

imagine  
all the  
people

# Hondurans

CITY OF BOSTON  
Martin J. Walsh  
Mayor

2016

## Hondurans in Boston

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



Celebration of Honduran Independence Day in the United States  
Isle Andrade, Creative Commons 2.0

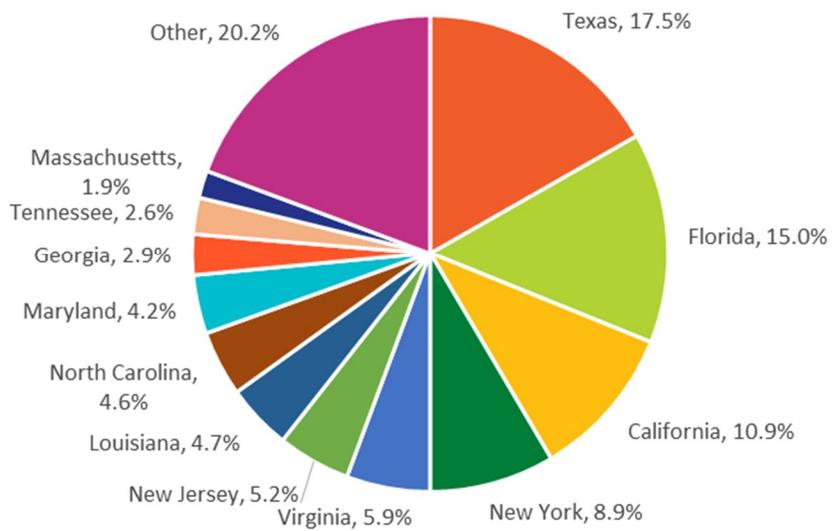
# Introduction

Honduran migration to the United States differs from that of neighboring countries El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Whereas migration from these other Central American countries can be linked to civil war, Honduran migration has been associated more with lack of economic opportunity than widespread violence.<sup>1</sup> Honduras is the third poorest country in the region behind Haiti and Nicaragua.<sup>2</sup>

A small number of Hondurans have resided in the United States since the 1960s, but significant migration did not occur until the 1990s. Hurricane Mitch caused significant physical and economic damage to the country in 1998, and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service granted Honduras Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in January of 1999. TPS has been renewed several times and is set to expire on July 5, 2016. Aside from TPS, Hondurans have had few options for authorized migration to the United States. The Department of Homeland Security in 2010 estimated that 62 percent of foreign-born Hondurans in the United States were unauthorized.<sup>3</sup>

The United States, Spain, and Nicaragua are the leading destinations of Honduran migrants.<sup>4</sup> Massachusetts has the 12th largest share (2 percent) of the estimated 569,027<sup>5</sup> foreign-born Hondurans living in the United States in 2014. States with the largest shares of Hondurans include Texas (18 percent), Florida (15 percent), California (11 percent), and New York (9 percent).

## Share of Foreign-Born Honduran Population by State



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey, BRA Research Division Analysis

## Population Share in Boston

Of the 11,042<sup>6</sup> foreign-born Hondurans residing in Massachusetts, approximately 2,919<sup>7</sup> live in Boston. Hondurans are the 13<sup>th</sup> largest country of origin among Boston's foreign-born population. Overall, foreign-born Hondurans in Boston constitute 1.7 percent of the city's total foreign-born residents.

Boston's foreign-born Hondurans are somewhat scattered throughout the city, but live mostly in the neighborhoods of Roxbury (20 percent), Dorchester (20 percent), and East Boston (13 percent). Other neighborhoods with smaller shares are Jamaica Plain, Hyde Park, and Roslindale.<sup>8</sup>

The U.S. Census Bureau's ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) allows for the detailed socio-economic analysis of specific populations. For smaller populations like foreign-born Hondurans in Boston, a 5-year sample is required to limit variation due to sampling error. The analysis that follows uses 2009-2013 ACS PUMS data.

Honduran migration has historically been dominated by females, and 61 percent of foreign-born Hondurans in Boston are female. Nearly 66 percent of foreign-born Hondurans in Boston are either married (50 percent) or divorced, separated or widowed (16 percent). Approximately 65 percent of all foreign-born Hondurans are between the ages of 35 and 64, and the median age of the population is 48 years. A smaller share of foreign-born Hondurans in Boston have arrived in the United States after 2000 (24 percent) compared to all foreign born (43 percent). The majority of foreign-born Hondurans (61 percent) are naturalized U.S. citizens.

