



Young Adults in Boston Across the Generations

BPDA Research Division

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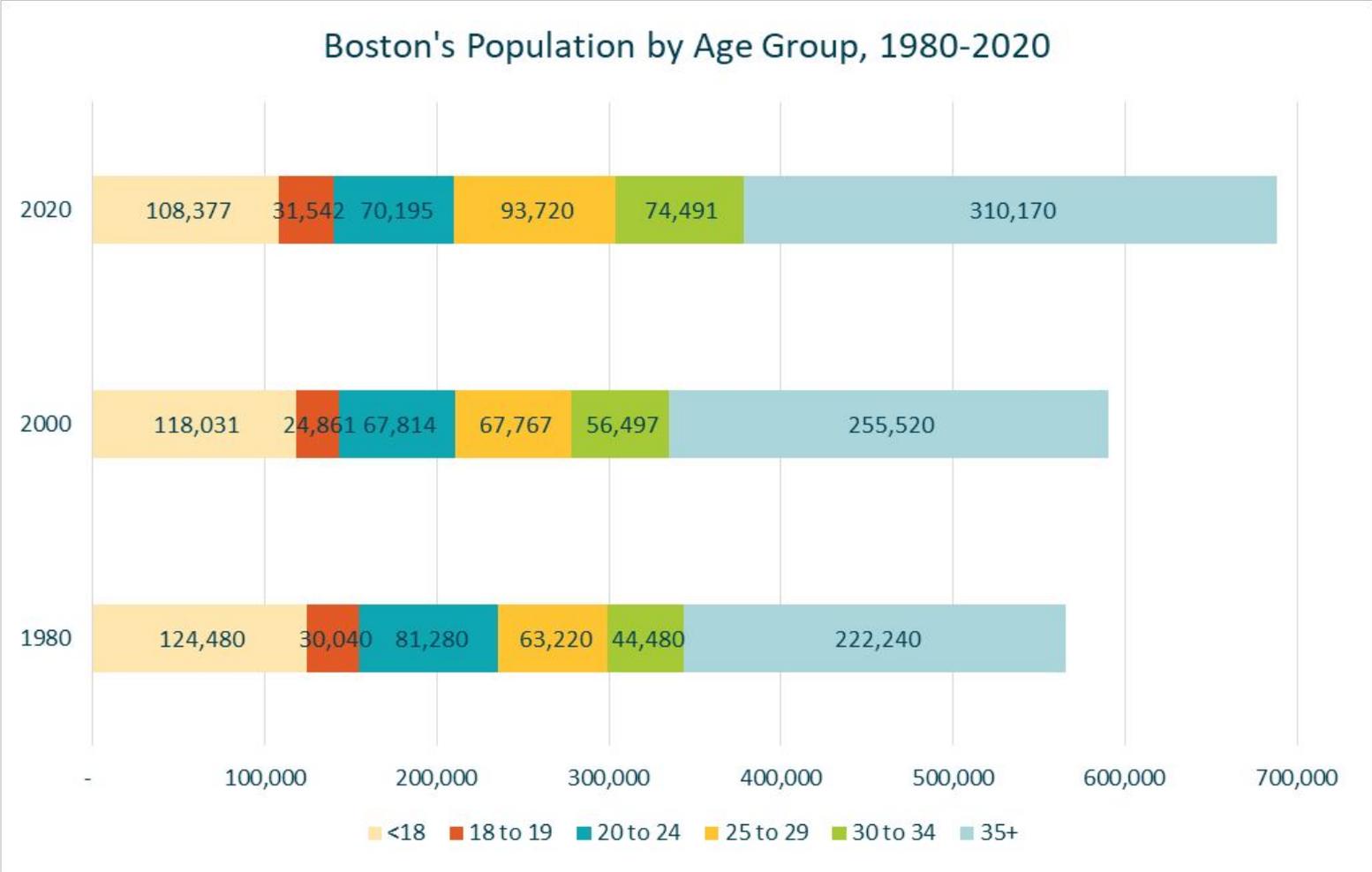
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01. Demographics



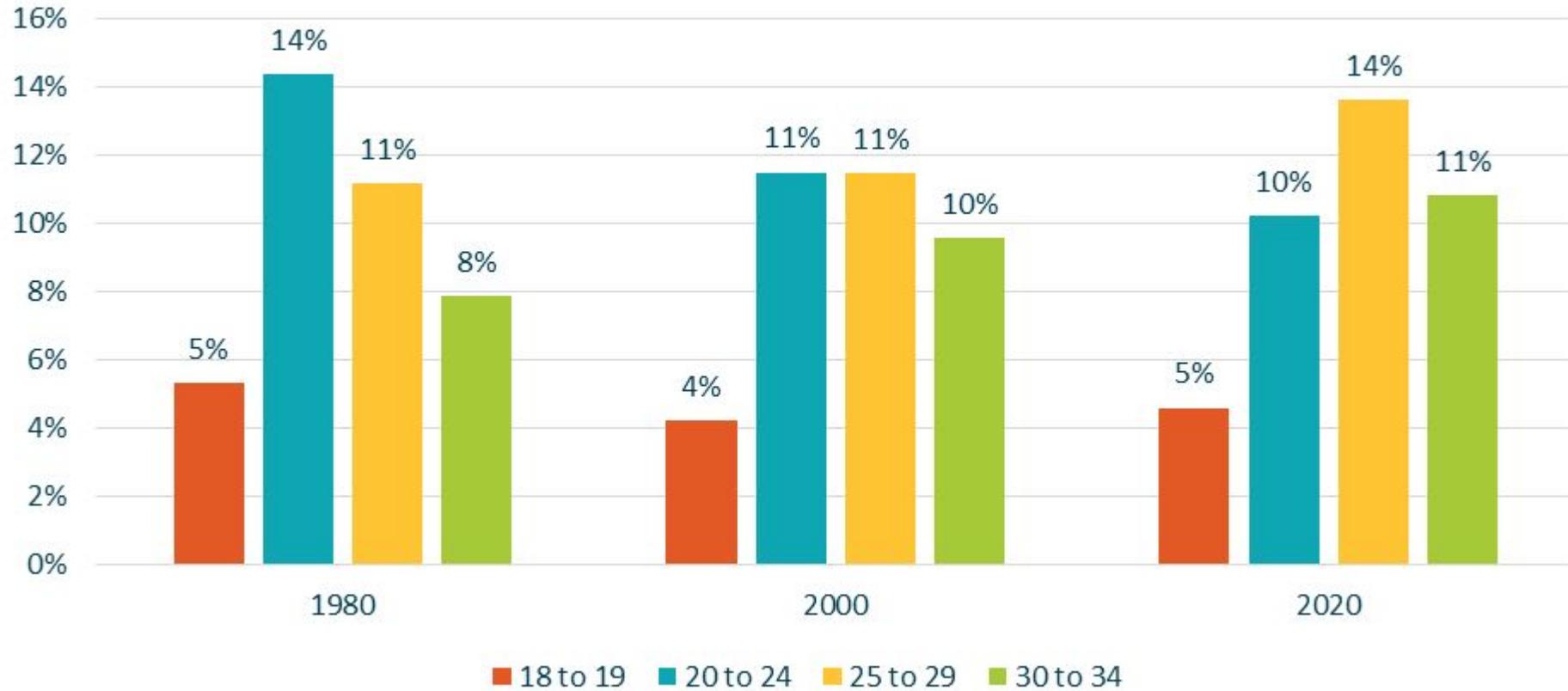
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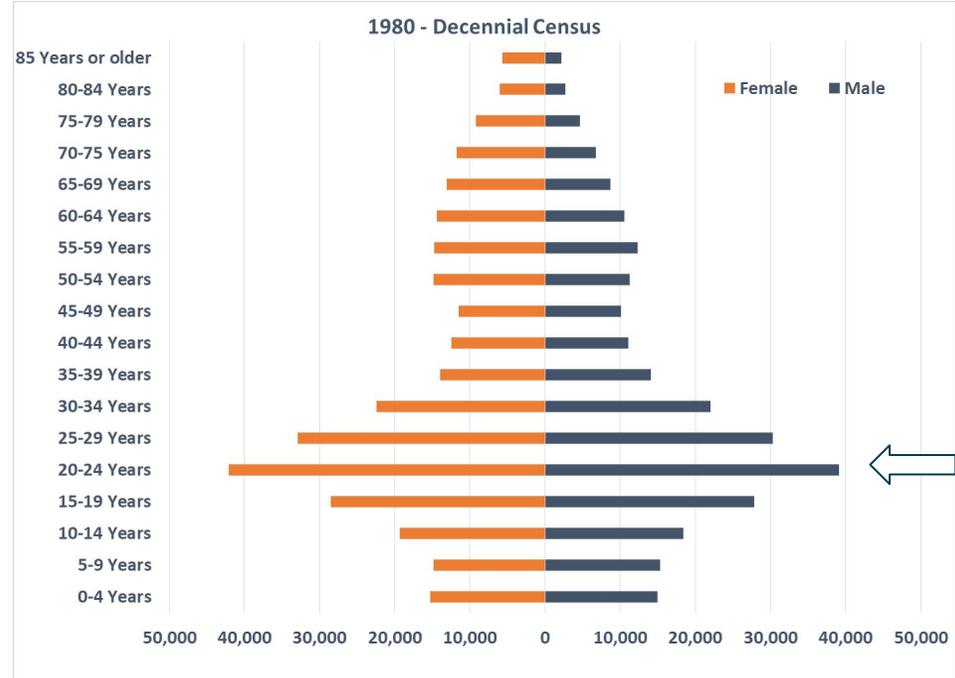
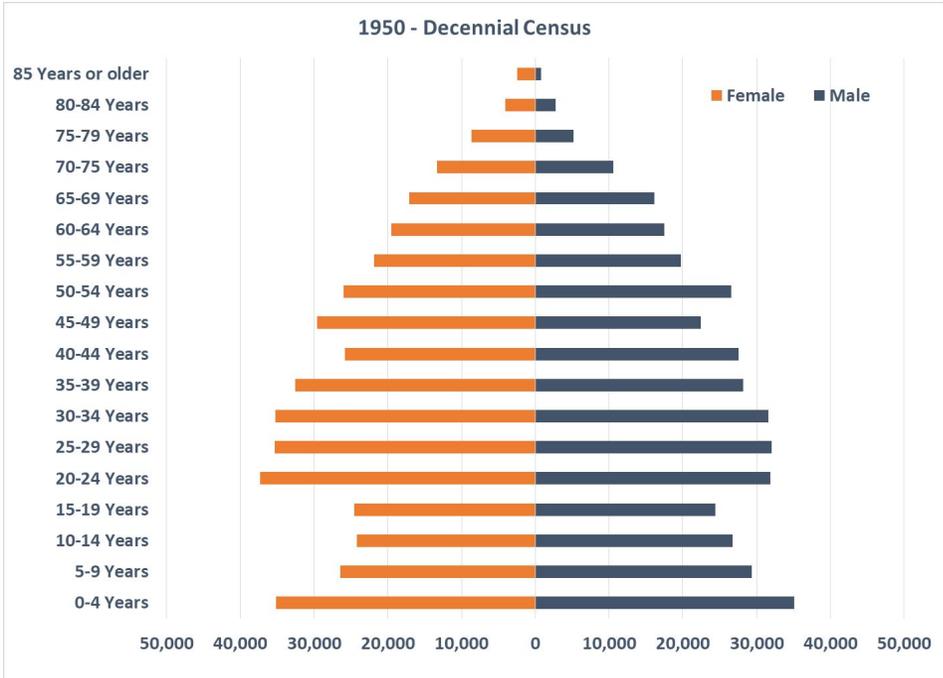
Since 1980, there has been significant growth in the population of young adults aged 25-34, while the 18-24 cohort has declined



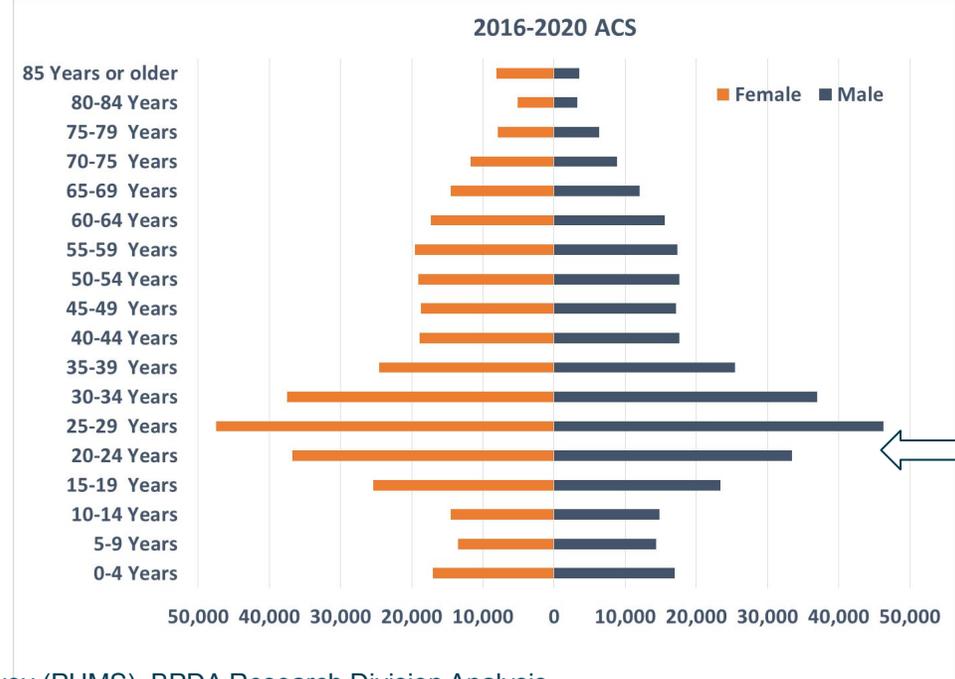
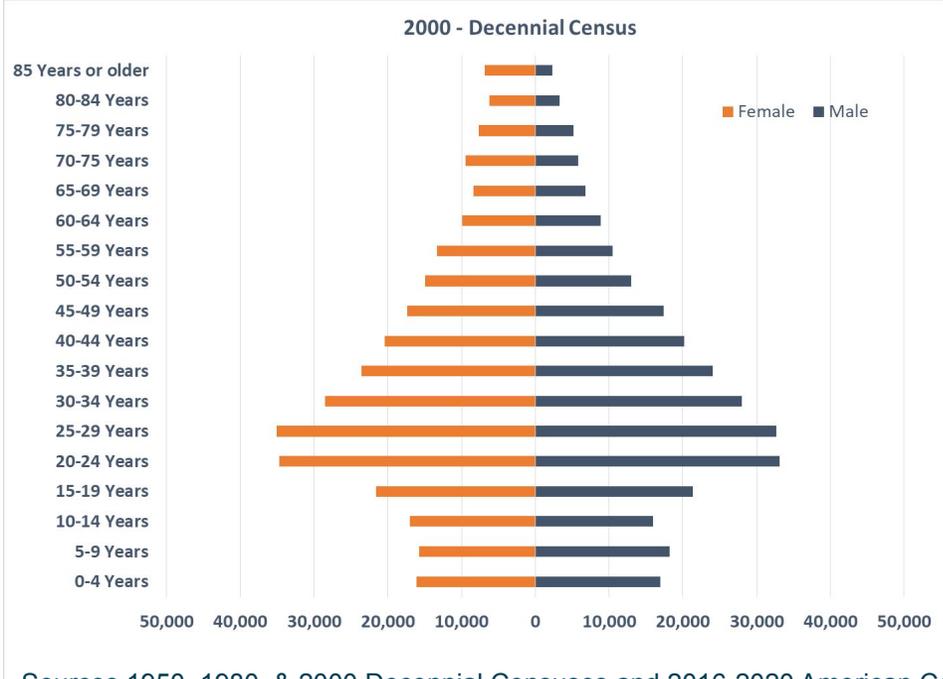
Young Adults aged 25-29 have grown to 14% of Boston's population.

