



Center for Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies

Mexicans in New York City, 2007: An Update*

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* Note: This report is an update of the Latino Data Project study *Mexicans in New York City, 1990–2005* available on the CLALCS website at the following web address:

[http://web.gc.cuny.edu/lastudies/latinodataprojectreports/Mexicans in New York City 1990 - 2005.pdf](http://web.gc.cuny.edu/lastudies/latinodataprojectreports/Mexicans%20in%20New%20York%20City%201990%20-%202005.pdf)



Latino Data Project - Report 26 - December 2008

The Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies is a research institute that works for the advancement of the study of Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latinos in the United States in the doctoral programs at the CUNY Graduate Center. One of its major priorities is to provide funding and research opportunities to Latino students at the Ph.D. level.

The Center established and helps administer an interdisciplinary specialization in Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies in the Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies program.

The Latino Data Project was developed with the goal of making information available on the dynamically growing Latino population of the United States and especially New York City through the analysis of extant data available from a variety of sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Institute for Health, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and state and local-level data sources.

All Latino Data Project reports are available at <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/lastudies/>

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The Mexican-origin population of New York City continued its extraordinary growth between 2005 and 2007 increasing by just over 27%, from 227,842 to 289,755 persons according to American Community Survey data for 2007 released by the U.S. Census Bureau. From 2000, the Mexican population the City has risen by an extraordinary 57.7%. If yearly population growth among all of the City’s Latino national subgroups continues at 2000-2007 rates, Mexicans will become New York City’s largest Latino nationality in 2024, although there are no guarantees that these population growth rates will continue into the future. (See Figure 1).

Mexican population expansion was fueled by continuing large-scale migration to New York City as well as extraordinarily high birth-rates among Mexican women already resident in the City. These are indicated in figure 2 on page 4. Foreign-born Mexicans rose by about 26% between 2005 and 2007 while the domestic-born sector of the Mexican population increased by 29%. In total some 63% of all Mexican-origin persons living in the city were foreign-born in 2007; 37% were domestic-born.

Figure 1
Population Projections Among New York City Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Mexicans
based on Yearly Population Growth Rates 2000 - 2007

