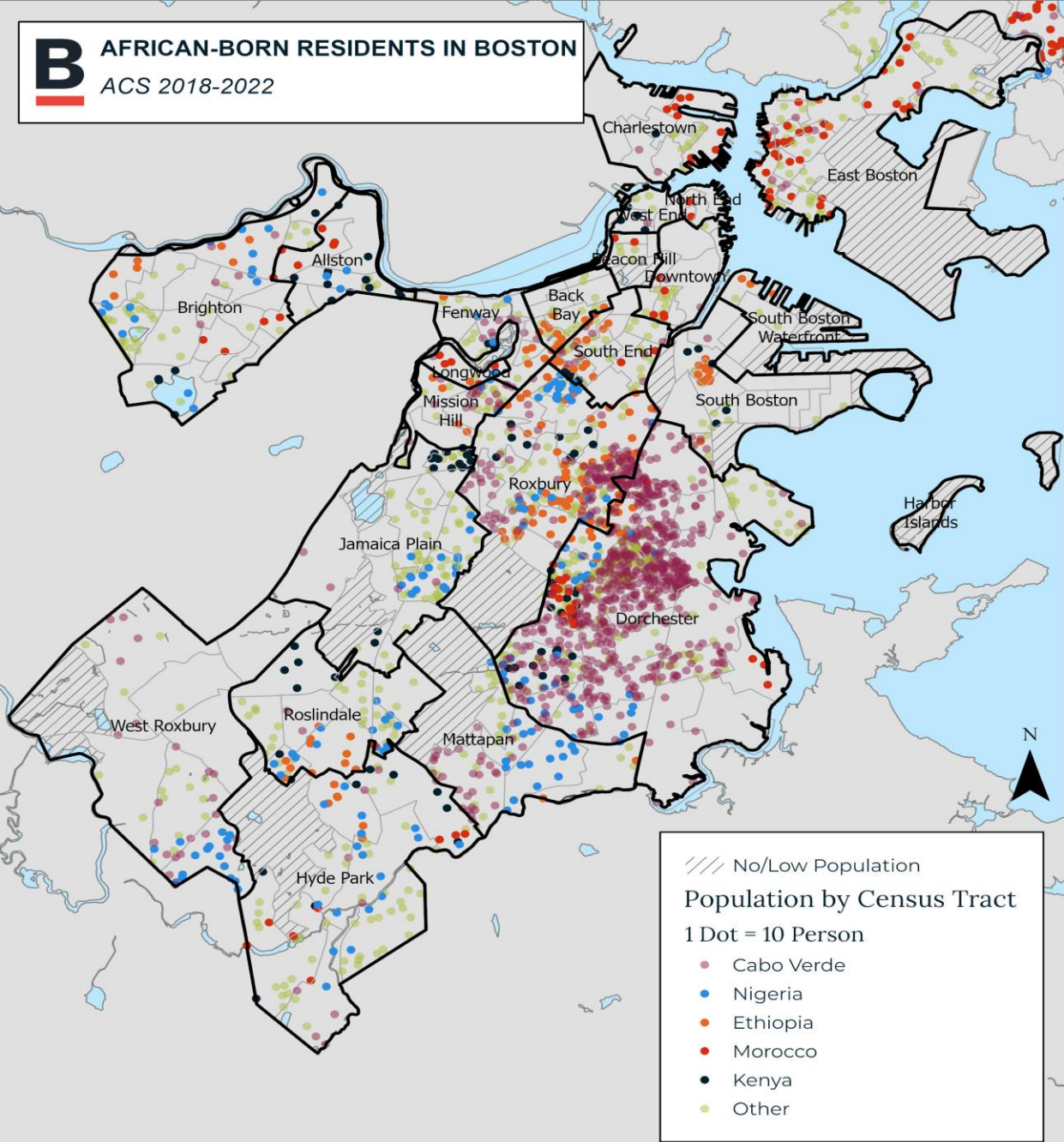


Boston's African-born community is over 40% Cabo Verdean

Share of African-born Population by Country



B AFRICAN-BORN RESIDENTS IN BOSTON
ACS 2018-2022



/// No/Low Population
Population by Census Tract
1 Dot = 10 Person
 ● Cabo Verde
 ● Nigeria
 ● Ethiopia
 ● Morocco
 ● Kenya
 ● Other

Source: US Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS), NHGIS, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis.

African-born Population By Neighborhood

	Dorchester	East Boston	Hyde Park	JP	Roxbury
Cabo Verde	71.7%	0.9%	0.8%	1.2%	12.6%
Morocco	22.3%	35.2%	9.2%*	*	
Ghana	21.3%	6.5%	32.8%	7.3%	9.7%
Nigeria	18.4%	*	10.0%	10.5%	17.2%
Somalia	24.2%*	*		8.6%	35.8%
Ethiopia	6.1%	1.6%	4.1%		43.9%
Kenya	21.1%	*	9.3%	15.1%	14.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis. * Population below 1 percent
City of Boston

To Sum-up: **Growth** and **Spatial Distribution** of the African-born population



Population Growth

The population has been **steadily increasing** across the nation, the state, and in Boston



Geographic Concentration

The population is **geographically concentrated**, with **distinct clusters** by country of origin