Share of Young Adults in Boston by Age Group, 1980-2020





1950-1980:
largest cohort
is 20-24

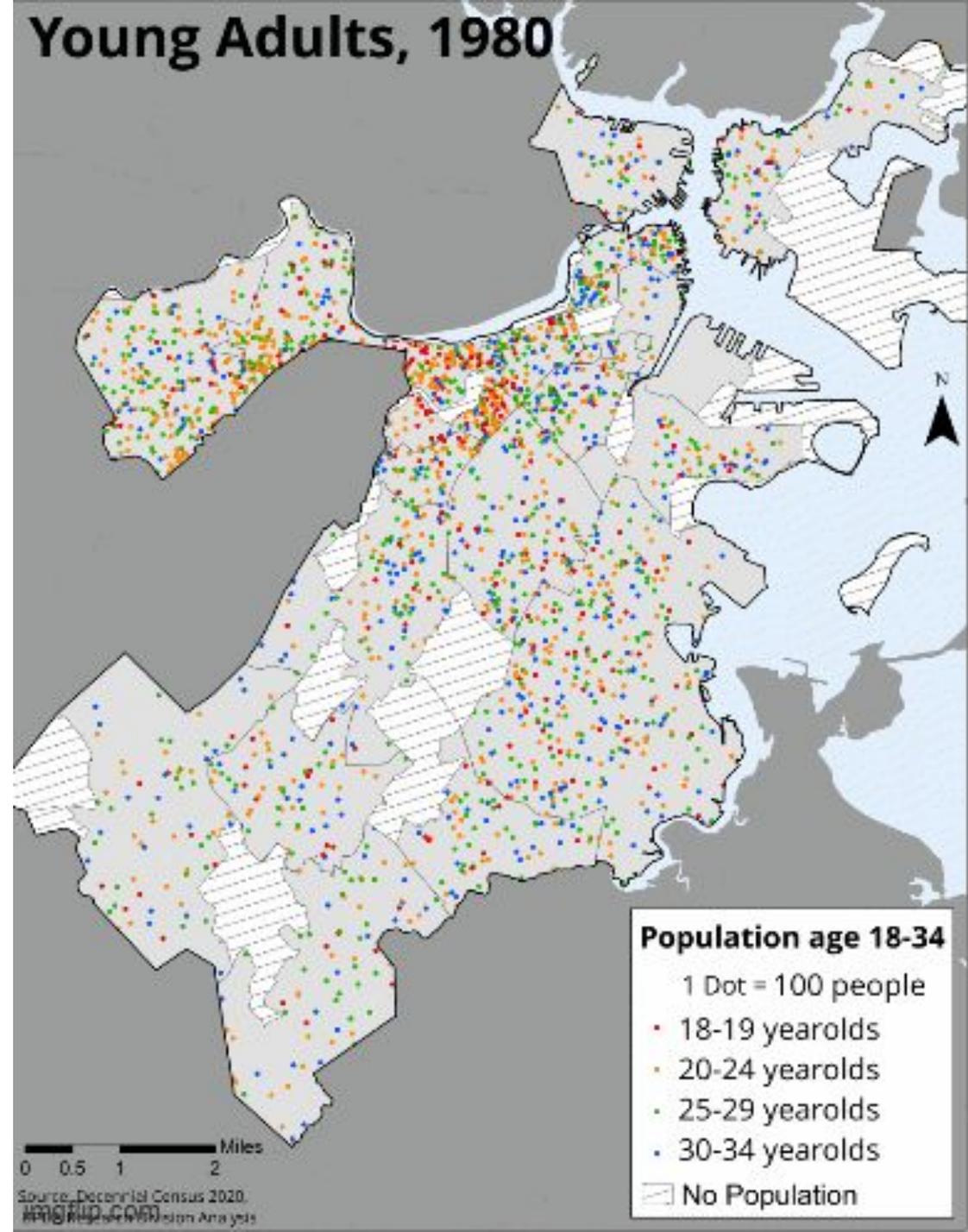


2000-2020:
largest cohort
is 25-29

Sources 1950, 1980, & 2000 Decennial Censuses and 2016-2020 American Community Survey (PUMS), BPDA Research Division Analysis

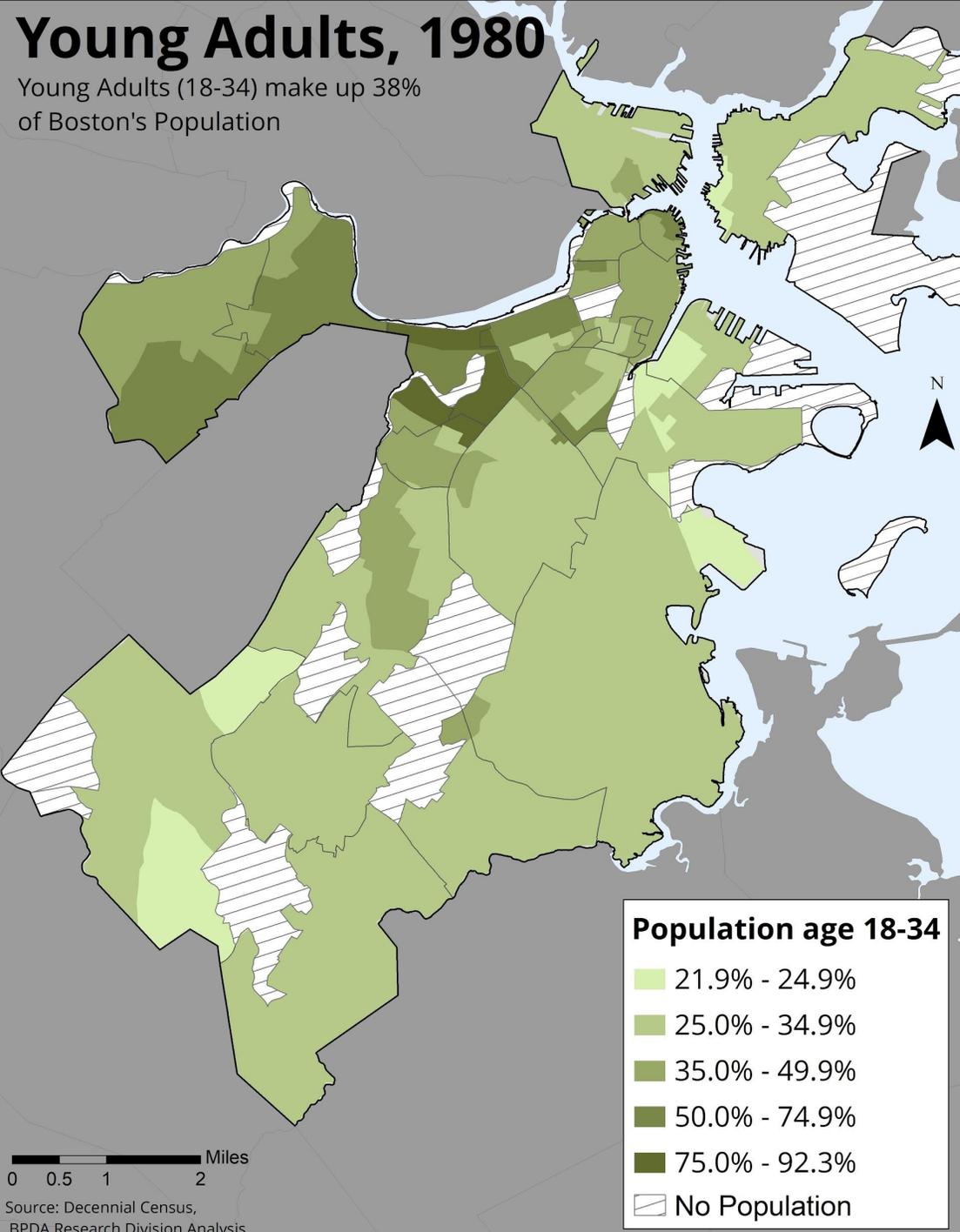
18-19 year olds are concentrated in Allston, Fenway, Longwood, and Downtown near colleges.

Older young adults are more spread out around the city.



Young Adults, 1980

Young Adults (18-34) make up 38% of Boston's Population

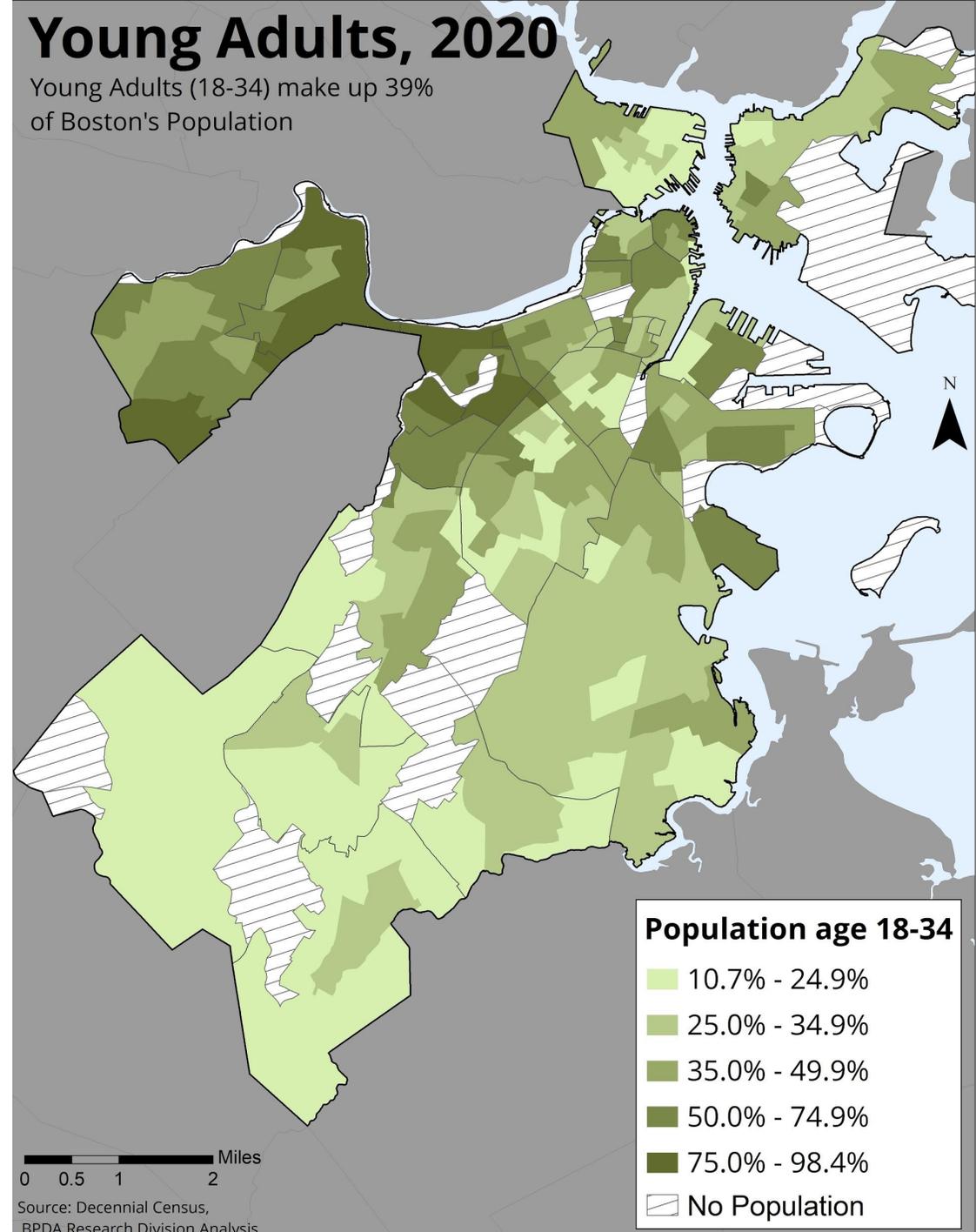


0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Source: Decennial Census, BPDA Research Division Analysis