*Almost 3,000  
foreign-born  
Hondurans live  
in Boston.*

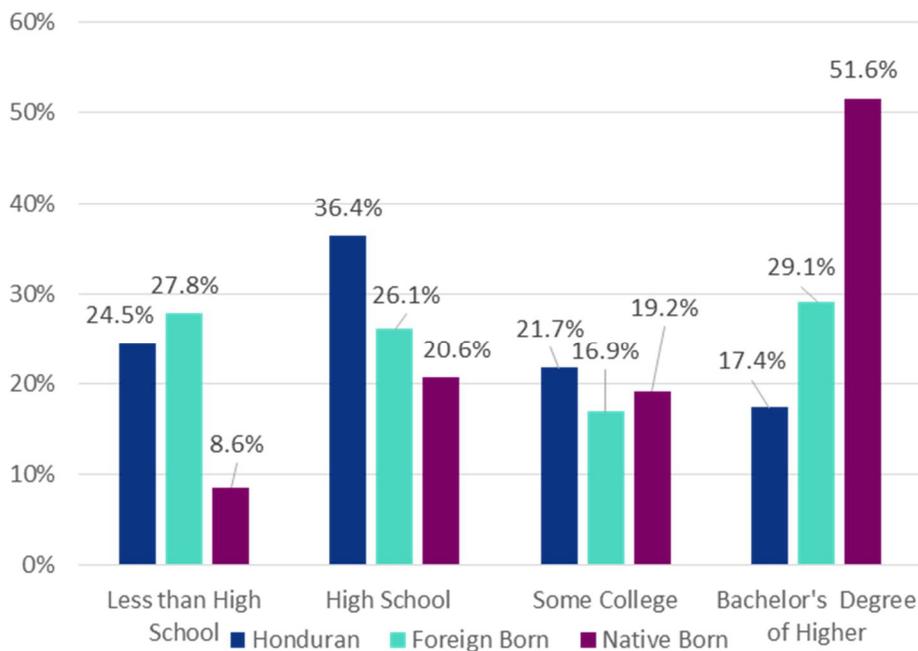
## Education

About one quarter of foreign-born Hondurans in Boston ages 25 years or older have not completed high school. This share is less than for all foreign-born residents (28 percent) and almost three times greater than the native-born population (9 percent). Approximately 36 percent of foreign-born Hondurans have a high school diploma as their highest level of educational attainment.

While 39 percent of foreign-born Hondurans 25 years or older have attended some college, only 17 percent have completed at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 29 percent of the entire foreign-born population, and 52 percent of the native born. Less than 2 percent of foreign-born Hondurans living in Boston hold a graduate or professional degree, compared with 14 percent of all foreign born and 22 percent of the native born.

*Only 17% of adult Hondurans in Boston have completed a Bachelor's degree.*

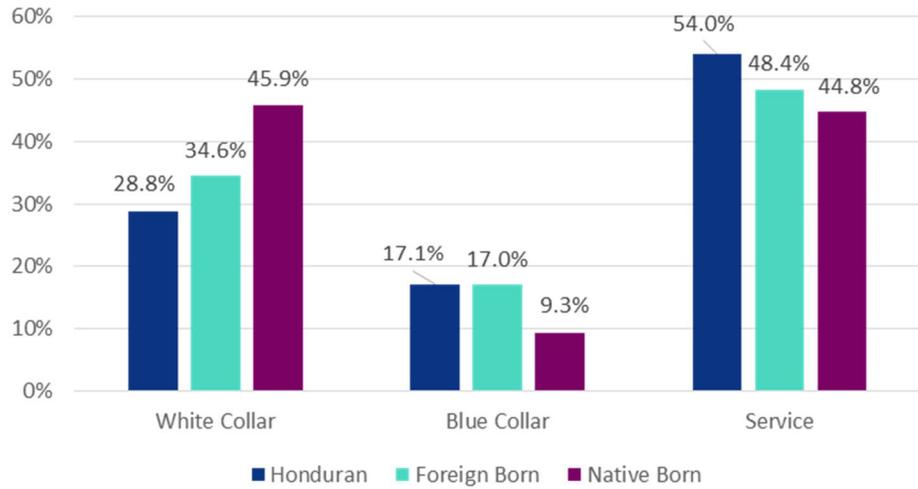
### Educational Attainment - Population 25 Years and Older



U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, BRA Research Division Analysis

The labor force participation rate<sup>9</sup> of foreign-born Hondurans is 70 percent compared to 68 percent for all foreign born and 69 percent for the native-born population. With their lower levels of educational attainment, the majority of foreign-born Hondurans work in what are generally categorized as service occupations (54 percent).<sup>10</sup> They are underrepresented in white-collar occupations (29 percent), and they are similar to other foreign born in working blue-collar occupations (17 percent). The most common service occupation among Hondurans is cleaning and personal care.