Diversity

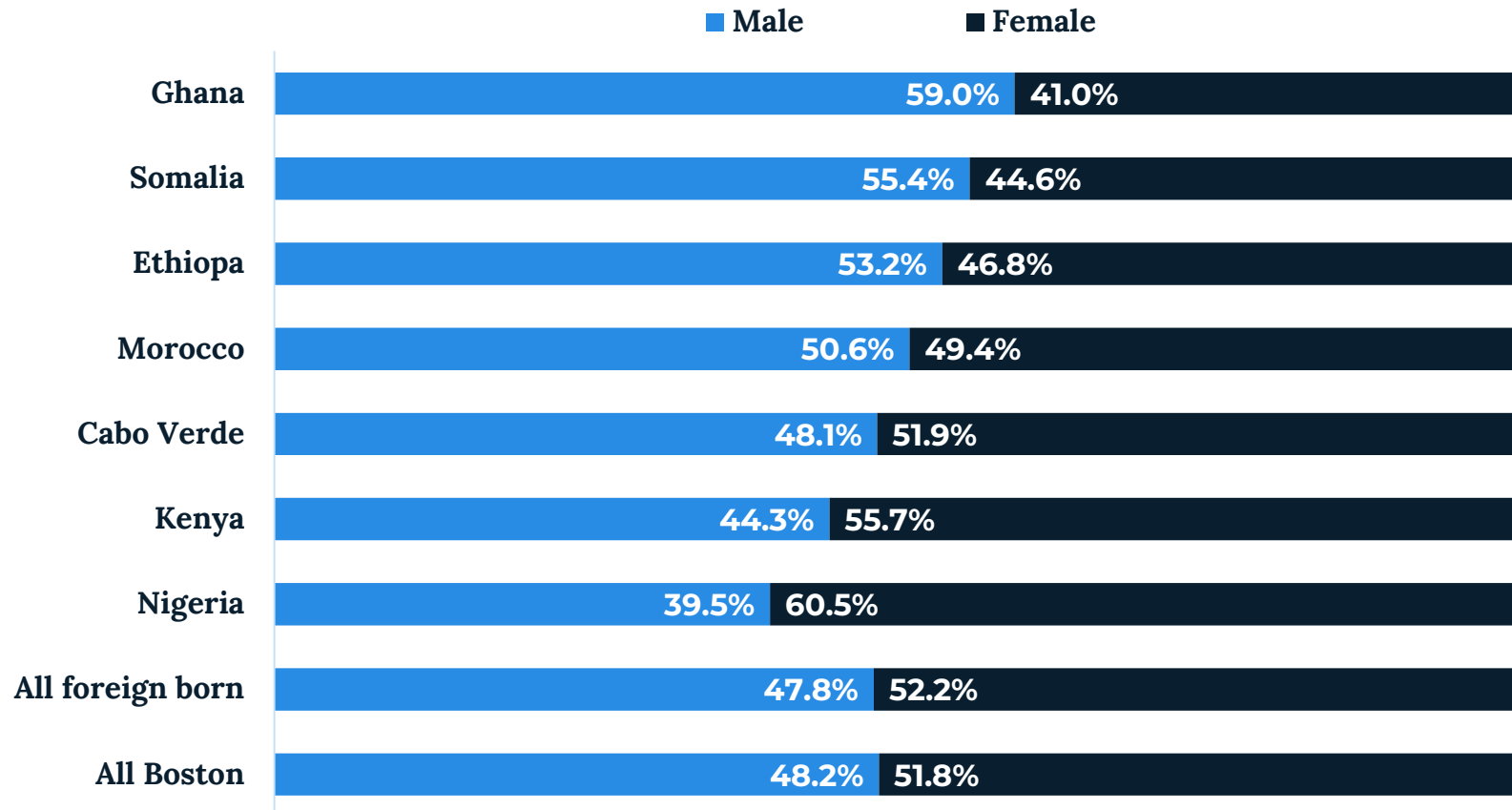
This concentration **enriches** the local **economy**, **diversity**, **cultural** vibrancy, and **population growth**

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Kenyan and Nigerian Boston residents have the highest female population shares