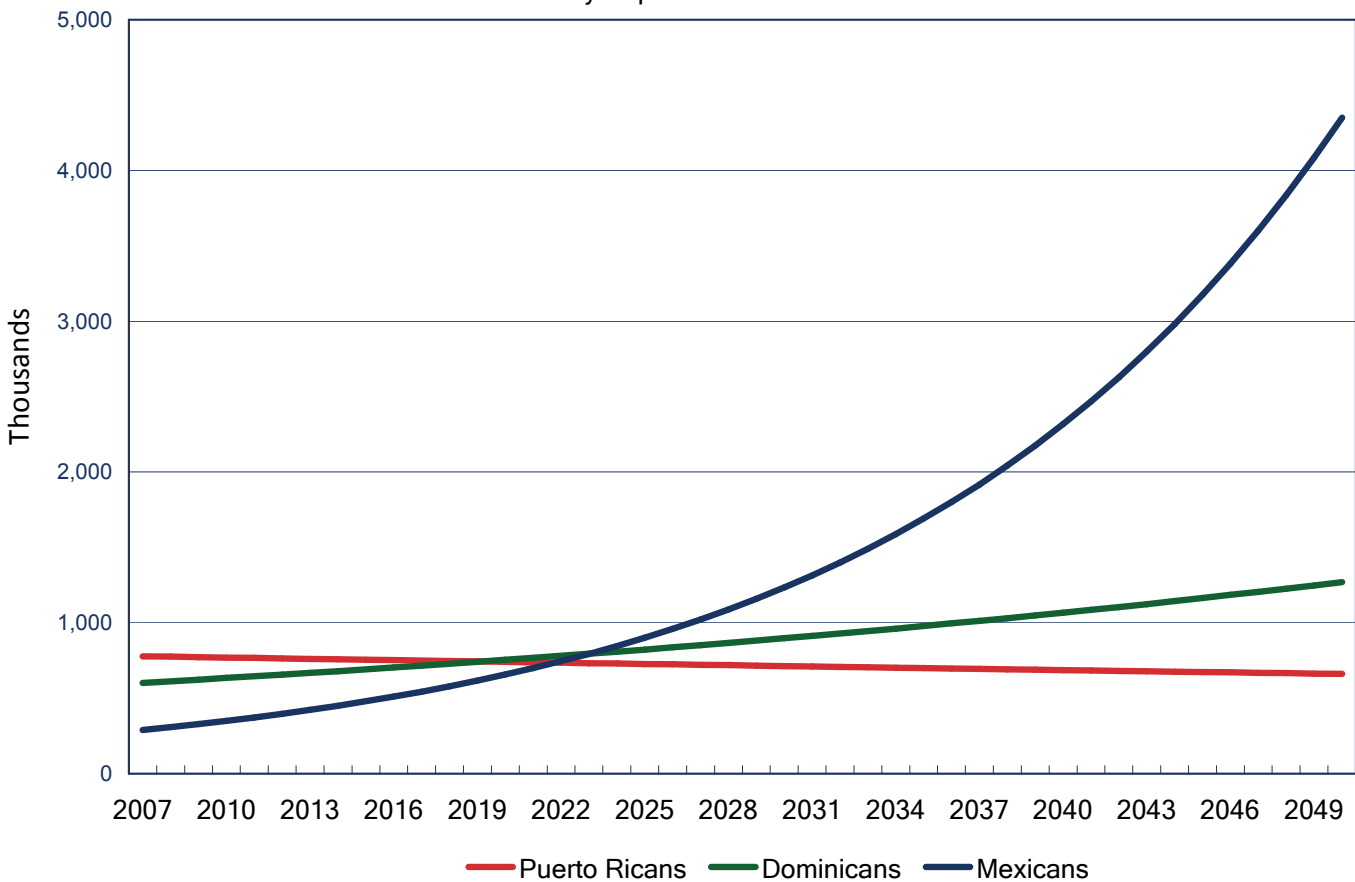
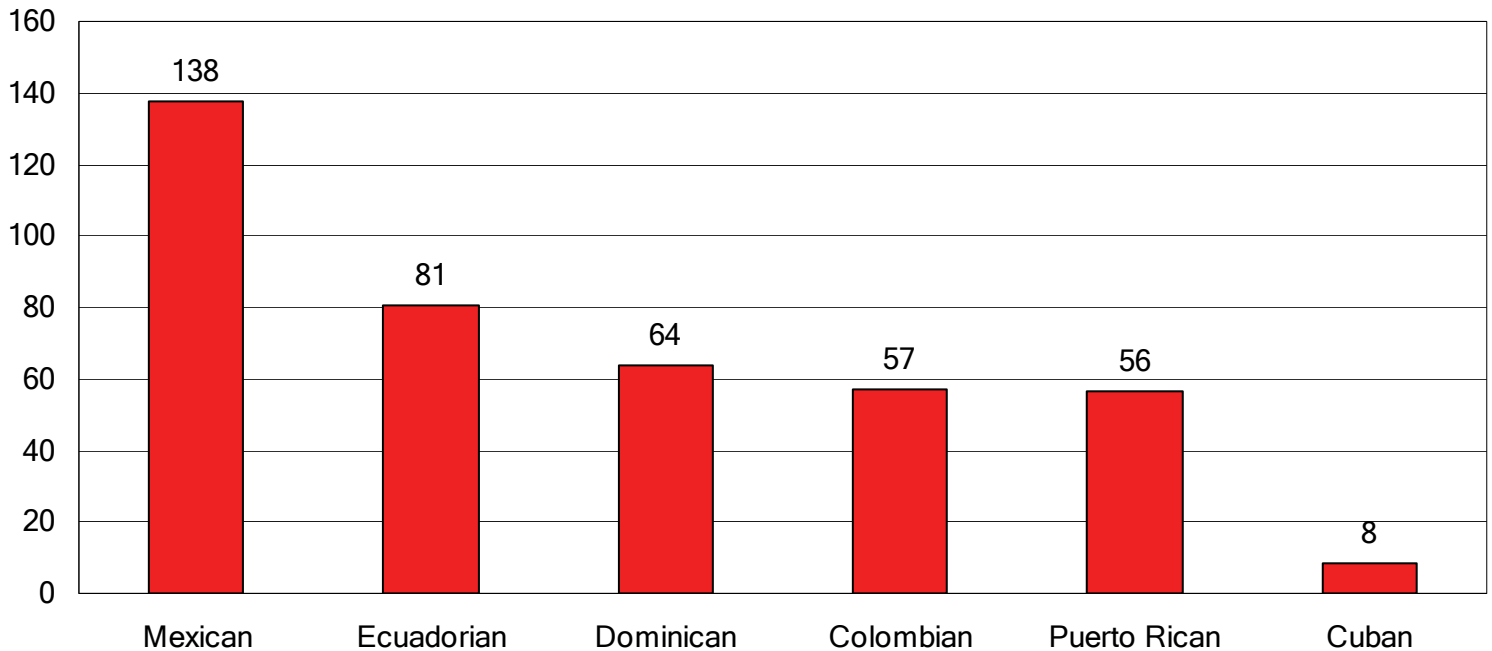