Young Adults, 2020

Young Adults (18-34) make up 39% of Boston's Population

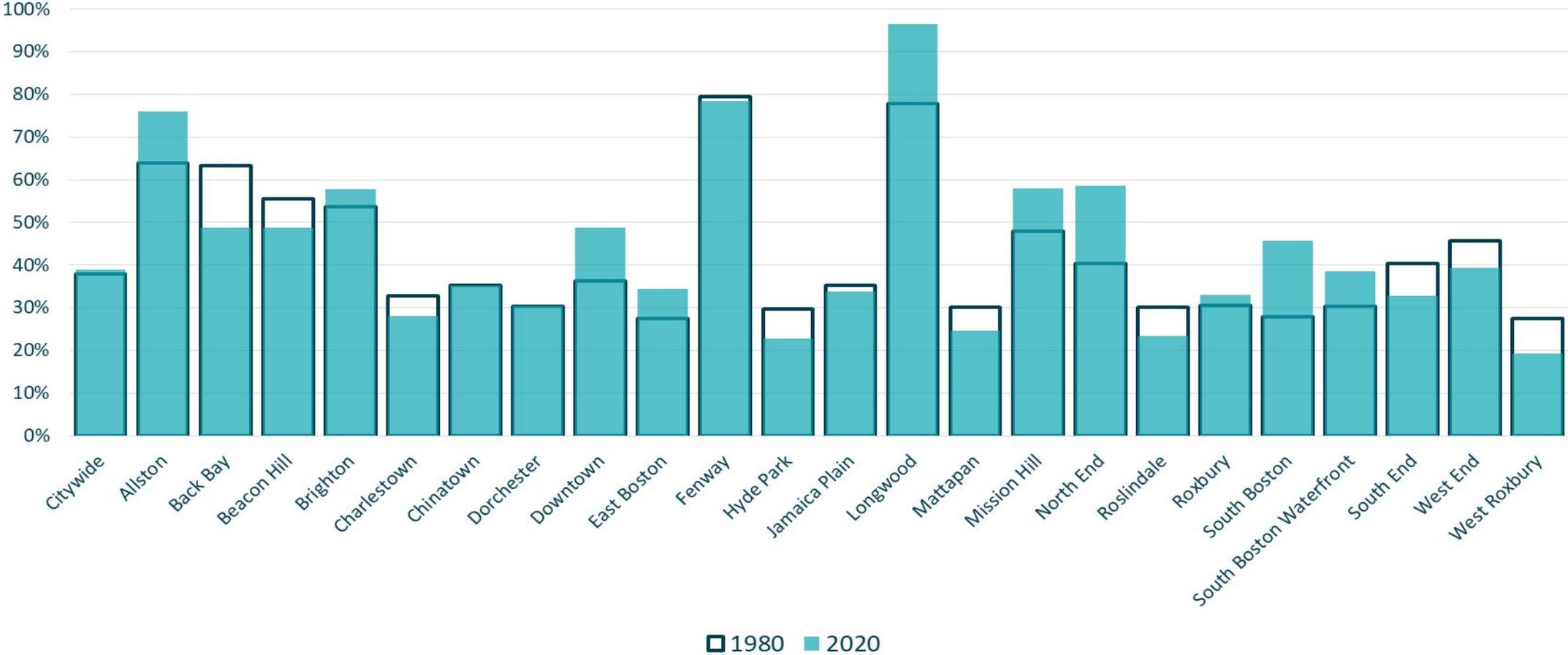


0 0.5 1 2 Miles

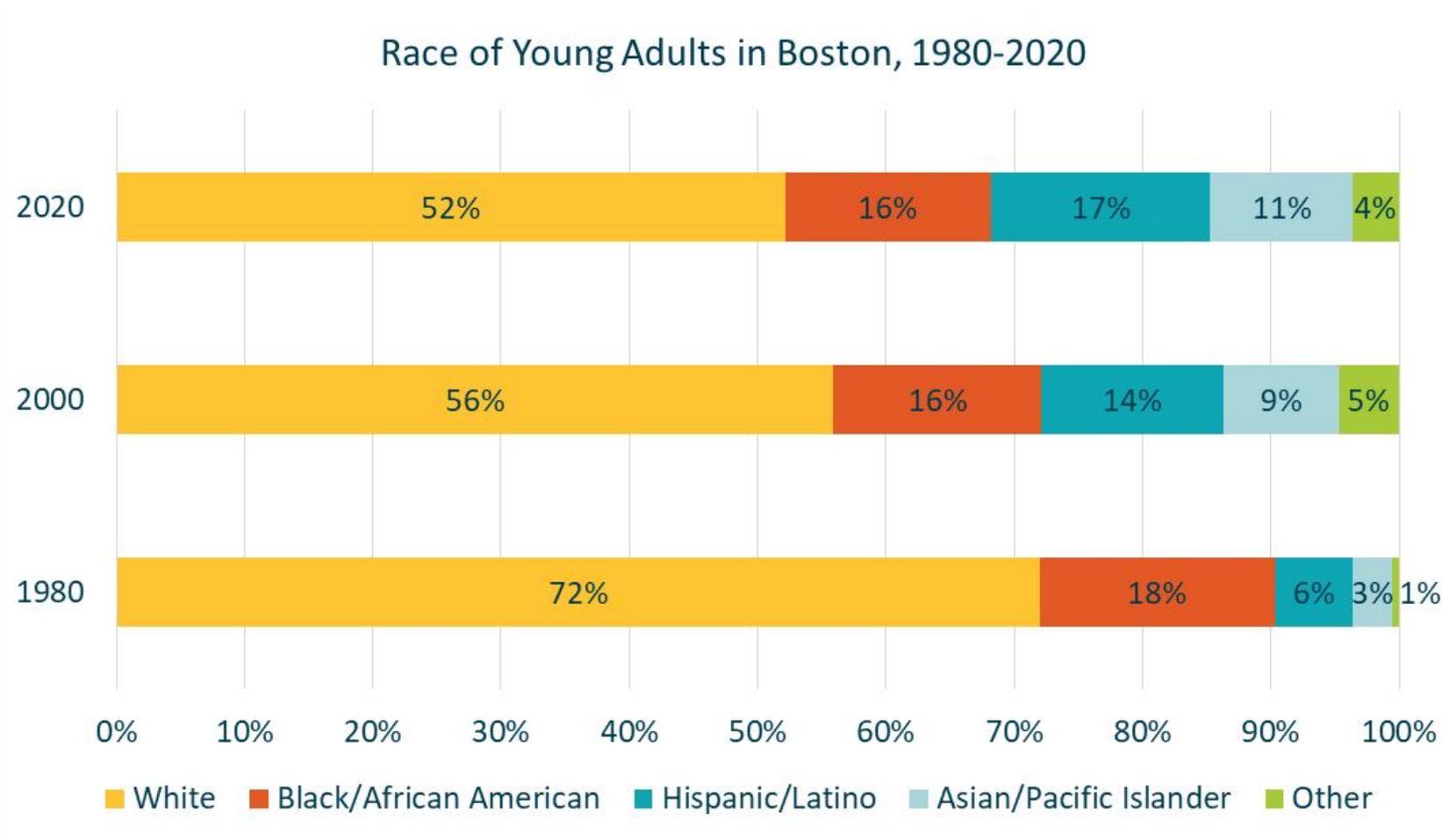
Source: Decennial Census, BPDA Research Division Analysis

Young adults have grown the most as a share of the population in South Boston, the North End, Downtown, Allston, Mission Hill and Longwood

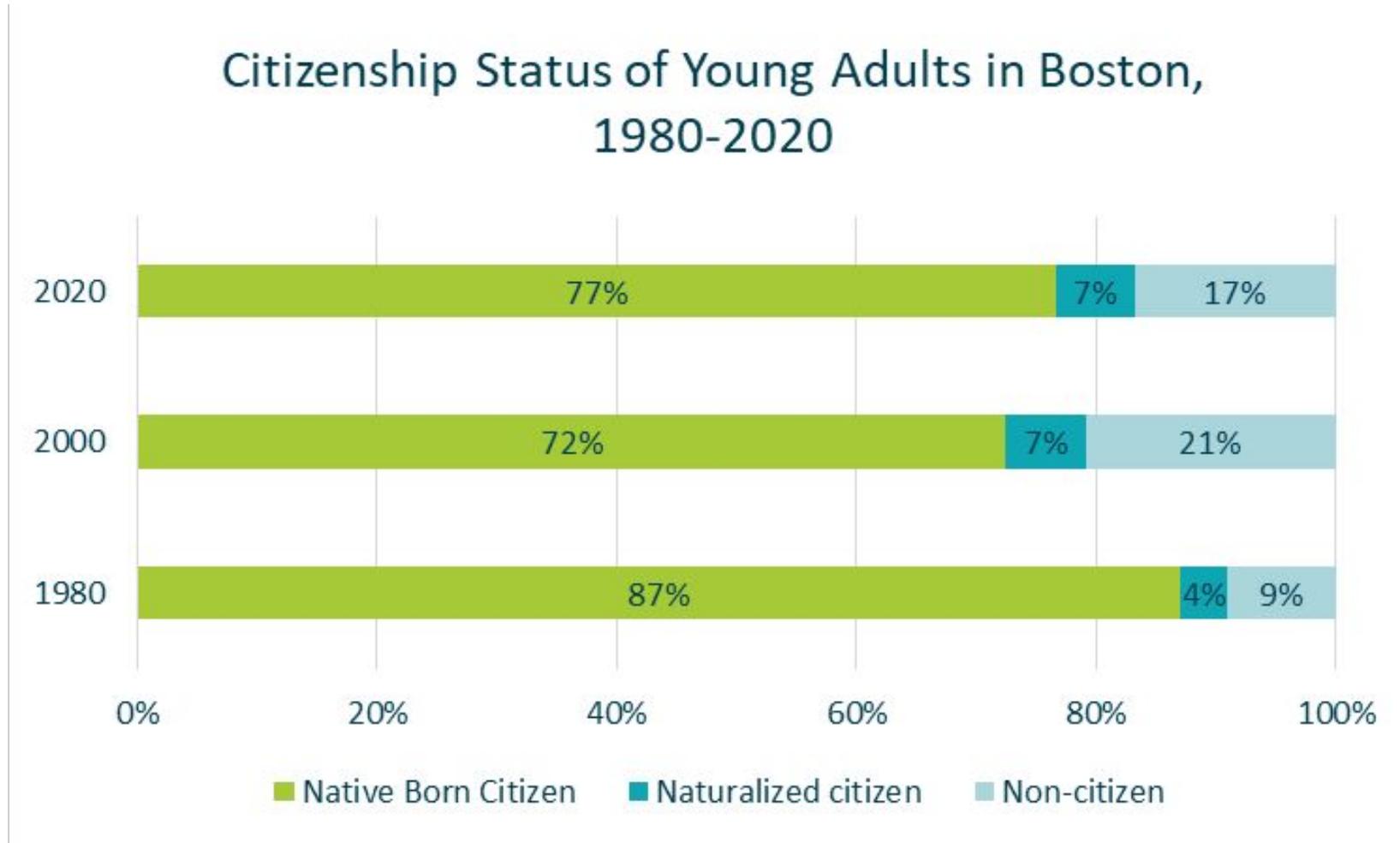
Share of Neighborhood Population Aged 18 to 34



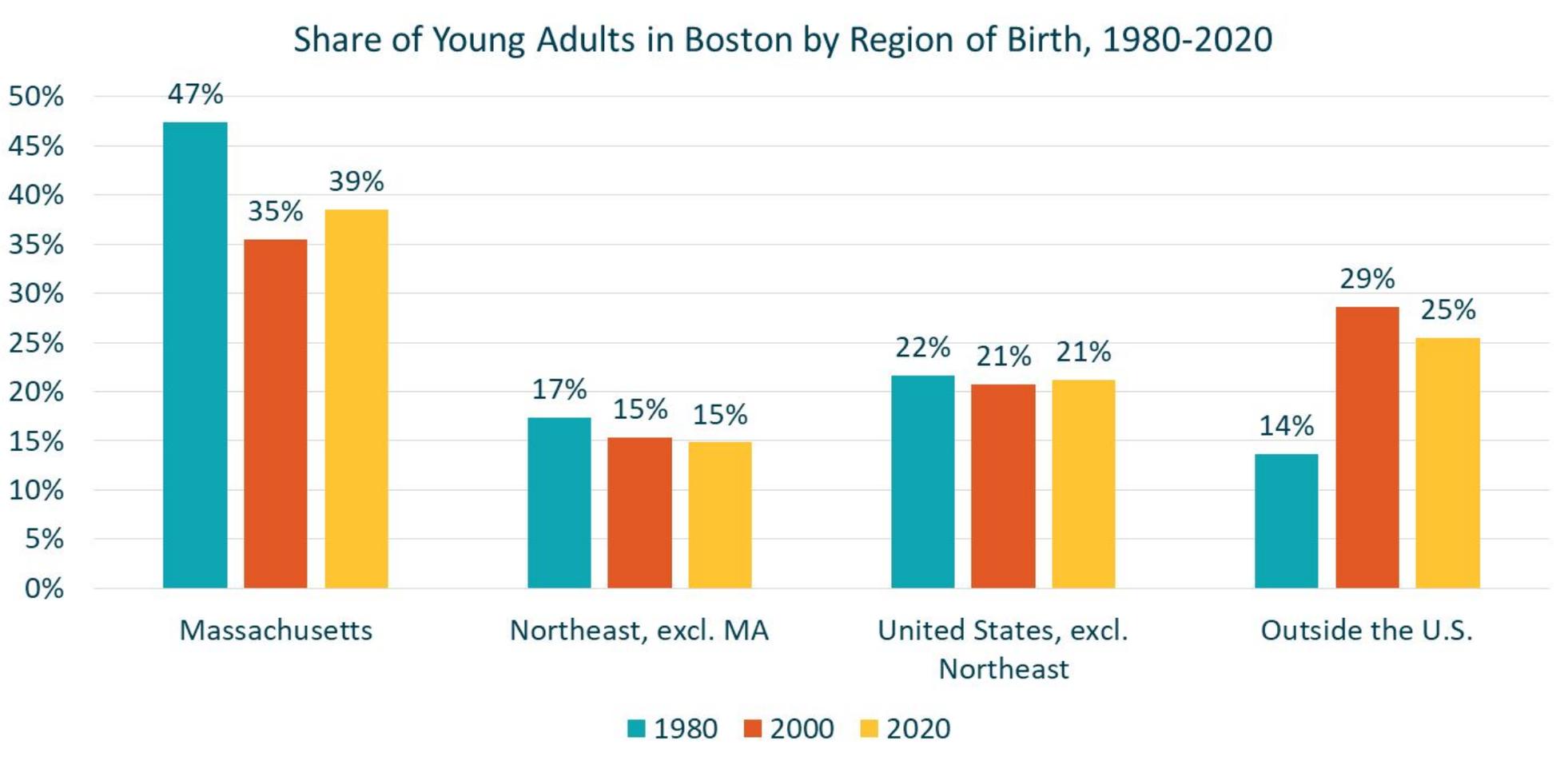
The percentage of Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Pacific Islander young adults has increased significantly since 1980



The proportion of Non-Citizens increased in 2000 to 21% and then fell back to 17% in 2020



In 1980, just 14% of young adults were born outside the U.S as compared to 25% in 2020