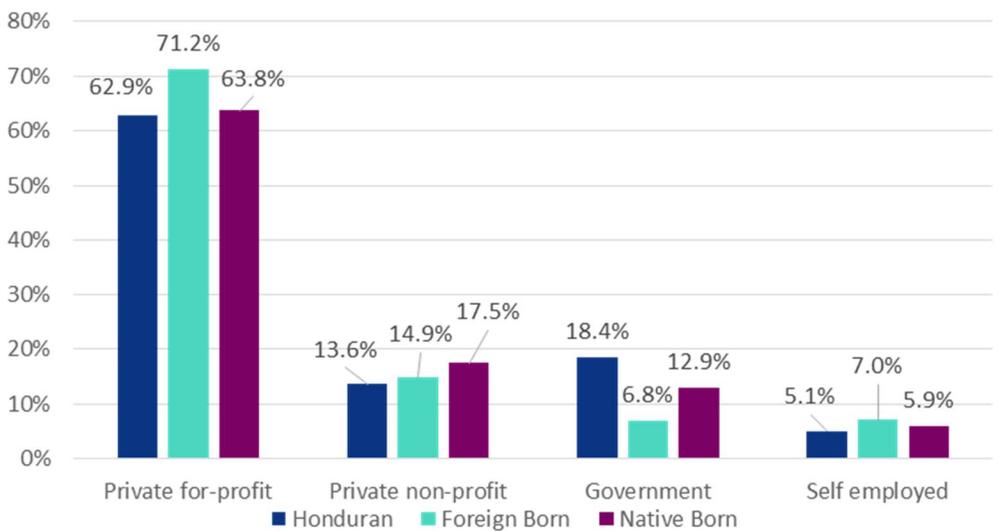
### Occupations by Nativity



U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, PUMS, BRA Research Division Analysis

A greater share of foreign-born Honduran workers (excluding unpaid family workers), work in the public sector (18 percent) compared to all foreign born (7 percent) and the native born (13 percent). Fewer foreign-born Hondurans are self-employed (5.1 percent) than all foreign born (7.0 percent) and the native born in Boston (5.9 percent).