Figure 2
Birth Rates Among Selected Latino Nationalities in New York City, 2006
(number of live births per 1,000 women ages 15-44)

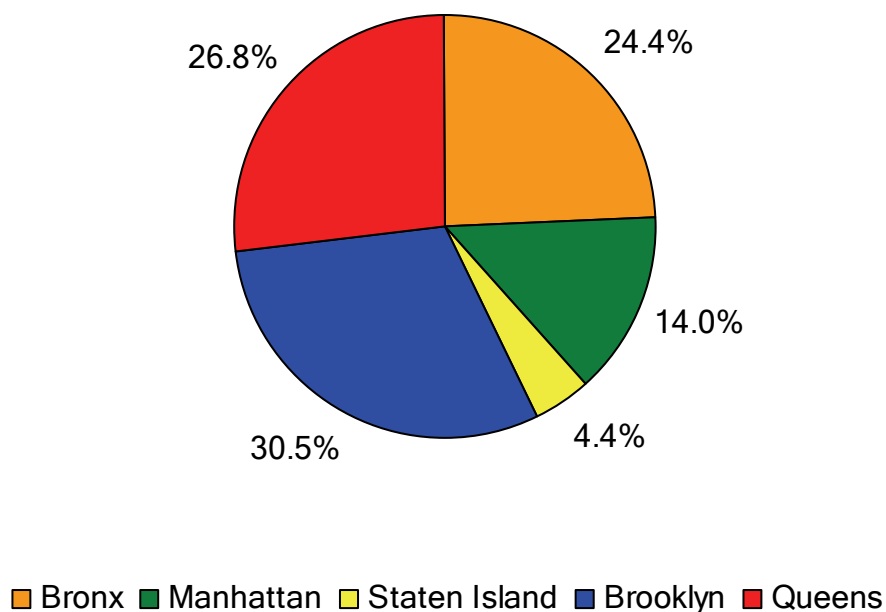


Over 80% of all Mexican-origin persons lived in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, and this had not changed substantially from 2000. There was also not much variation in the percentage of foreign or domestic-born persons in each borough in 2007. (See Table 1 and Figure 3).

Table 1
Distribution of the Mexican Population of New York City by Borough and Foreign Born/
Domestic Born, 2007

Borough	Population	%	Foreign Born	Domestic Born	% Foreign Born	% Domestic Born
Bronx	70,622	24%	43,474	27,148	62%	38%
Manhattan	40,458	14%	26,148	14,310	65%	35%
Staten Island	12,687	4%	8,021	4,666	63%	37%
Brooklyn	88,259	30%	52,800	35,459	60%	40%
Queens	77,729	27%	51,874	25,855	67%	33%
Total	289,755	100%	182,317	107,438	63%	37%

Figure 3
 Mexican Population Distribution by New York City Borough, 2007
 (in percentages)



Mexican median household income surpassed the incomes of Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in 2007, but was significantly lower than income levels among Colombians, Cubans, and Ecuadorians. (See Figure 4). This is a somewhat surprising finding since Mexicans are New York City’s most recently arrived national group. Data on employment and the number of families living in each household suggest two fundamental reasons for this. First, Mexicans had a higher percentage of its population between the ages of 16 and 60 which was employed (67%) compared with Puerto Ricans (53%) and Dominicans (59%). (See Figure 5). Second, Mexicans had a significantly greater number of families living in each household (an average of 1.47 families/household) than the other Latino nationalities. (See Figure 6). This meant that household incomes among Mexicans were determined by the collective incomes of more wage earners than found among the other Latino sub-groups.