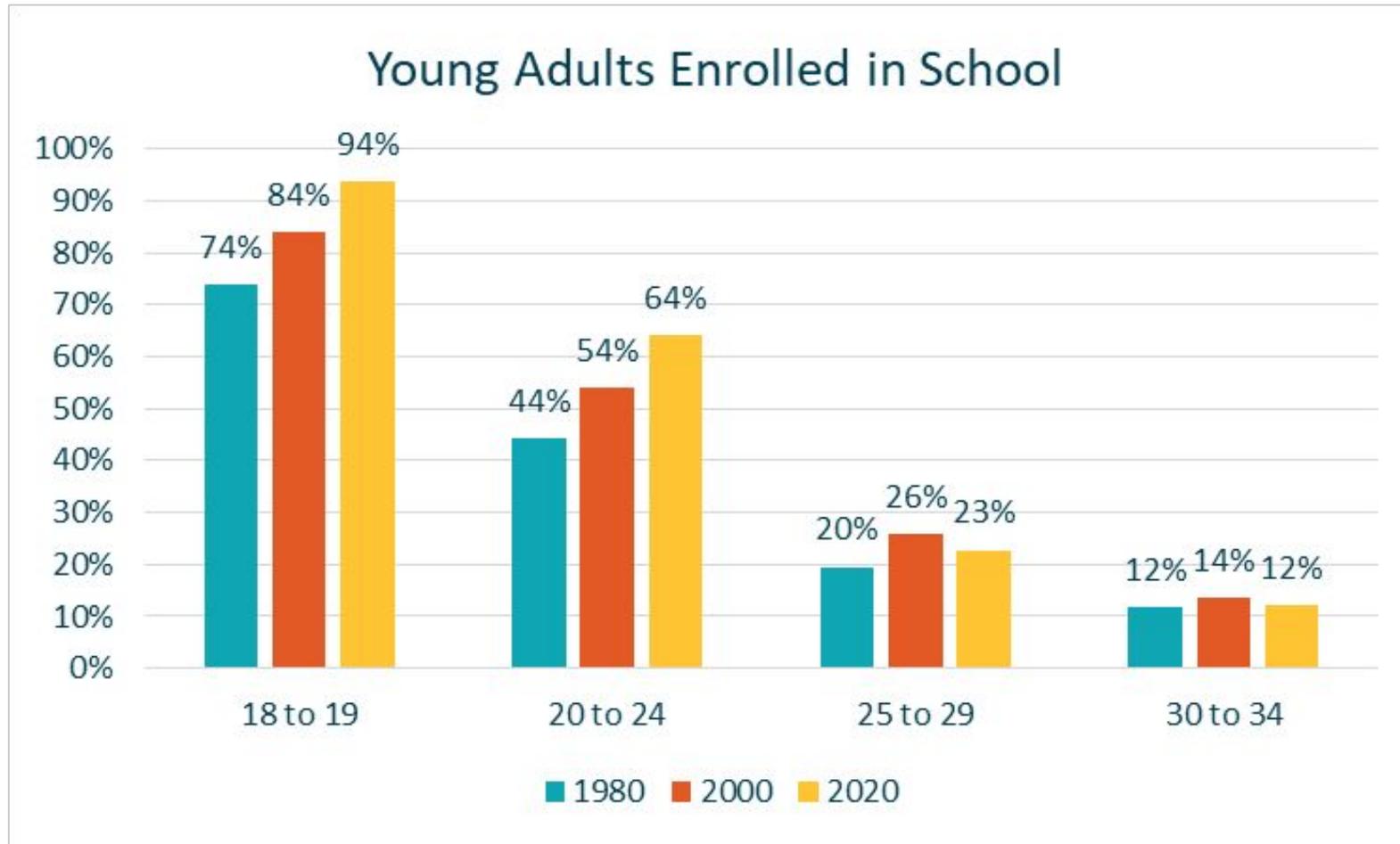


02. Education



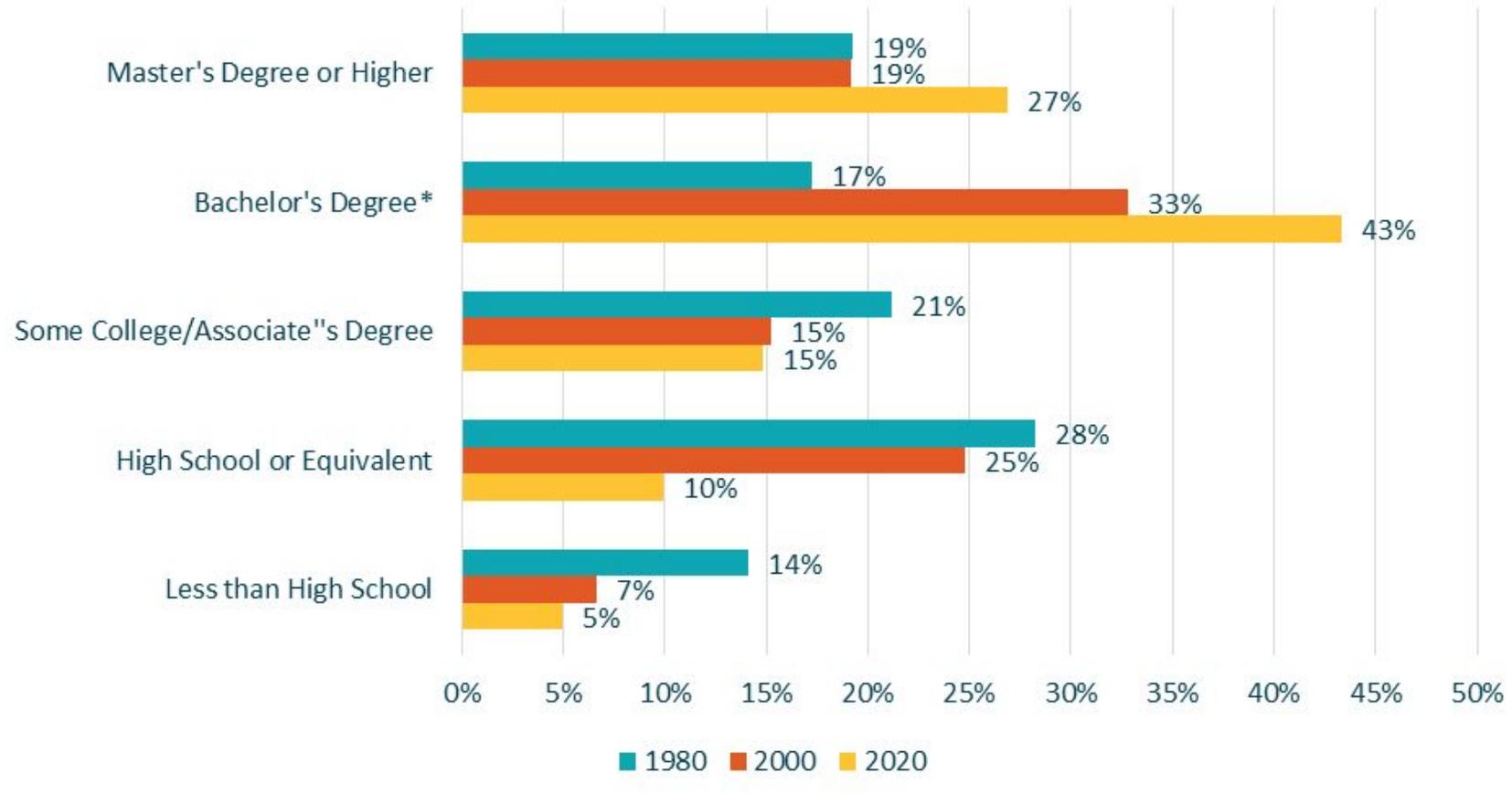
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School Enrollment for young adults aged 18-19 has increased from 74% in 1980 to 94% in 2020



Young adults are more formally educated than in the past; 70% of young adults (25-34) have an advanced degree in 2020

Educational Attainment for 25-34 yr olds, 1980-2020

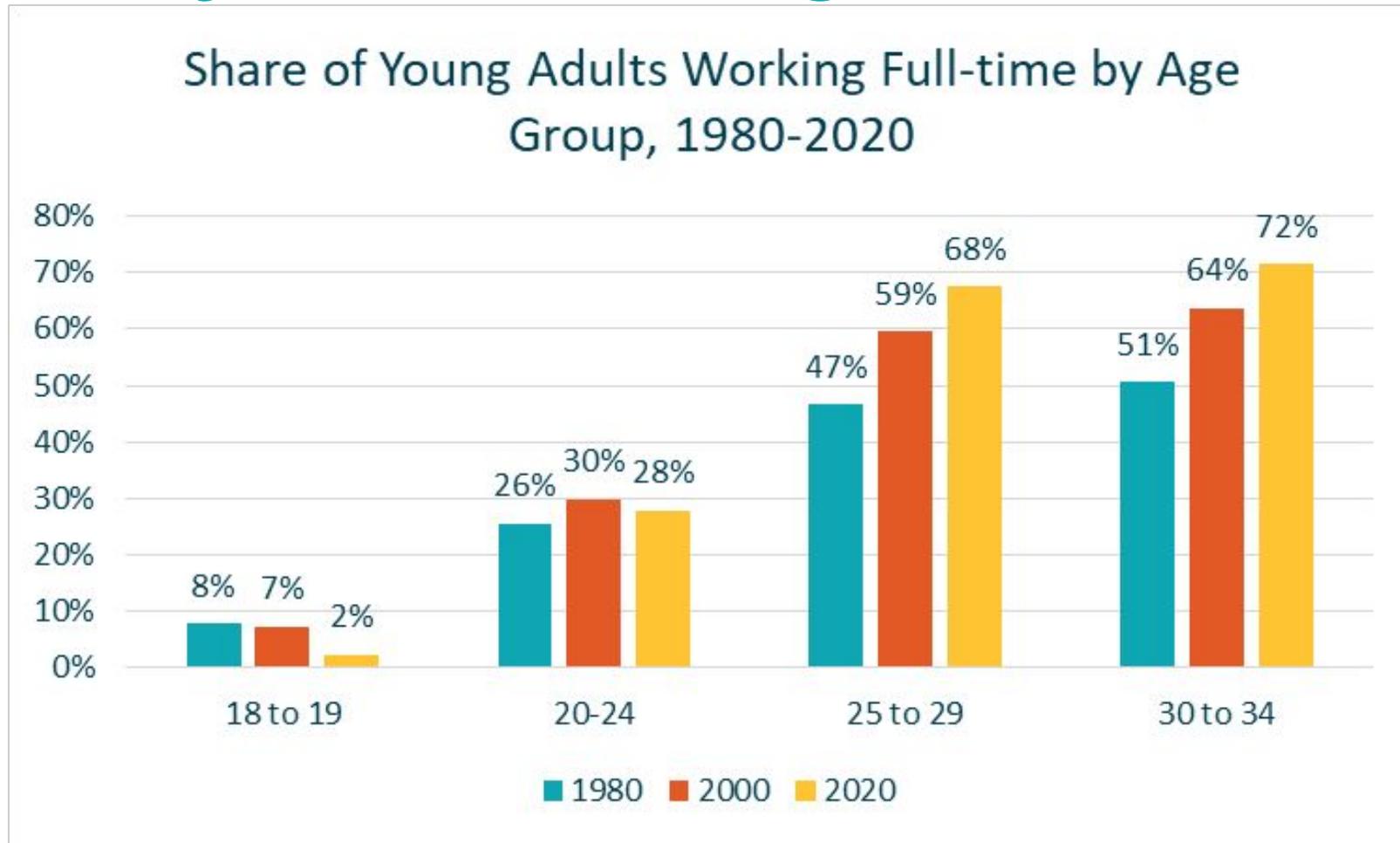


*In 1980, 4 years of undergraduate studies is equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree

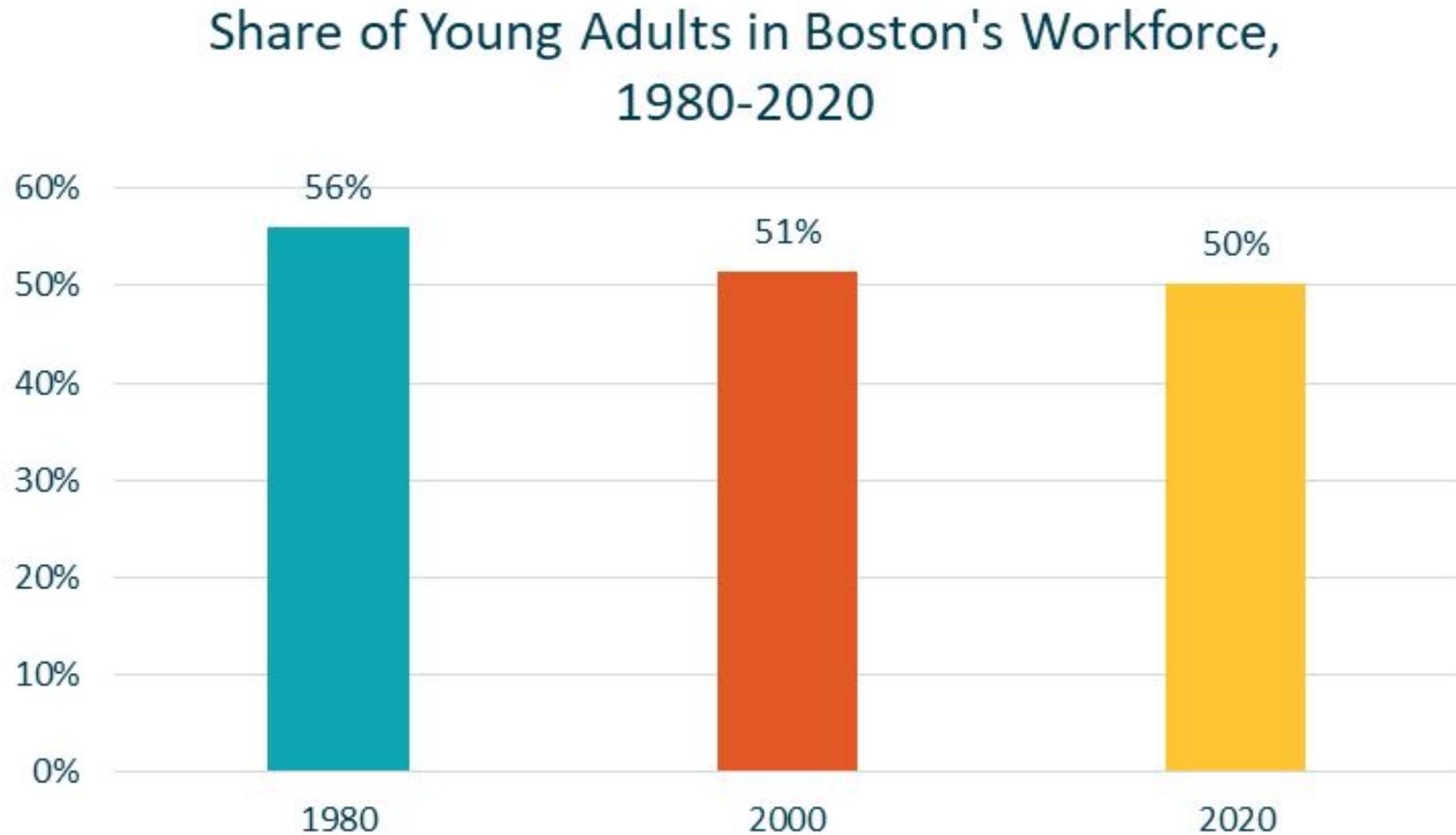
03. Employment & Earnings



Older young adults are more likely to work full time, possibly because of higher education