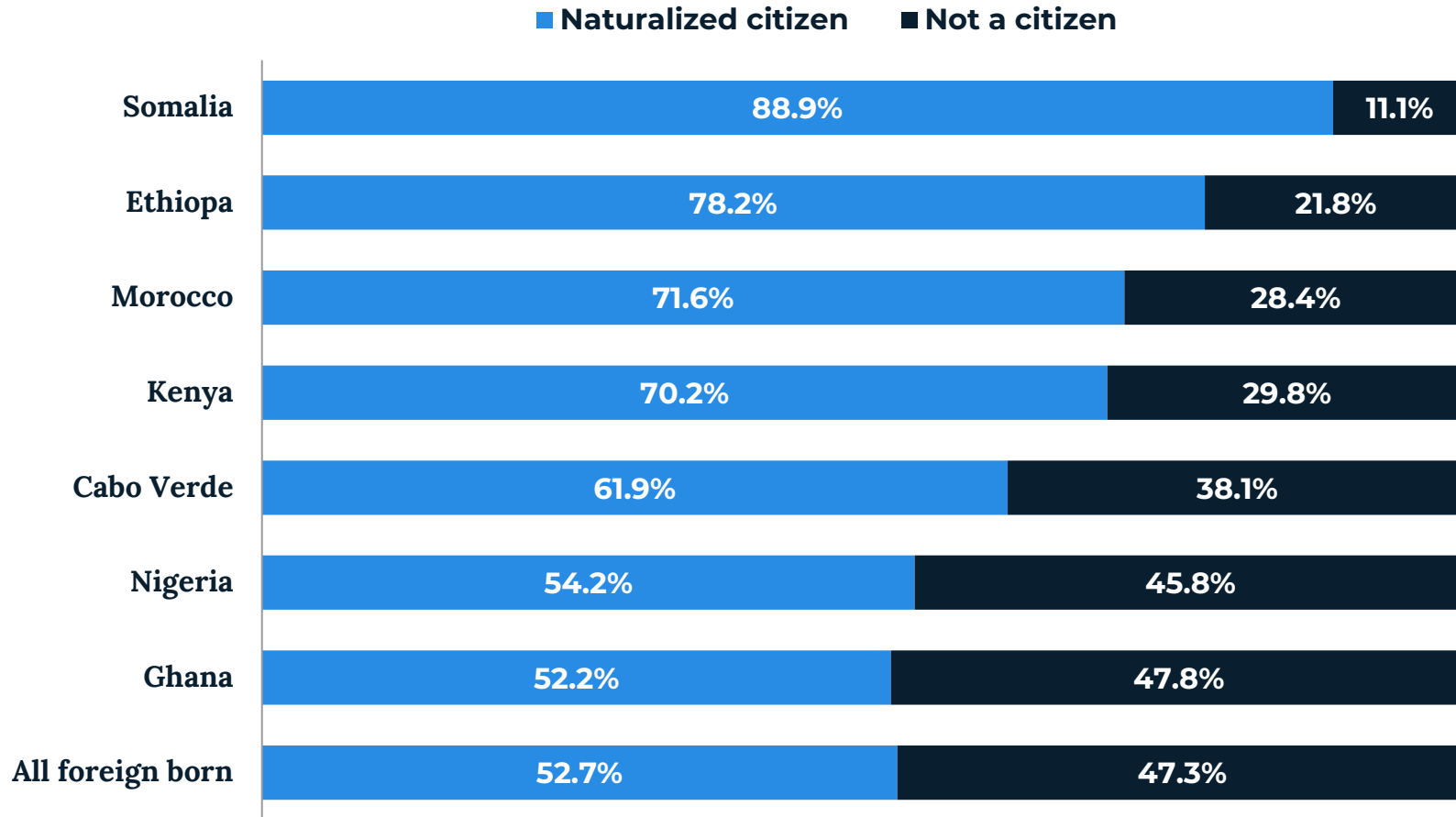
African-born Residents By Sex



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

Somalis have the highest percentage of naturalized citizens compared to other groups

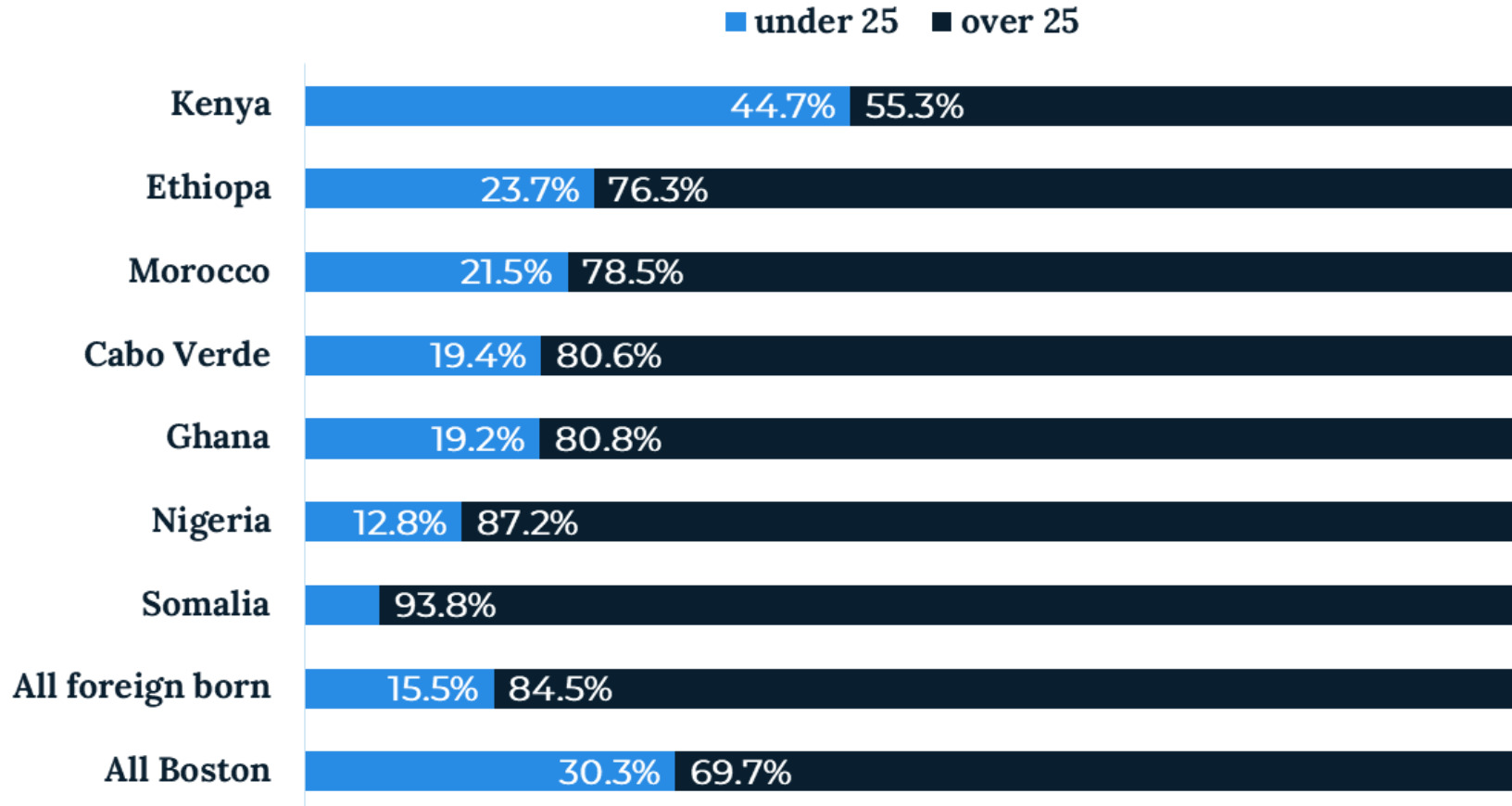
African-born Residents By Citizenship Status