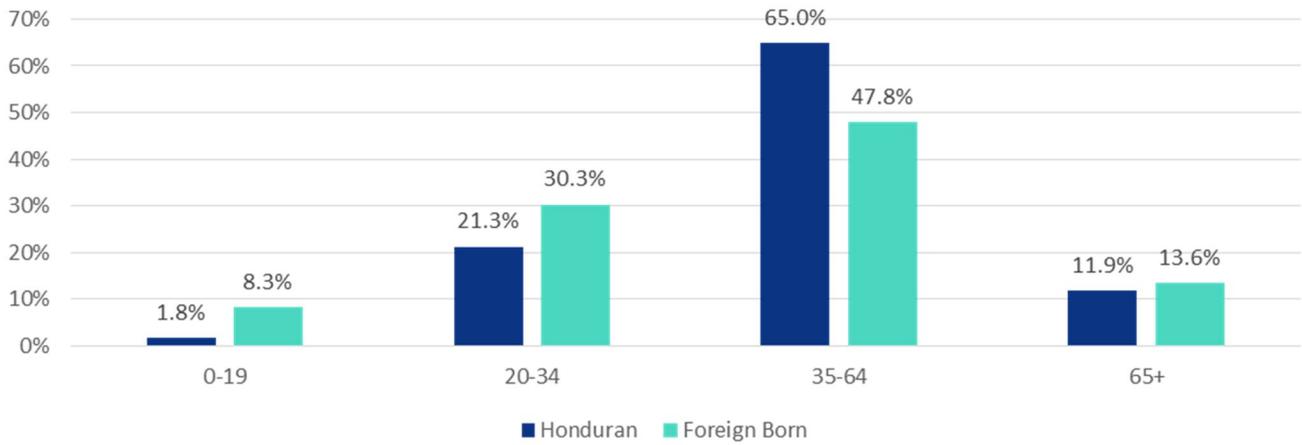
### Employment by Employer Type



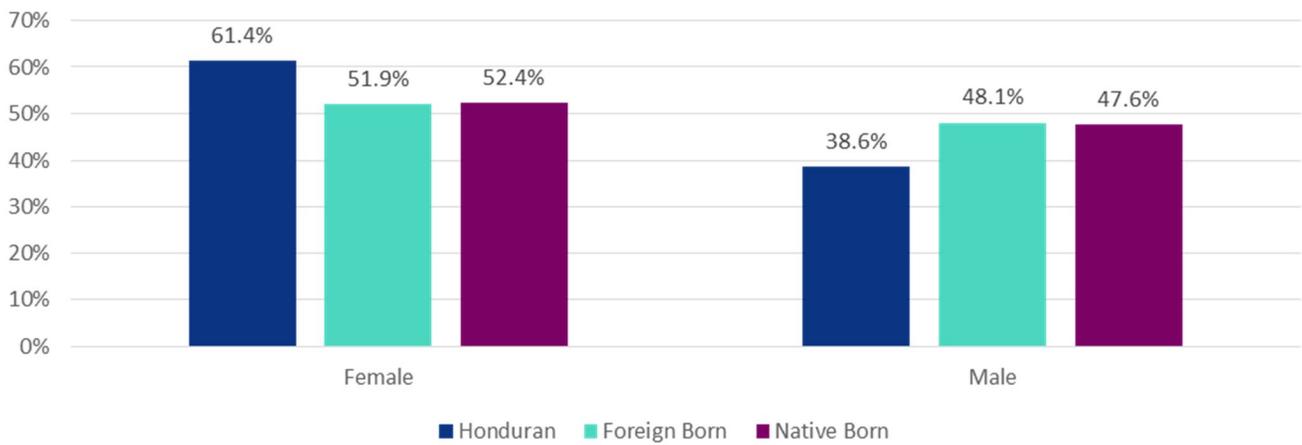
U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, PUMS, BRA Research Division Analysis