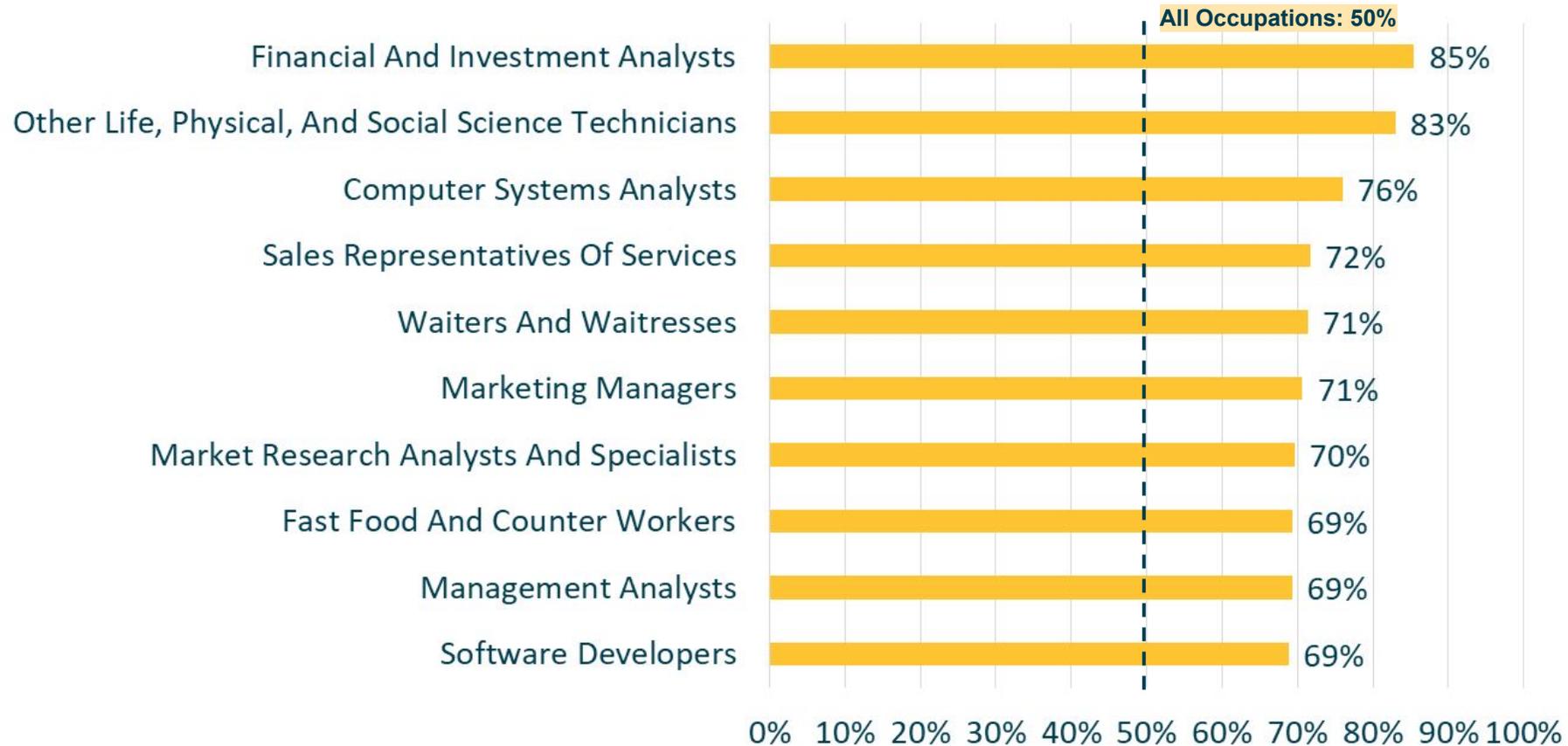


From 1980 through 2020, young adults have made up more than half of Boston resident workers

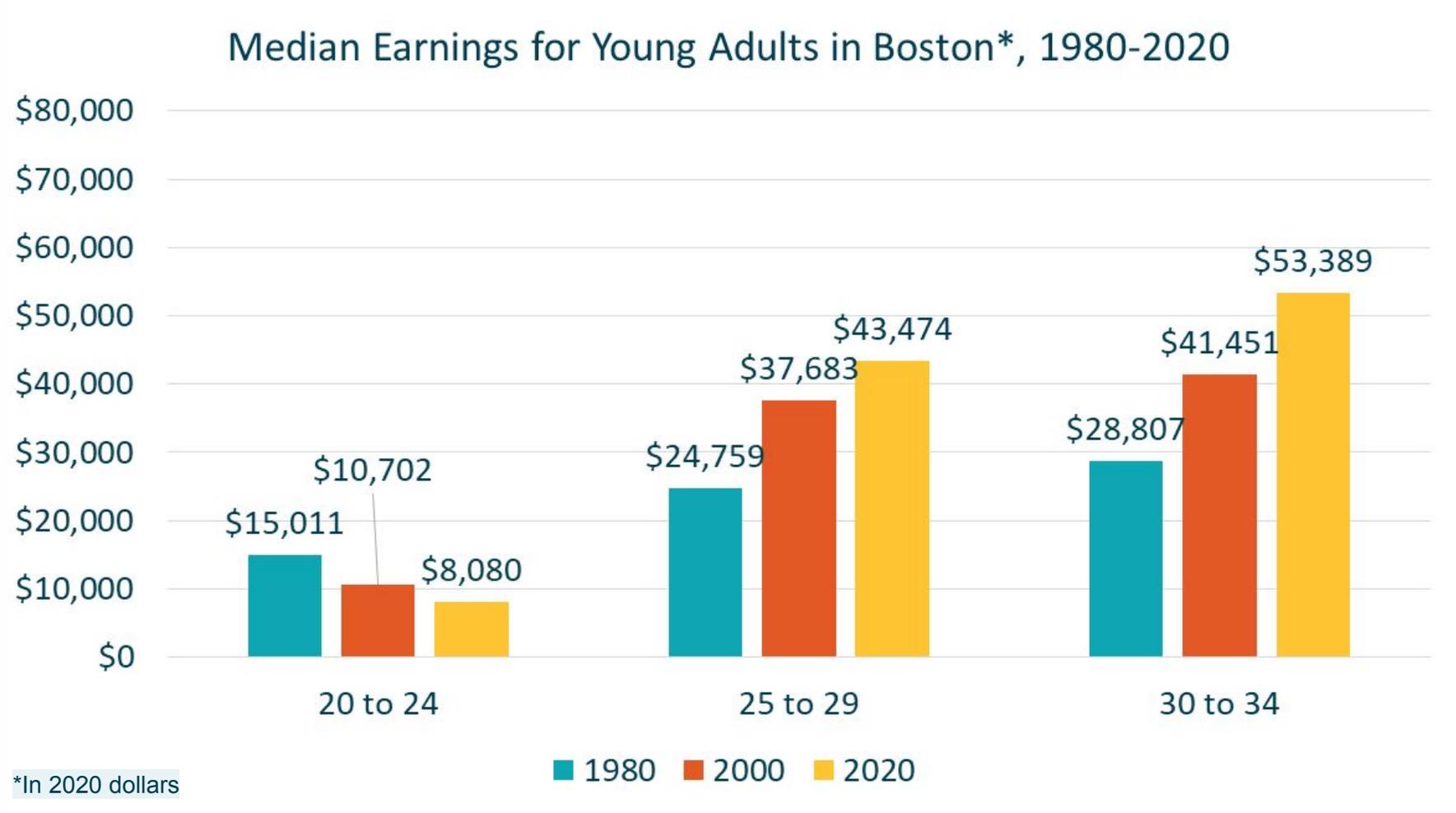


Young adults are overrepresented in computer and finance occupations as well as food service

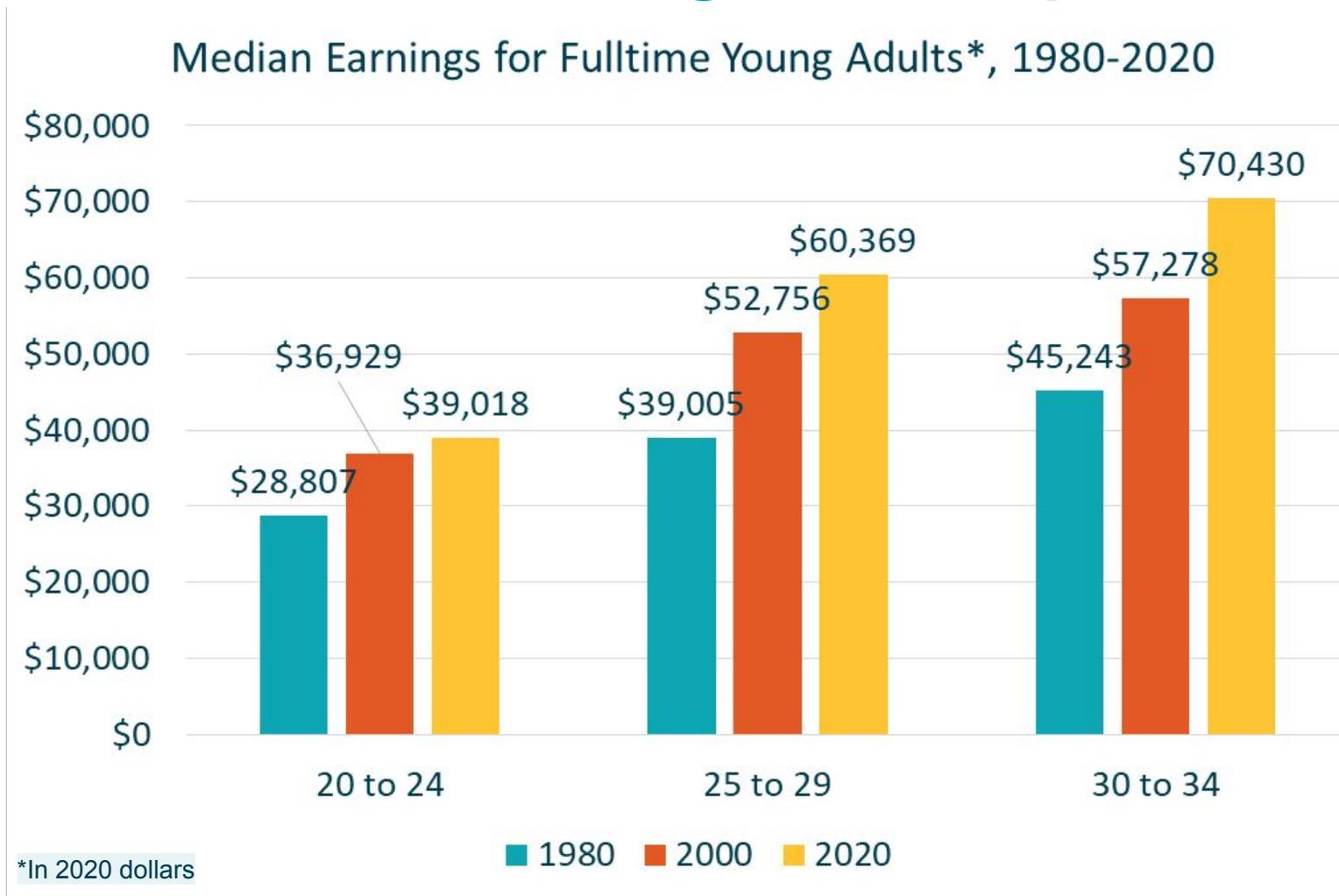
Top Detailed Occupations with Largest Share of Young Adults*, 2020



Adjusting for inflation, young adults 25-34 earn more on average in 2020 than in previous decades



Among full-time, full-year workers, young adults aged 20-24 also earn more on average than in previous decades