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

The African-born population is **more likely to be older (Over 25)**

African-born Residents By Age Group



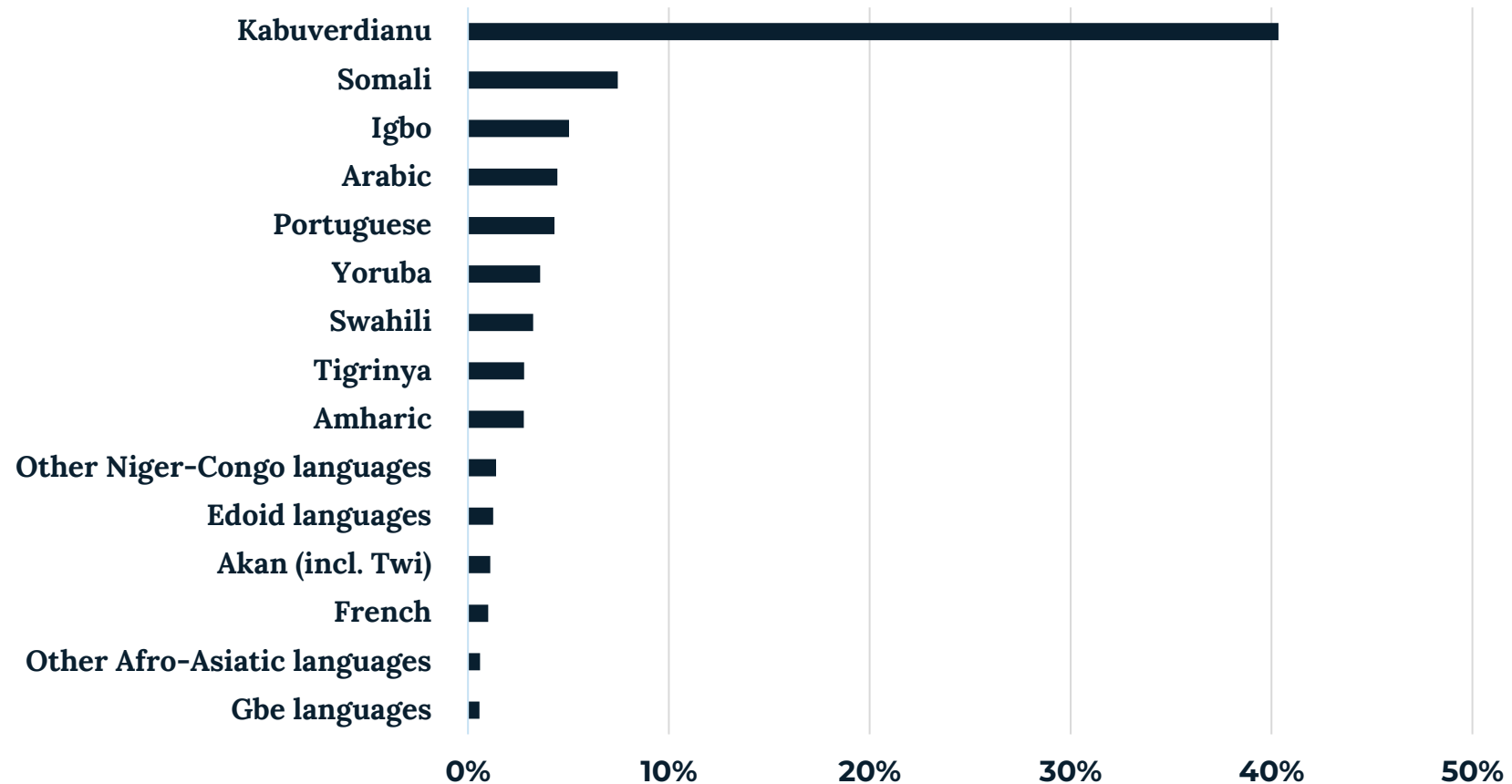
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Kabuverdianu is the most commonly spoken language at home, primarily due to the large Cabo Verdean population, followed by Somali and Igbo