Figure 4
Median Household Income Among New York City Latino Nationalities, 2007

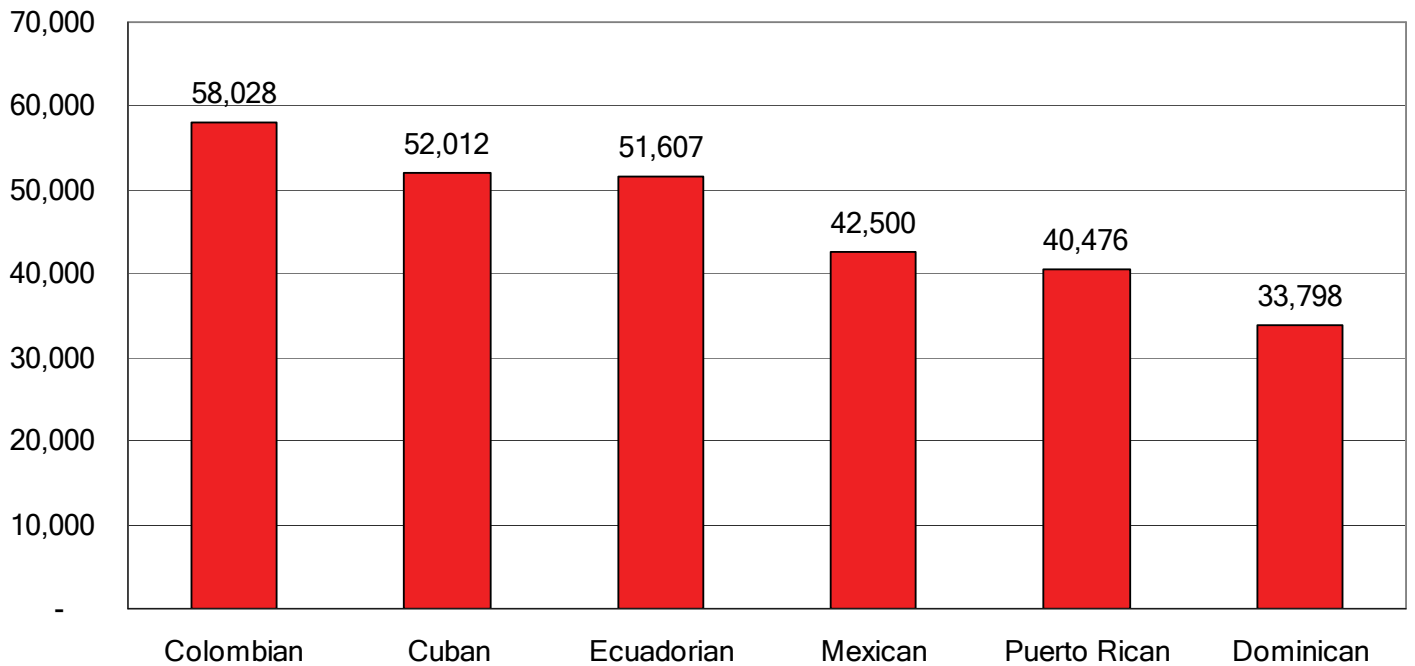


Figure 5
Percentage of New York City Population Ages 16-60 who were Employed by Latino Nationality, 2007