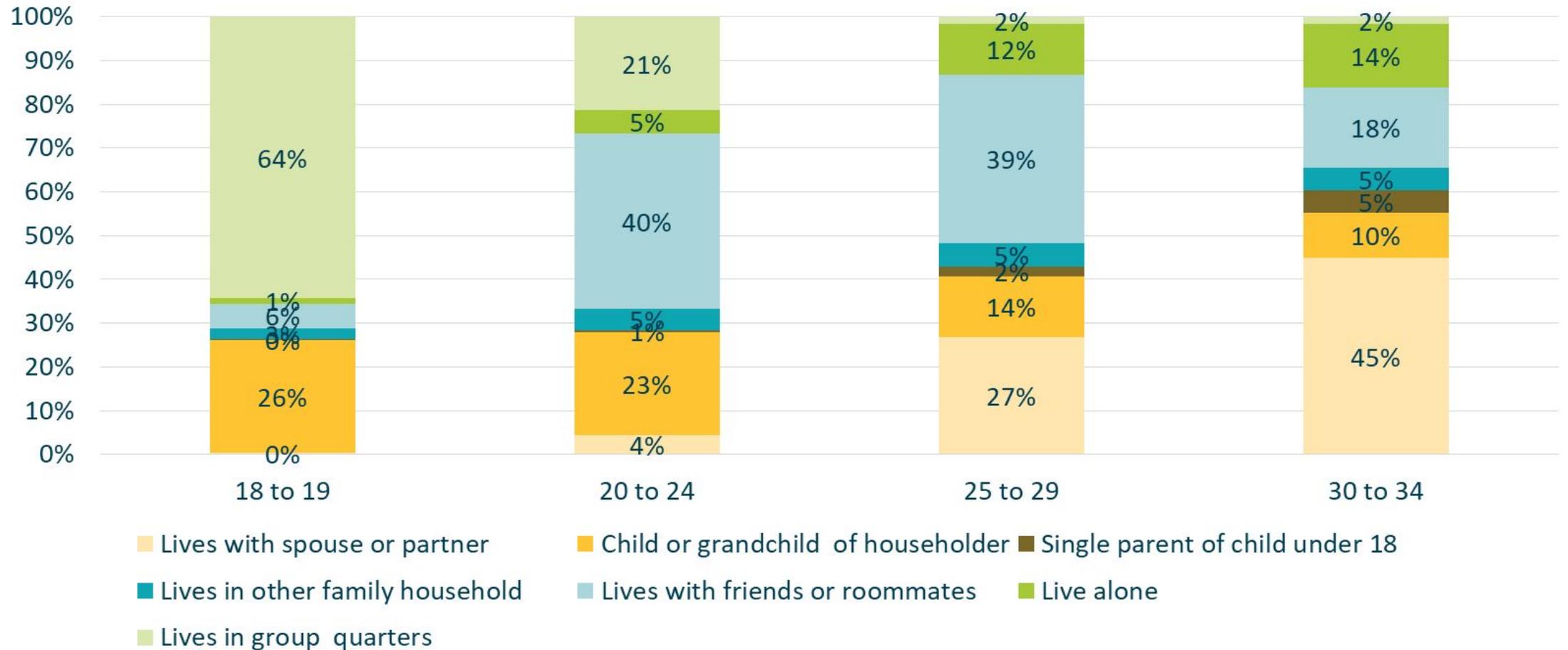


04. Family/Household Structure



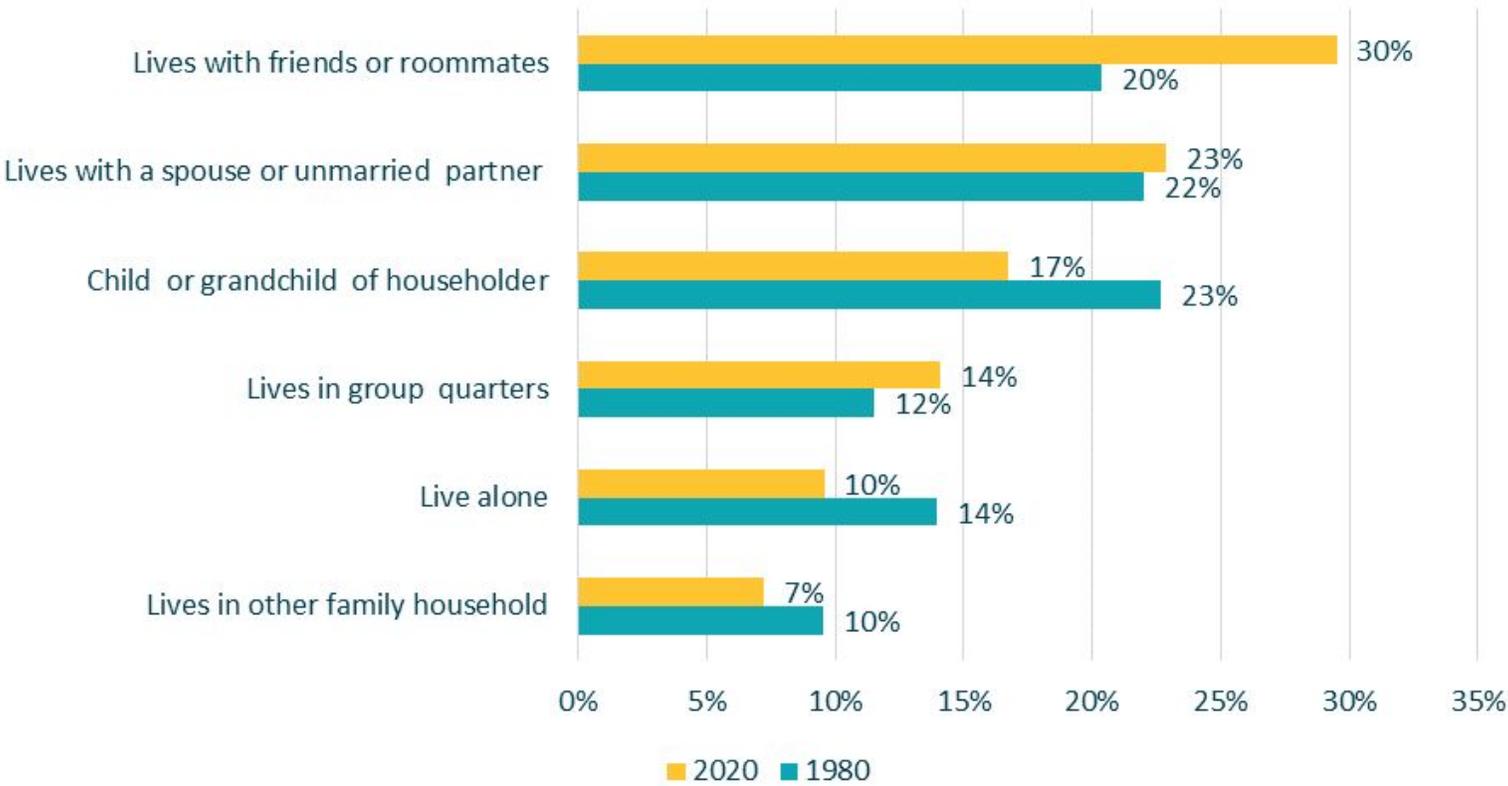
18-19 year olds commonly live in dorms, while 20-29 year olds live with roommates and 30-34 year olds live with a romantic partner

Household Type by Age Group in Boston

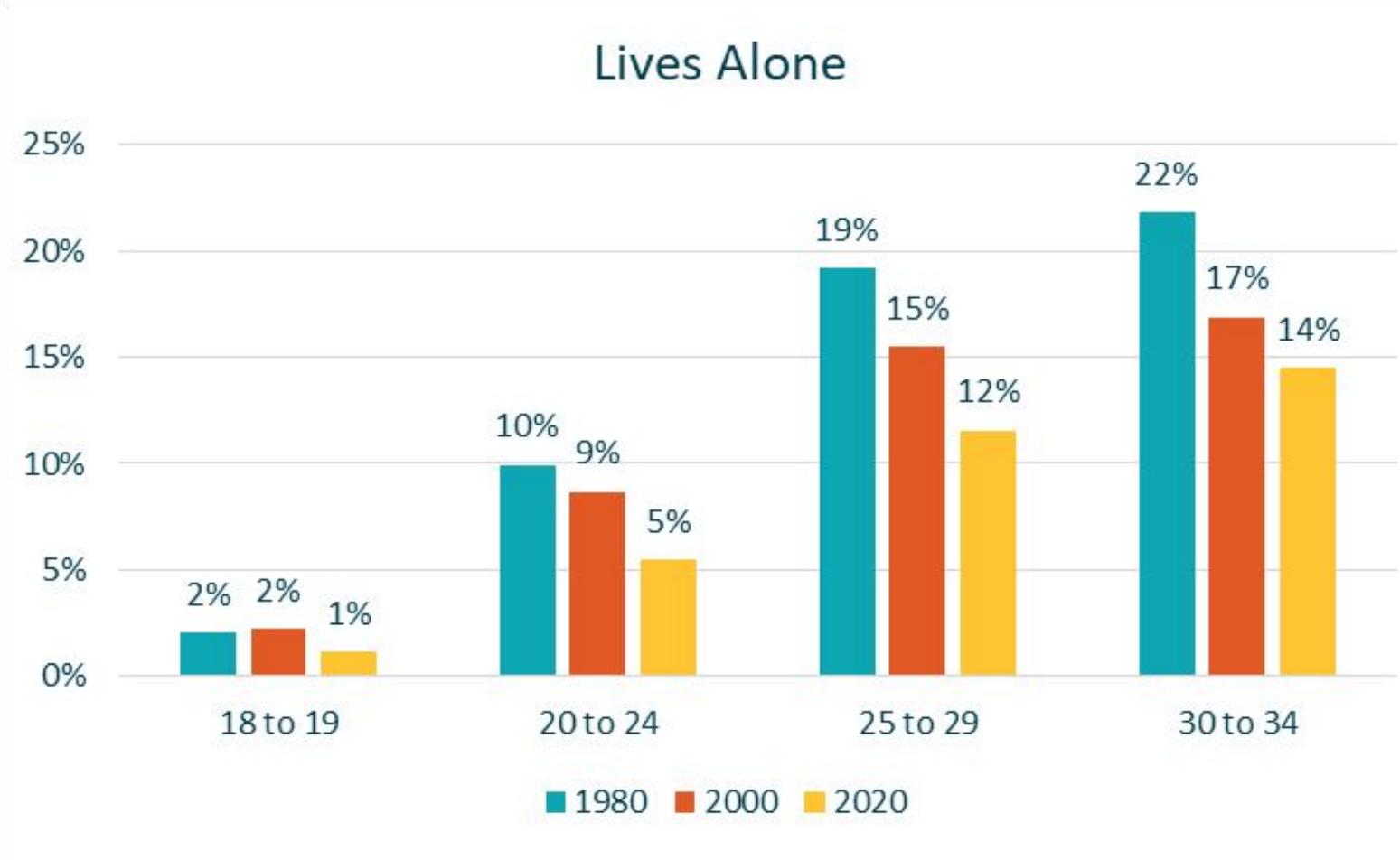


In 2020, young adults are more likely to live with friends or roommates while in 1980 young adults were more likely to be child or grandchild of the householder.

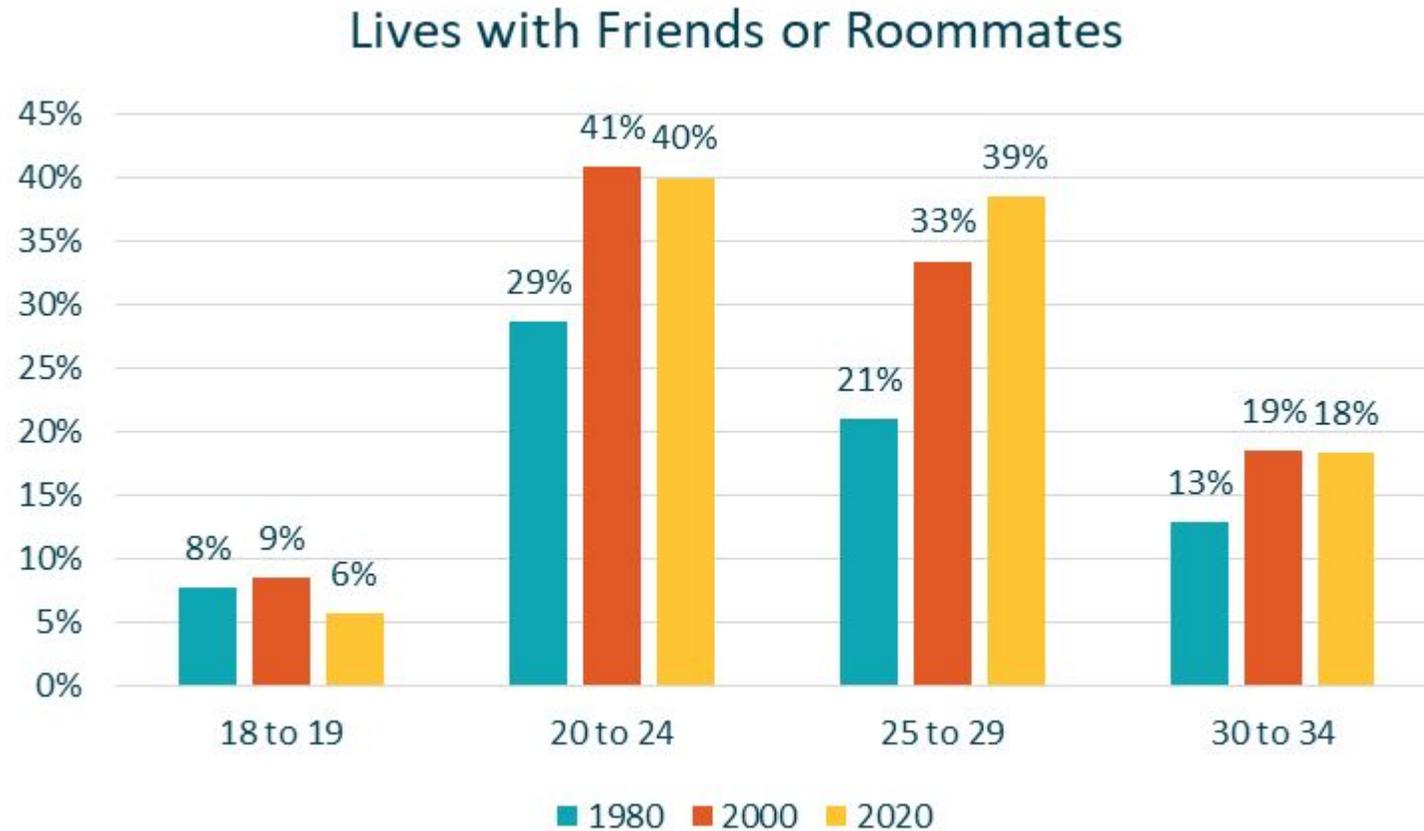
Household Type, 1980 vs 2020



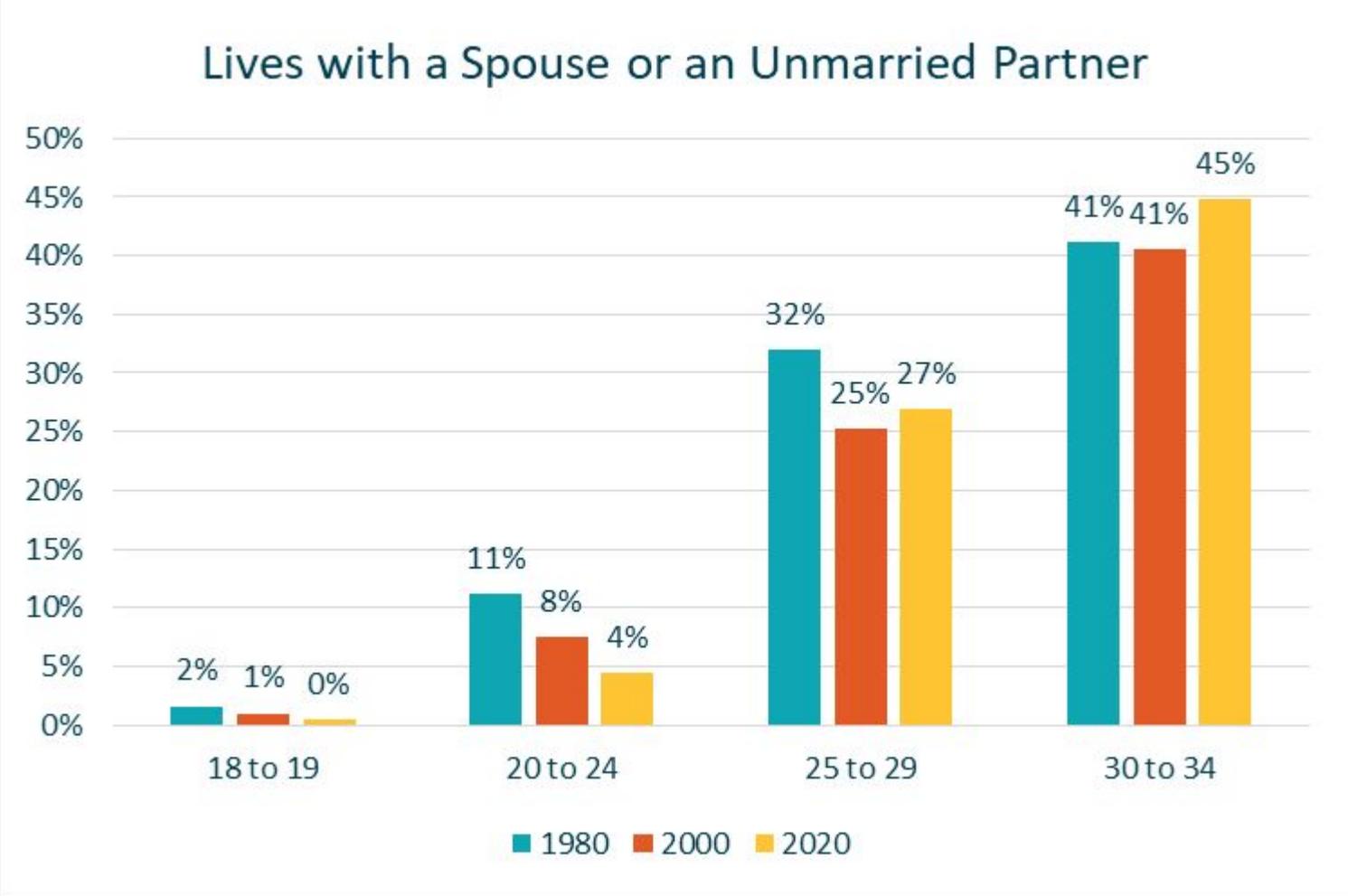
Young adults are less likely to live alone than in previous decades: 14% of 30-34 year olds lived alone in 2020 compared to 22% in 1980