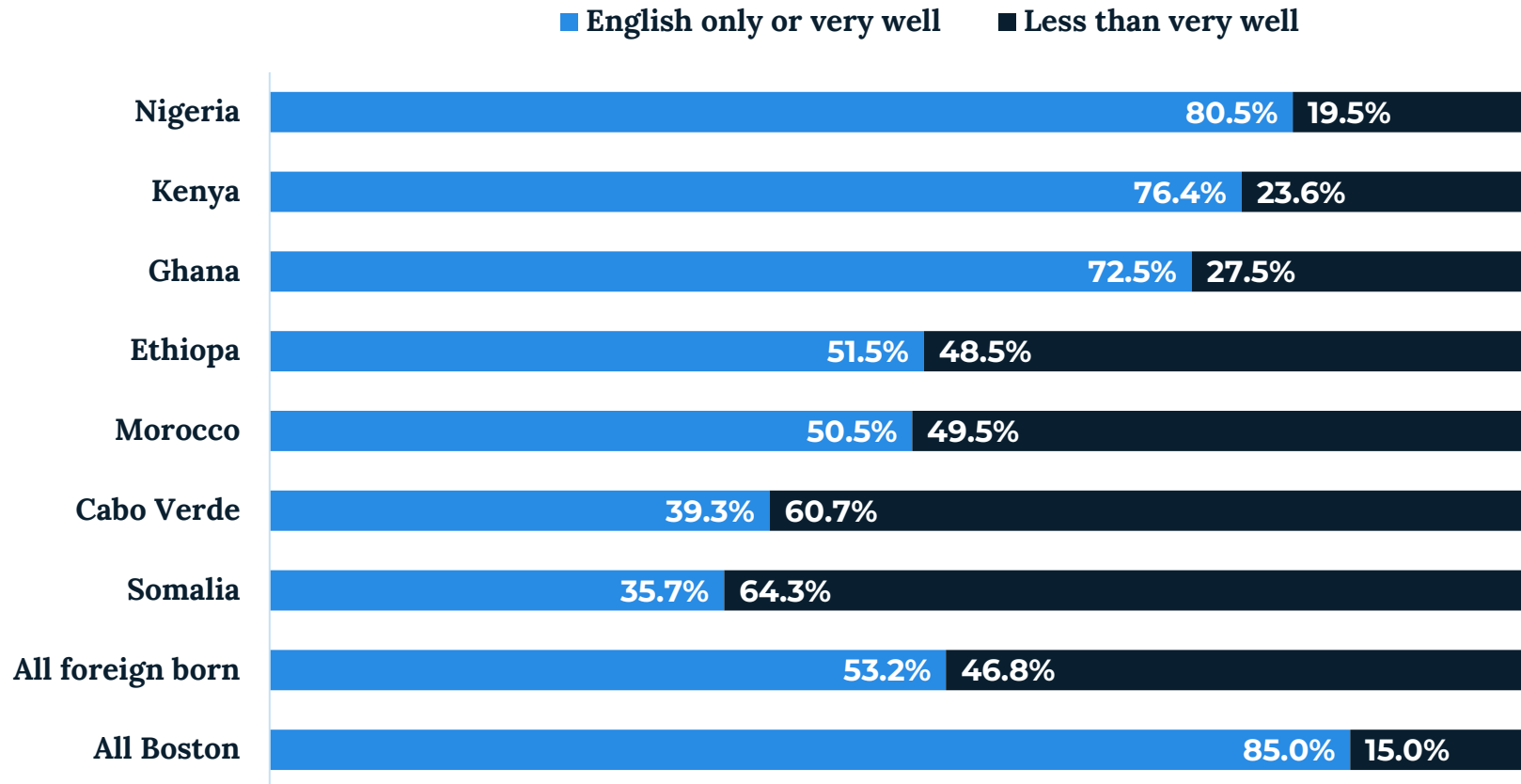
Top 15 Non-English Languages Spoken at Home By African-born Residents



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

Majority of Nigerians, Kenyans and Ghanaians speak English only or very well

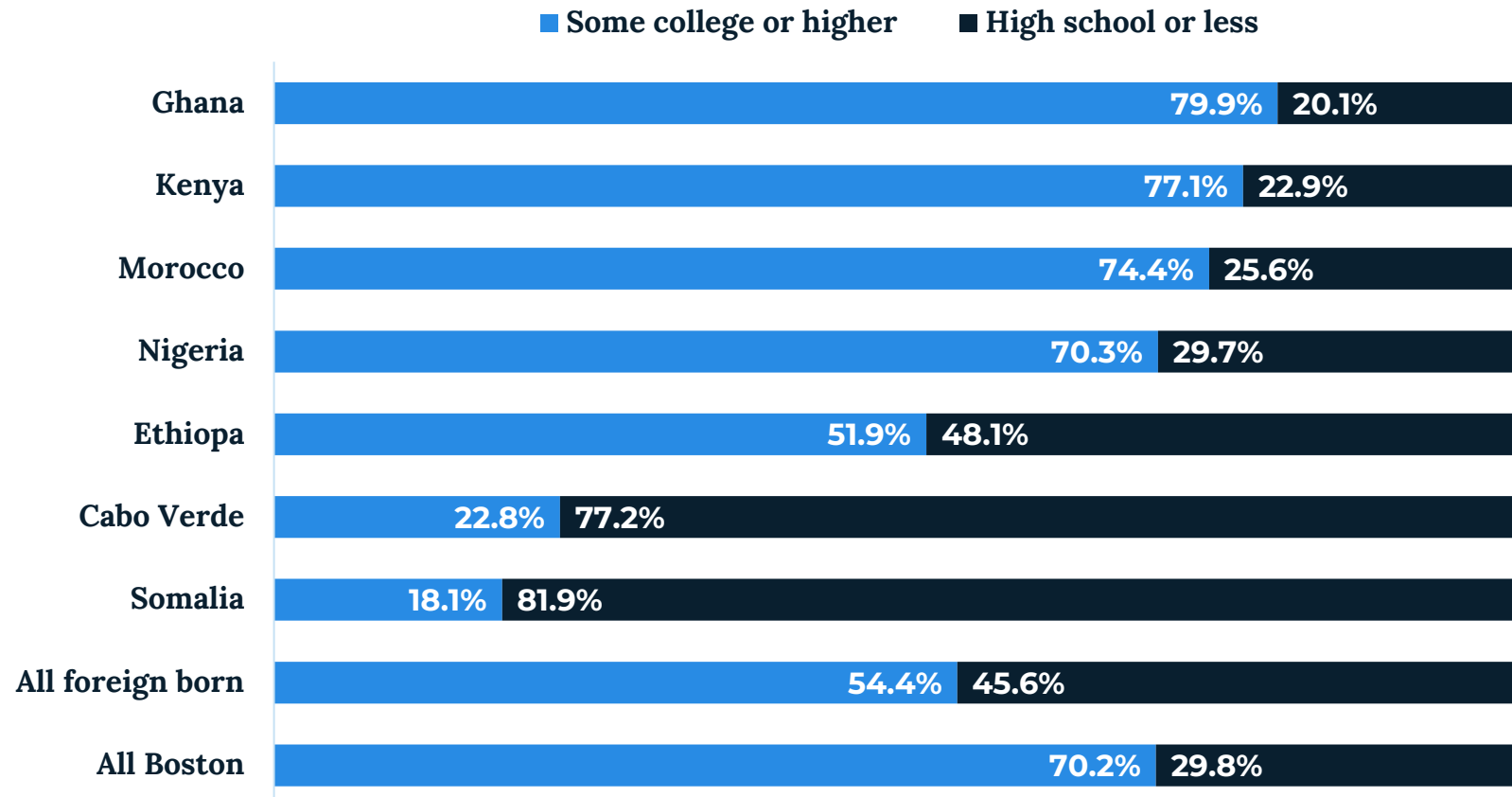
African-born Residents By English Proficiency