# Imagine all the people: Honduras

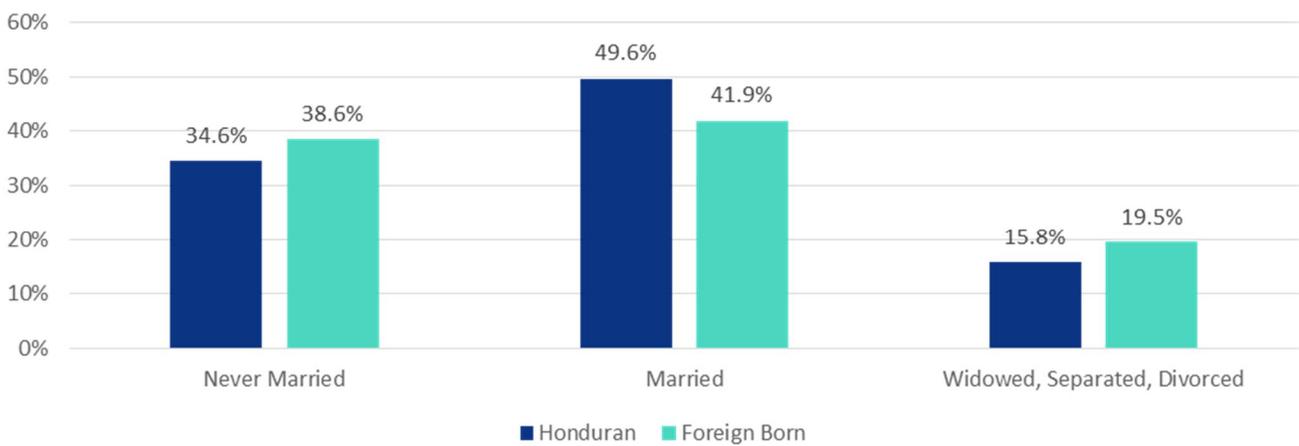
## Age



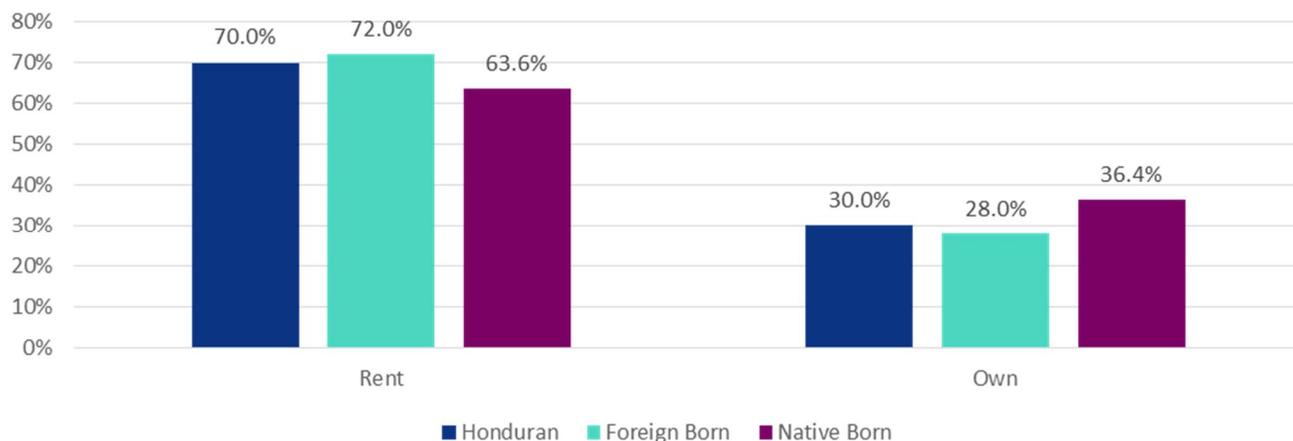
## Gender



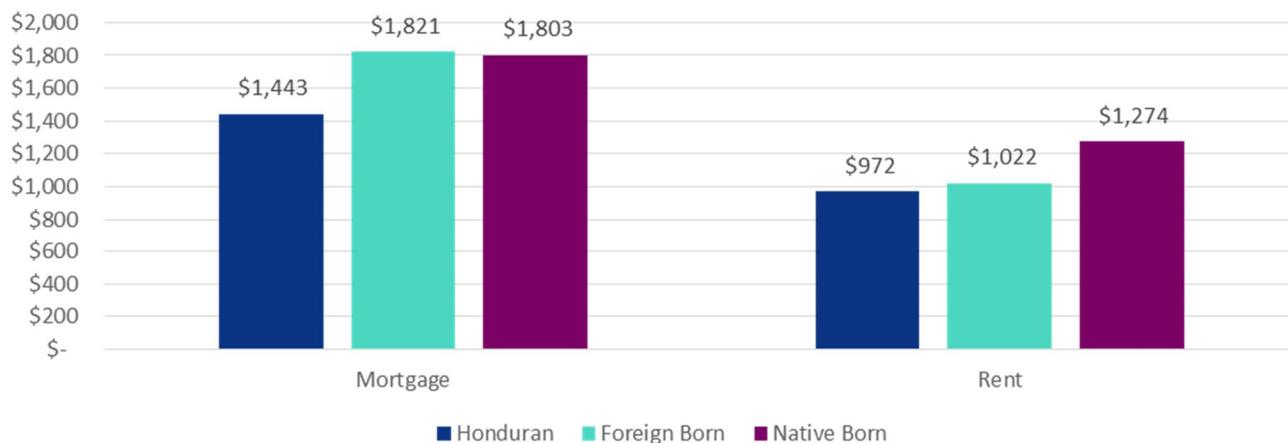
## Marital Status



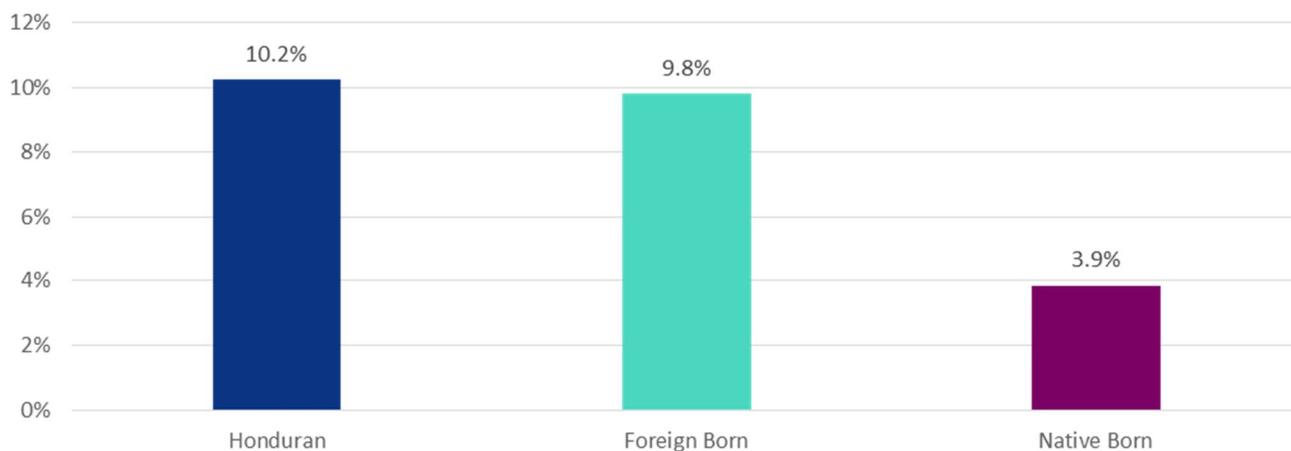
## Housing Tenure\*



## Housing Costs\*



## Medical Uninsurance



\*Housing data are based on the householder's nativity.

# imagine

---

imagine

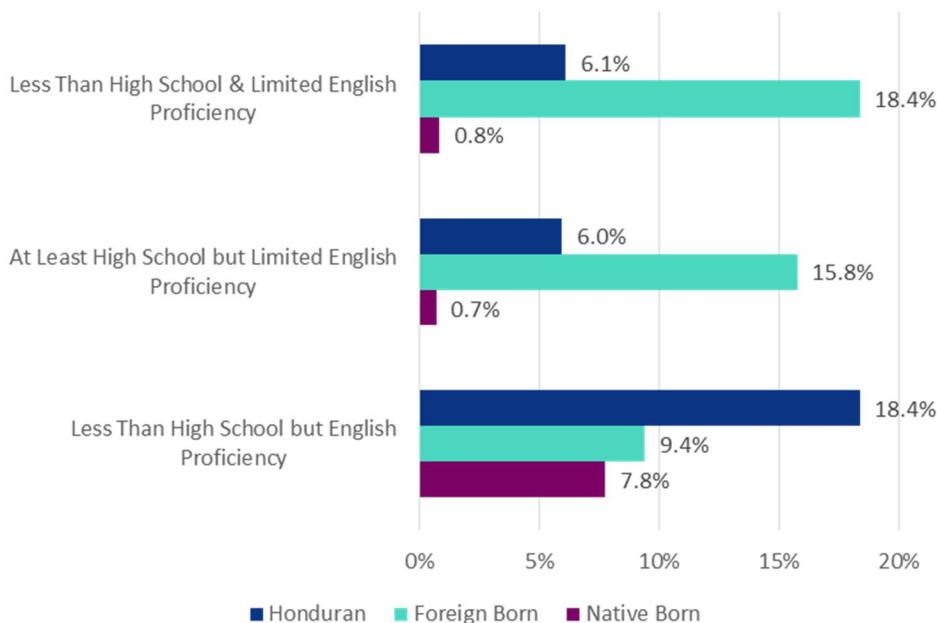
## Standard of Living

Nearly 29 percent of foreign-born Hondurans have achieved a middle class standard of living, compared with 45 percent of Boston's native-born population, and a similar 29 percent of all foreign-born. 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 2014, a middle class income would be at least \$62,920. In contrast, only 17 percent of foreign-born Hondurans live below the federal poverty level compared to 20 percent for the city's population.