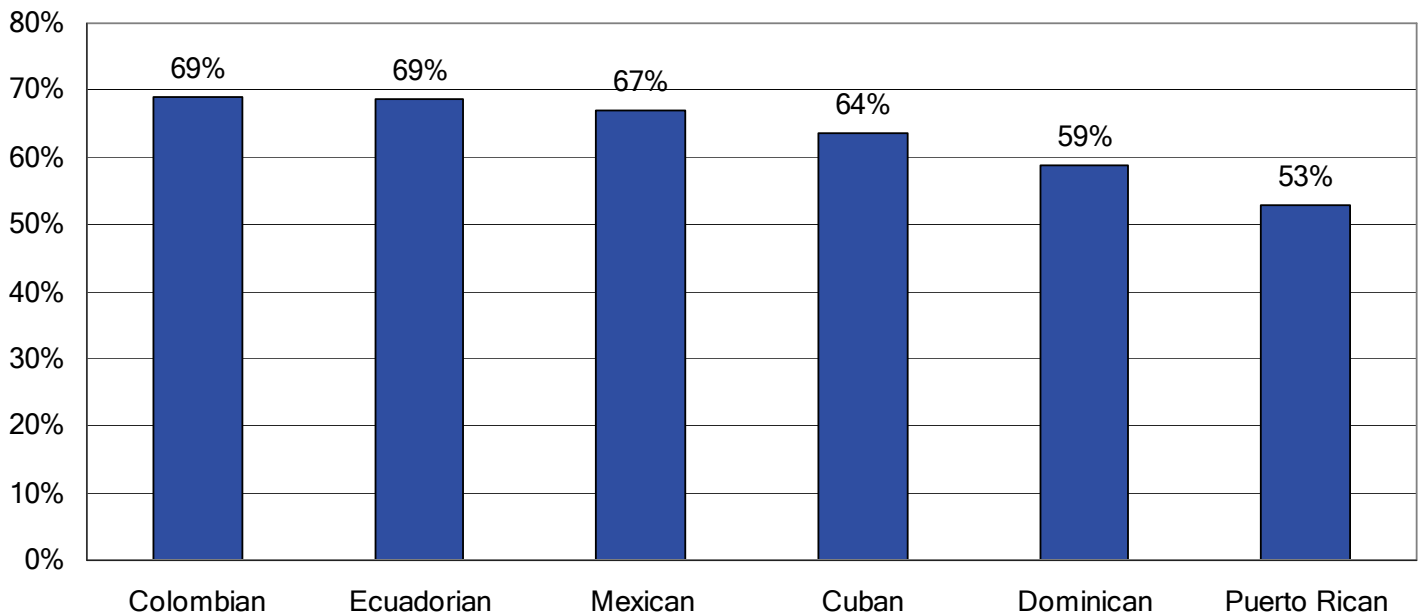
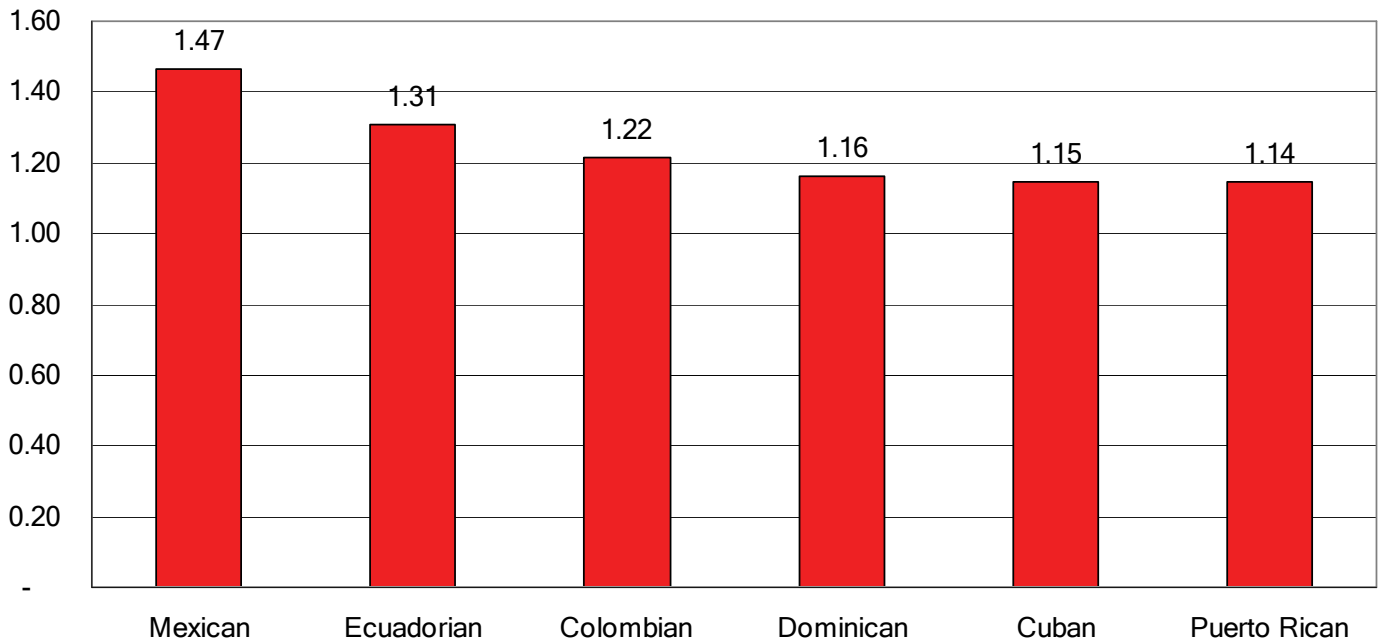