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

People from Ghana, Kenya, Morocco and Nigeria have the highest level of educational attainment in Boston

African-born Residents By Educational Attainment (25+)



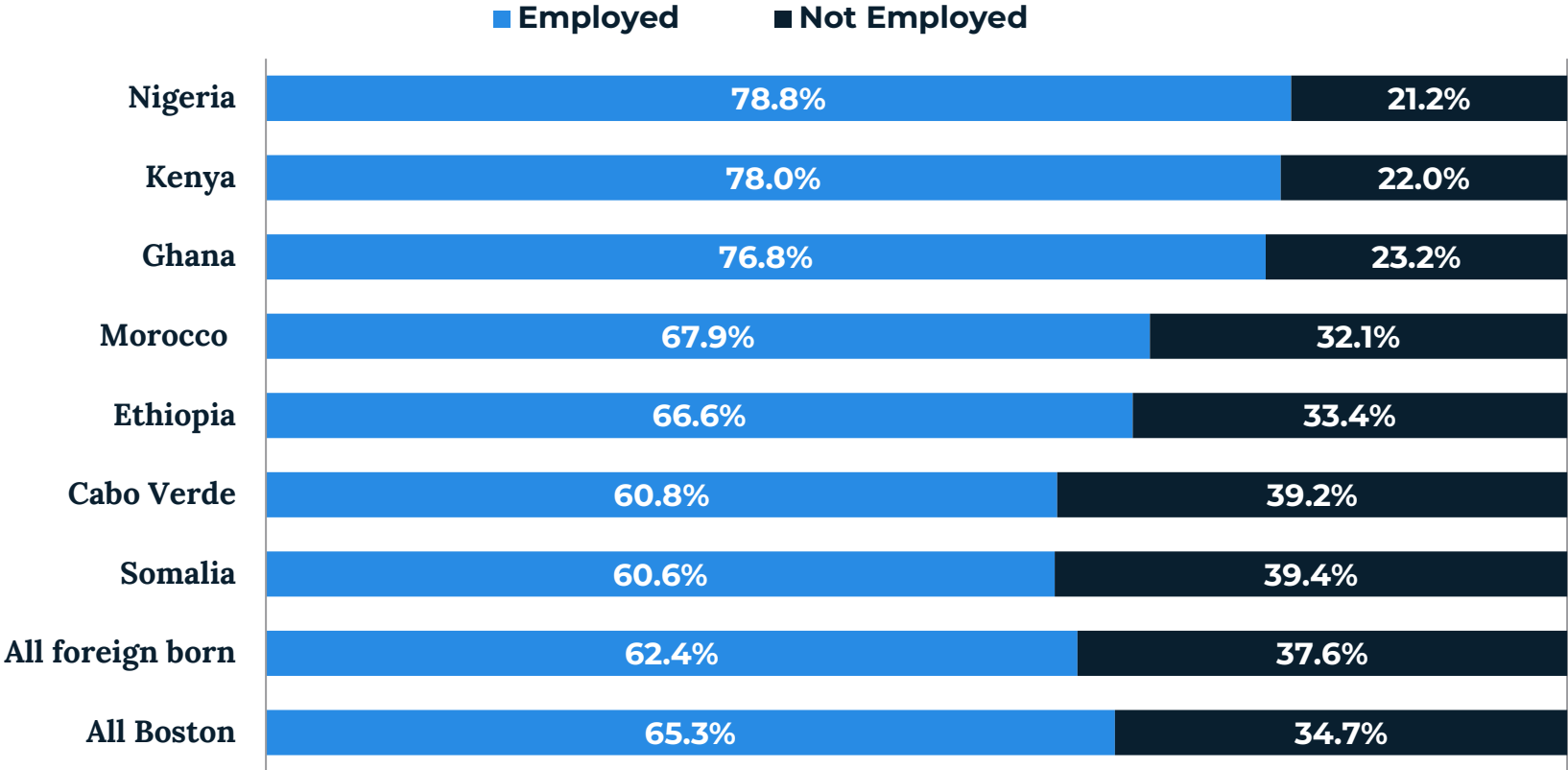
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

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Majority of African-born residents are employed, with Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana showing the highest employment rates