Lower levels of educational attainment more than lack of English proficiency may contribute to Hondurans' lower standard of living. Only 12 percent of adult Hondurans have limited English proficiency, compared to 34 percent of all foreign born. While 6 percent of Boston's adult Honduran-born population does not have a high school diploma and has limited English proficiency, the share among all foreign-born adults is 18 percent.<sup>11</sup>

*Hondurans have lower poverty rates than the citywide average.*

### Educational Attainment and English Proficiency Population 25 Years or Older



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, BRA Research Division Analysis

## Economic Impact

Foreign-born Hondurans contribute to the local economy through their labor and consumer spending. The total value of their economic contributions was estimated using a Regional Economic Model (REMI) that calculated the value of goods and services consumed on each dollar spent. Foreign-born Hondurans in Boston generated total expenditures of nearly \$27 million in 2014.<sup>12</sup> These annual expenditures contributed slightly less than \$16 million to the regional product and generated \$900,000 in state and local taxes.<sup>13</sup> In total, these expenditures supported 117 jobs in the Massachusetts economy.<sup>14</sup>



Baleada—a traditional Honduran dish of mashed fried beans inside a tortilla  
Ilse Andrade, Creative Commons 2.0

## Conclusion

Honduras ranks 13<sup>th</sup> among countries sending emigrants to Boston. Foreign-born Hondurans in Boston contribute to the economy, culture, and civic life of the city. Their migration to Boston occurred earlier than it did in other parts of the country, but Honduran migration has not increased as has migration from neighboring El Salvador and Guatemala. Foreign-born Hondurans are more likely to work in service occupations, and have a smaller share of their population living below the federal poverty level than others in Boston.

<sup>1</sup> Reichman, D., Honduras: The Perils of Remittance Dependence and Clandestine Migration. Migration Policy Institute, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank estimates Honduran per capita GDP to be 2,434 in 2014. [http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?order=wbapi\\_data\\_value\\_2013+wbapi\\_data\\_value&sort=asc](http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?order=wbapi_data_value_2013+wbapi_data_value&sort=asc)

<sup>3</sup> Naker, B & Rytina, N., Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population in the United States: January 2012, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF Migration Profiles, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> American Factfinder website Table B05006 reports 588,301 Hondurans residing in the United States in 2014 with a margin of error of +/- 20,515. The 569,027 estimate reported for this analysis was tabulated from 2014 U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Sample data. Both estimates contain a margin of error due to sampling methodology. For more information on American Fact Finder please see: <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?lang=en>.

<sup>6</sup> American Factfinder website Table B05006 reports 11,885 Hondurans residing in Massachusetts with a margin of error of +/- 2,704 in 2014. The 11,042 estimate reported for this analysis was tabulated from 2014 U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Sample data. Lower survey response rates due to language or documentation issues may result in an undercount of the population. Both estimates contain a margin of error due to sampling methodology.

<sup>7</sup> American Factfinder website Table B05006 reports 2,940 Hondurans in Boston with a margin of error of +/- 1,348 in 2014. The 2014 U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Sample data estimates 2,919 foreign-born Hondurans for Boston. Both estimates contain a margin of error due to sampling methodology.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, BRA Research (2016).

<sup>9</sup> Share of the working-age population that is either currently employed or seeking work. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016).

<sup>10</sup> For a smaller population like foreign-born Guatemalan in Boston, occupations fall into three broad categories. White collar includes managerial & professional, health care, education, and arts, design entertainment, sports & media occupations. Service includes service, sales, office & administrative support, community & social service occupations. Blue collar includes construction, production, and agricultural & fishing occupations. Military specific occupations and long-term unemployed are excluded from the analysis.

<sup>11</sup> The Limited English Proficient includes immigrant adults who do not speak English at all or who do not speak it well.

<sup>12</sup> BRA Research Division Analysis, 2014, Regional Economic Model, Inc., REMI.

<sup>13</sup> BRA Research Division Analysis, 2014, Regional Economic Model, Inc., REMI.

<sup>14</sup> BRA Research Division Analysis, 2014, Regional Economic Model, Inc., REMI.

# End Notes



CITY OF BOSTON  
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor



MAYOR'S OFFICE  
FOR IMMIGRANT  
ADVANCEMENT

*Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston*



BOSTON  
REDEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY

Brian P. Golden, Director

#### Produced by the Research Division

Alvaro Lima, Director of Research  
Jonathan Lee – Deputy Director  
Christina Kim – Research Manager  
Phillip Granberry – Senior Researcher/Demographer  
Matthew Resseger – Senior Researcher/Economist  
Kevin Kang – Research Associate  
Kevin Wandrei – Research Assistant  
Interns:  
Michael Bratsis  
Cyan O'Garro  
Jingwan Wang

#### Map by the Digital Cartography & GIS

Alla Ziskin