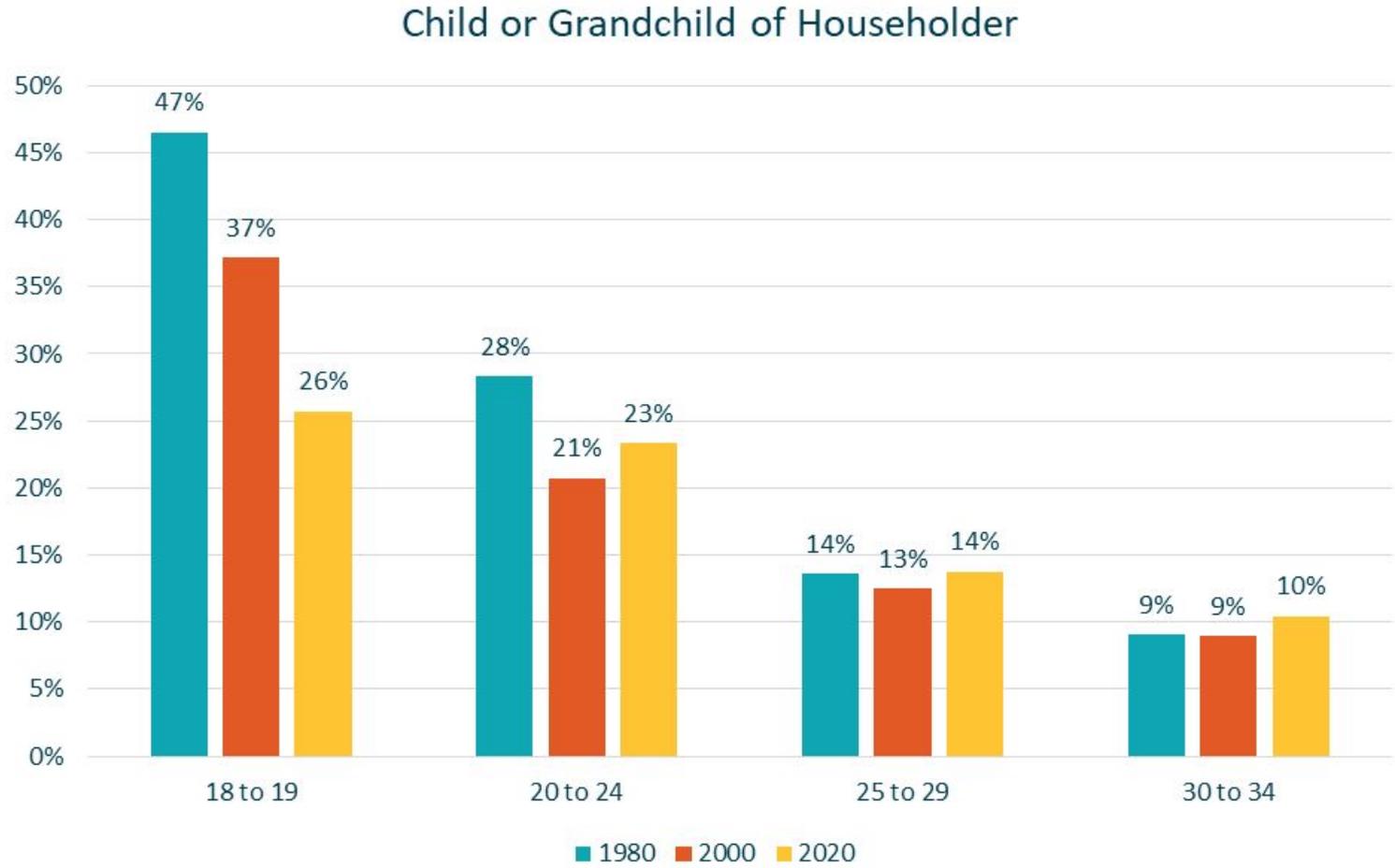
Young adults are more likely to live with friends or roommates: 39% of 25 to 29 year olds in 2020 live with friends or roommates compared to 21% in 1980



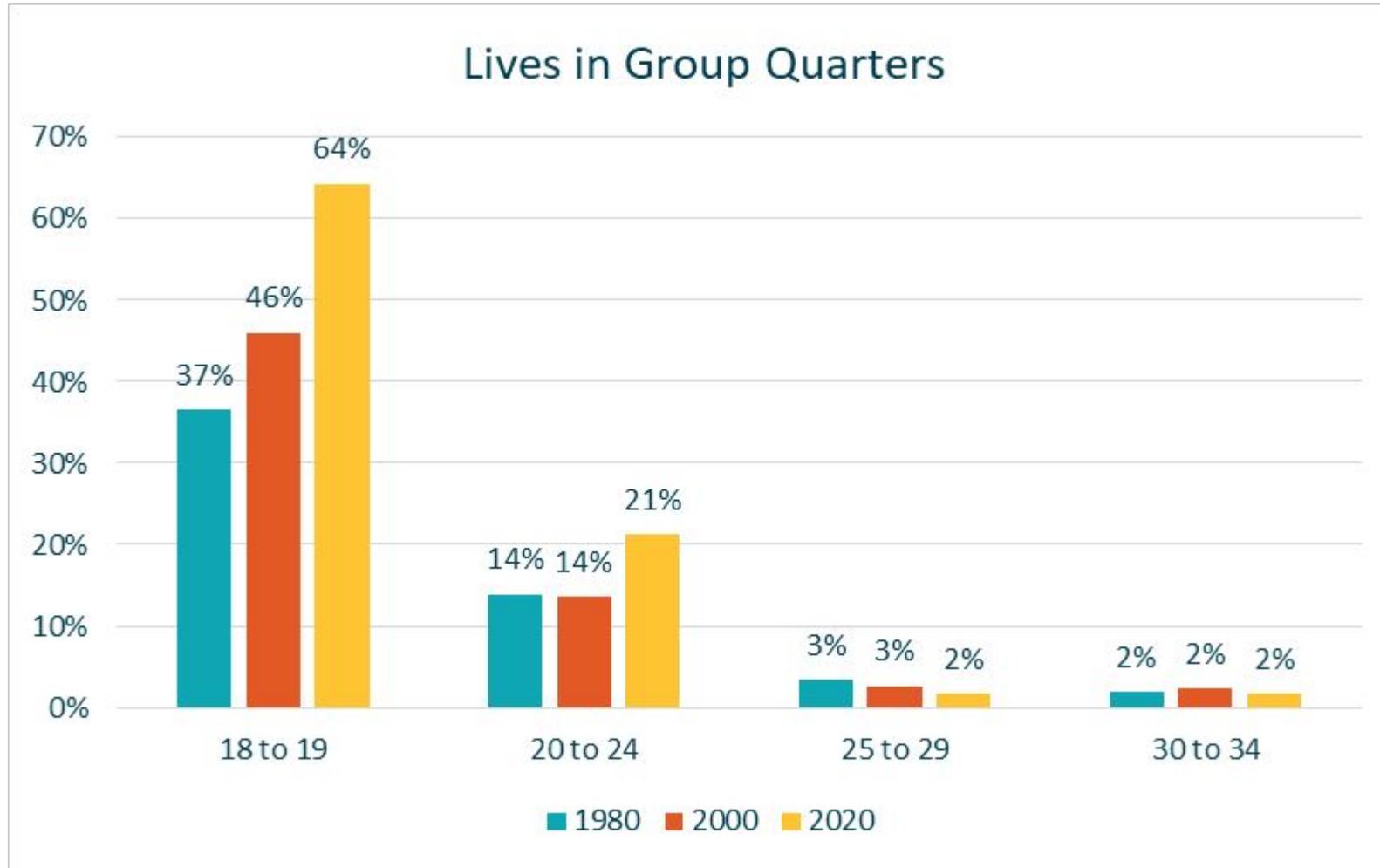
Young adults under 30 are less likely to live with a spouse or unmarried partner, but in their 30s young adults are more likely to live with a partner



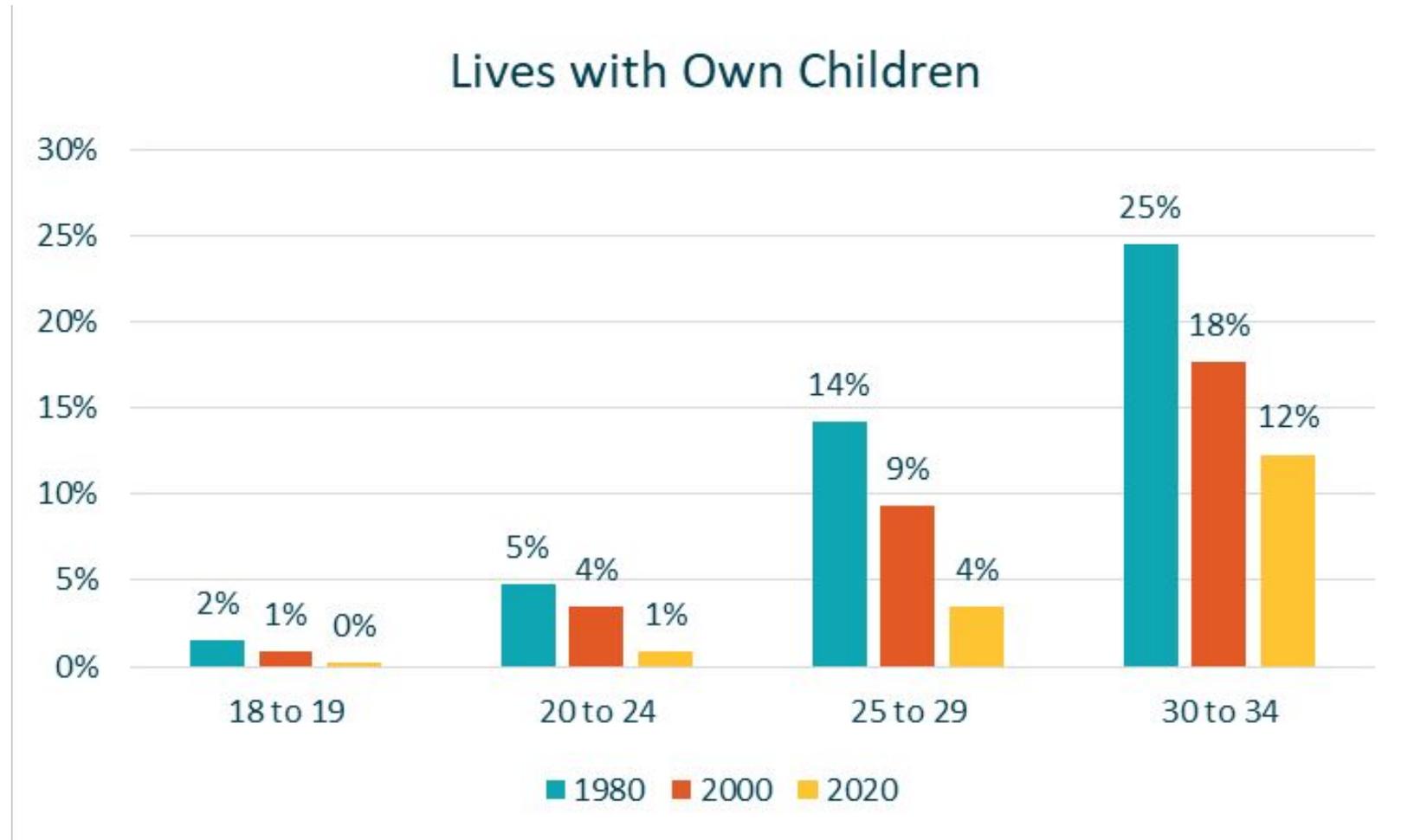
Almost half of 18-19 year olds in 1980 lived with a parent or grandparent as opposed to just 26% in 2020



With increased college enrollment, 64% of 18-19 year olds live in group quarters (dorms)



Young adults are less likely to have children than in previous decades: only 12% of 30-34 year olds have children at home in 2020 - half the rate of 1980