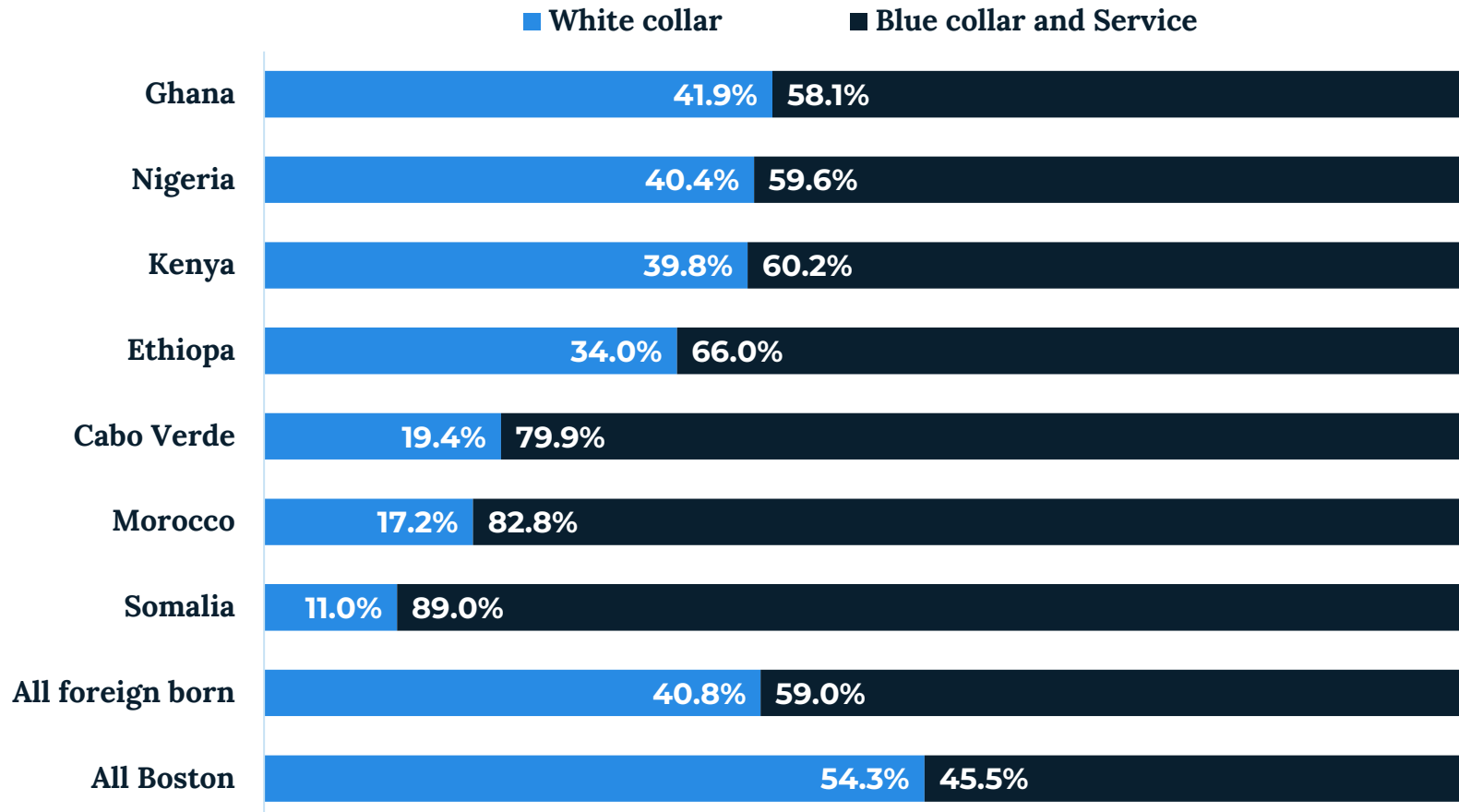
African-born Residents By Employment Status (16+)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

Individuals from Somalia, Morocco, and Cabo Verde are **more likely** to work in **service** and **blue-collar occupations**

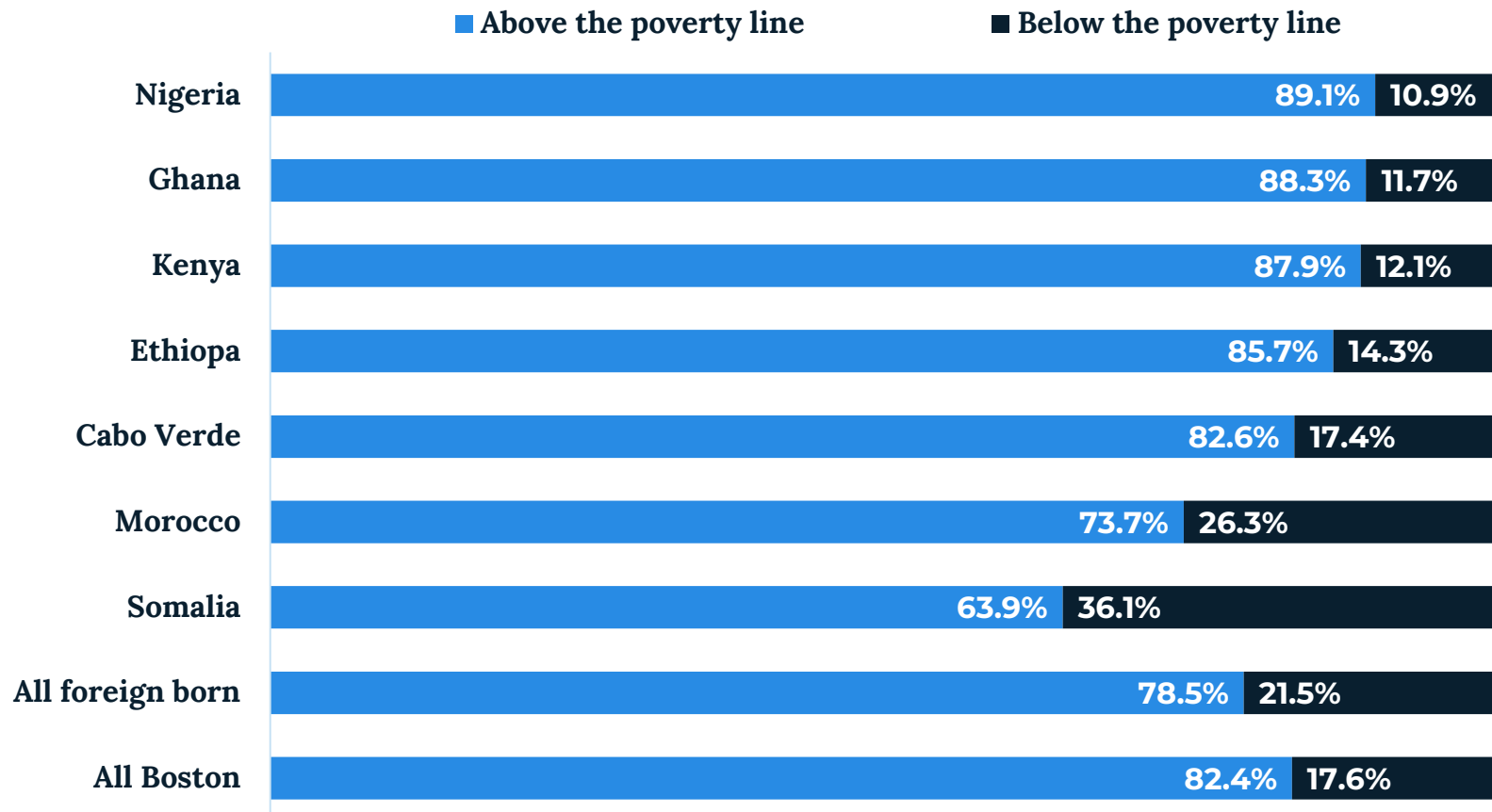
African-born Boston Resident Workers By Occupation