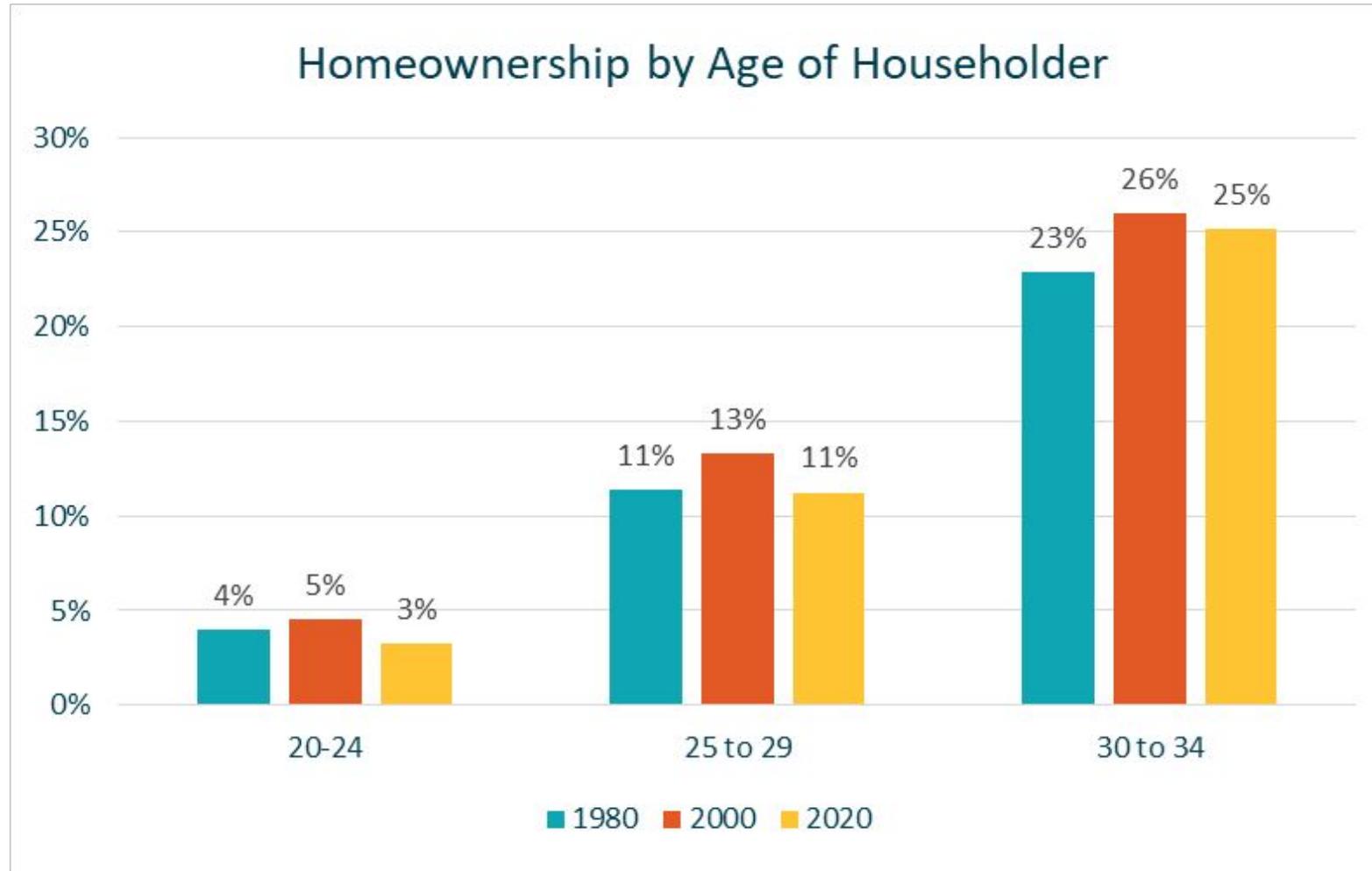


05. Housing

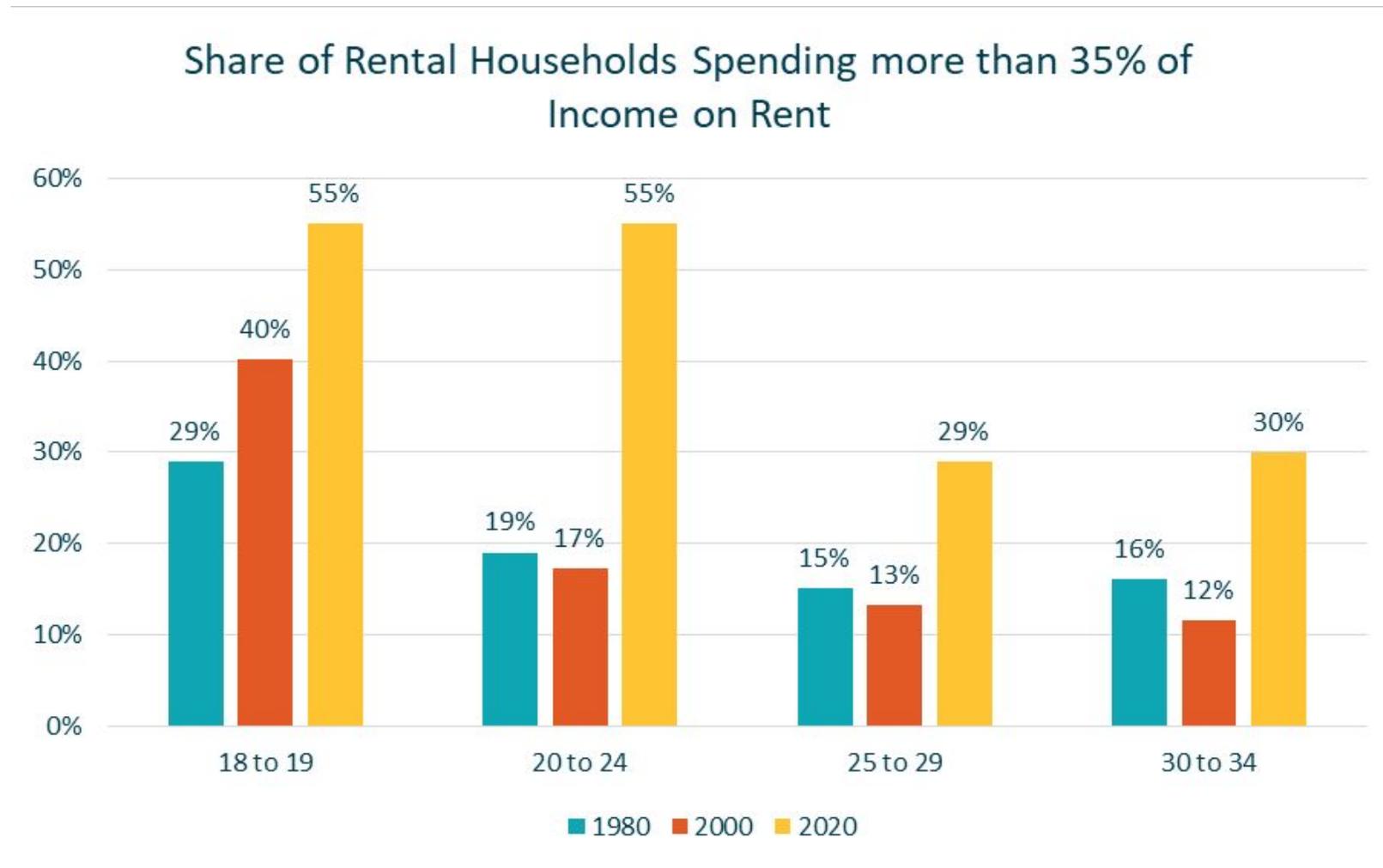


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Homeownership increases with age, but has remained low among young adults through the decades

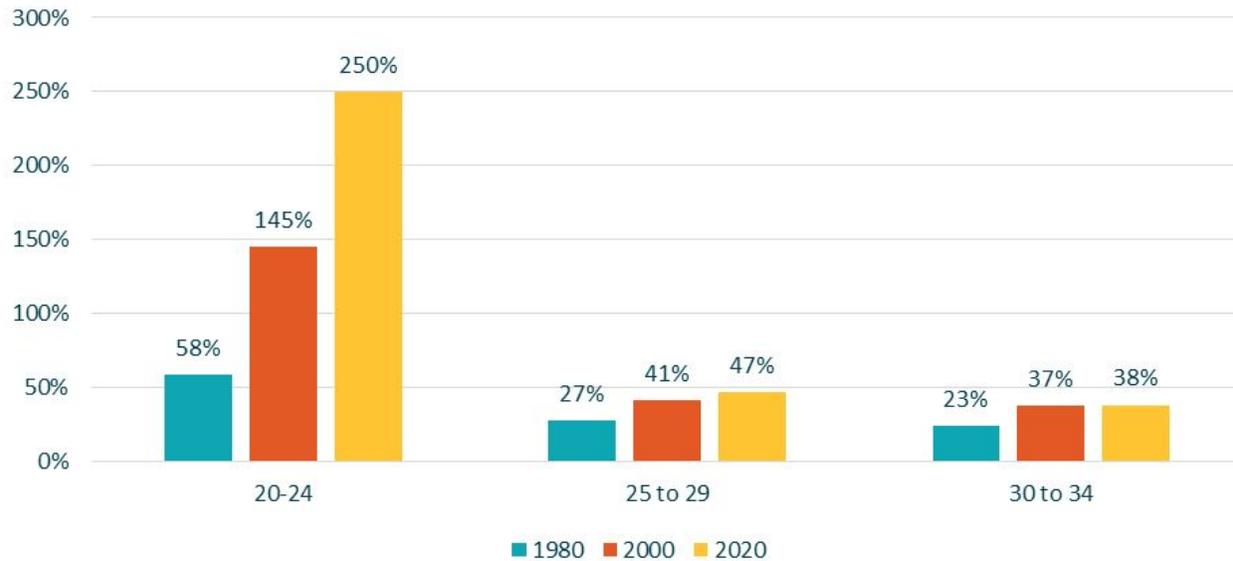


Rental Cost Burden has increased significantly over the years

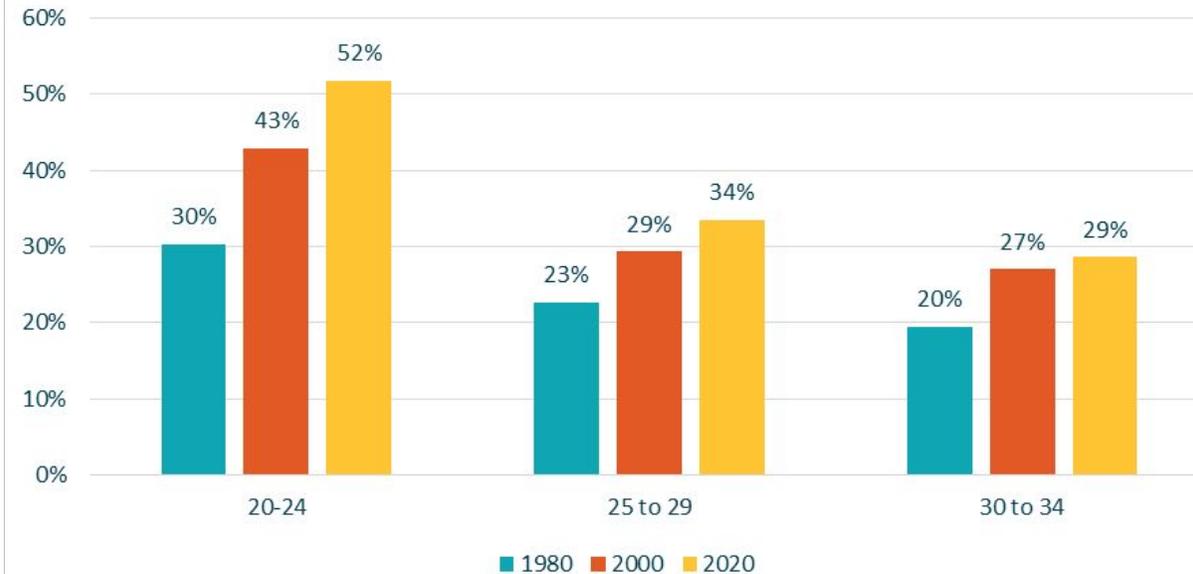


The median rent for a 1-bedroom is 52% of the median monthly earnings for a 20-24 year old working full-time in 2020, up from 30% in 1980

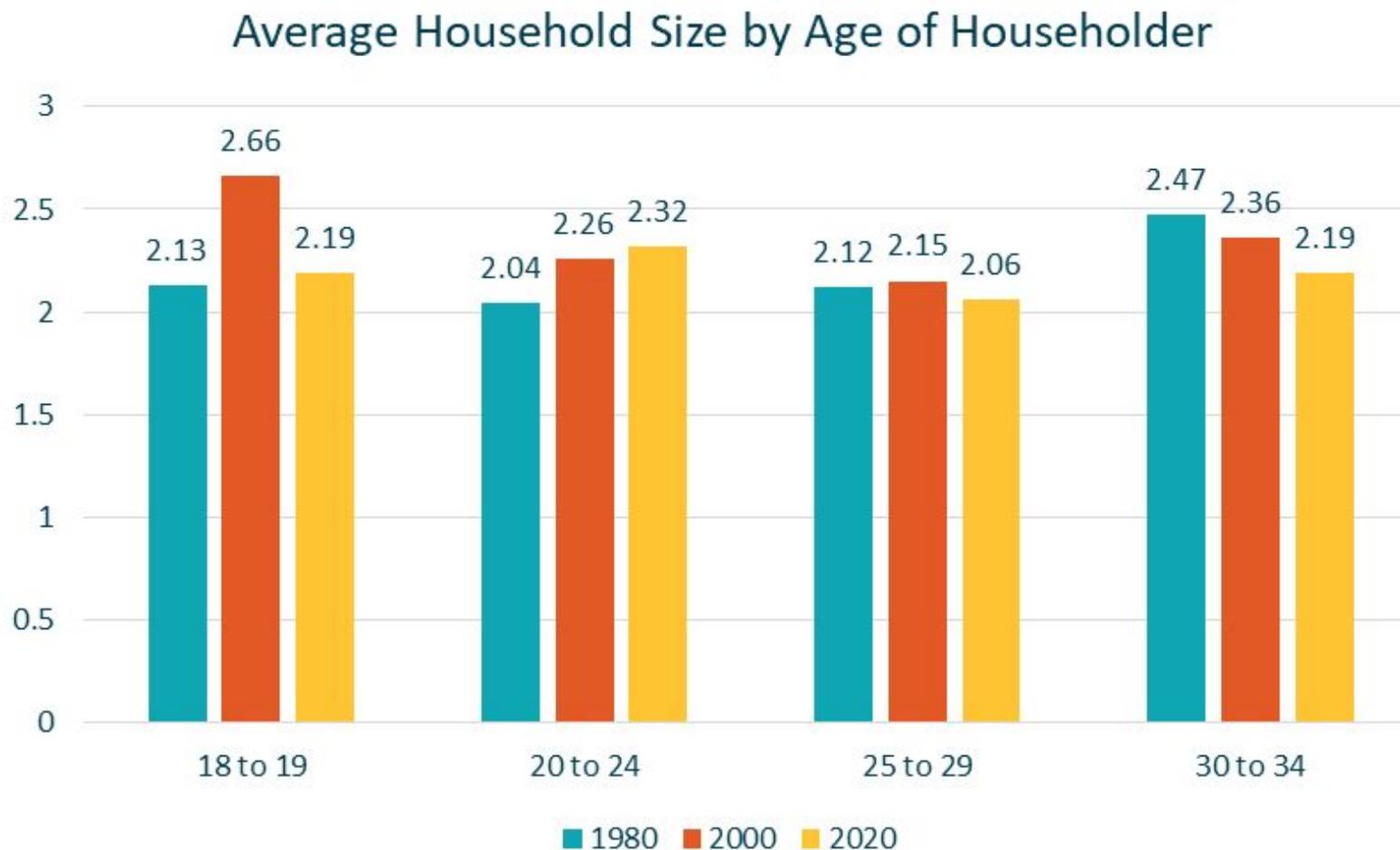
Median Personal Income Relative to Median One-Bedroom Rent



Median Personal Income Relative to Median One-Bedroom Rent- Full time status



Average Household Size in 2020 for 30-34 year olds has decreased from 1980



Implications & Questions for Policy and Planning



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Young Adults of 2020 compared to prior generations

- Higher rates of school enrollment and higher educational attainment
- Higher incomes
- However, housing costs have risen faster than incomes
- More living in dorms or with roommates
- Fewer living alone
- Fewer having children