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

Majority of African-born tend to be above the poverty line

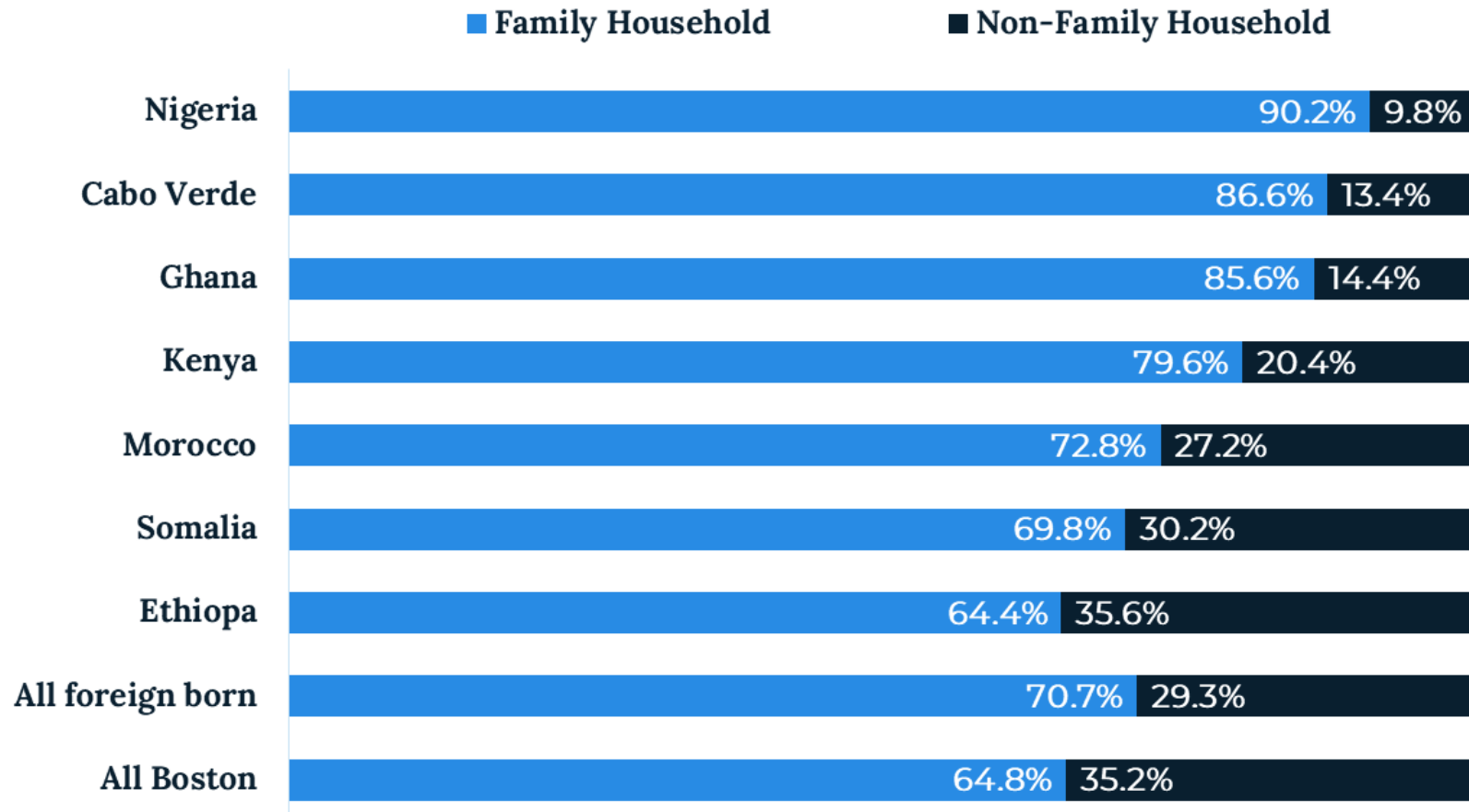
African-born Residents By Poverty Status



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

Majority of African-born tend to live with family members

African-born Residents By Household Structure



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022, City of Boston Planning Department Research Division Analysis

To Sum-up: American Community Survey data on the African-born

- Boston's African-born population shows **distinct gender dynamics**, high **naturalization rates**, and a significant proportion of **older residents**, highlighting *unique migration patterns*.
- Language spoken at home is **linked to English proficiency** and **educational attainment**, with Somali and Cabo Verdean populations showing lower levels in both.
- These language and educational factors also **impact labor market outcomes**, including **employment, occupation, and poverty** status.