Figure 6
Average Family Size per Household among New York City Latino Nationalities, 2007



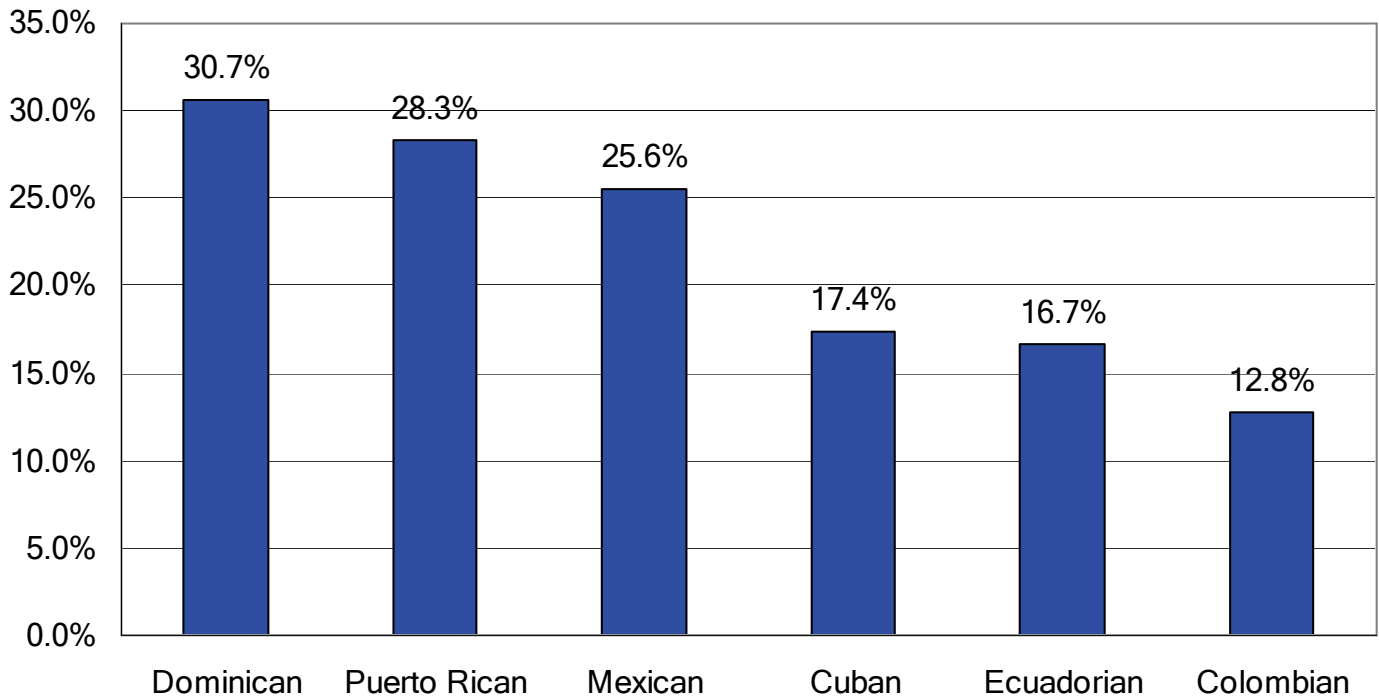
If we examine household income structures, Mexicans exhibit the same kind of social and economic stratification found among other Latino national groups. About 15% of all Mexican households earned less than \$20,000 per year according to the 2007 data. But at the other extreme of the income-earning hierarchy, over 23% of all Mexican households earned more than \$75,000 yearly. These upper end income-earning Mexican households controlled nearly 57% of all Mexican total income. Those households earning under \$20,000 yearly accounted for only 2.7% of all income derived by Mexican households. (See Table 2 for the complete household income distribution structure data).

Table 2
 Estimate of Household Income Distribution Structure
 Mexicans in New York City, 2007

Income Category	% Households	% Income
Less than 10,000	5.5%	0.5%
10,000-19,999	9.6%	2.1%
20,000-29,999	13.1%	4.9%
30,000-39,999	18.1%	9.7%
40,000-49,999	11.6%	8.0%
50,000-74,999	18.9%	18.2%
75,000-99,999	11.6%	15.1%
100,000 - 199,999	8.4%	16.3%
200,000 +	3.2%	25.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Median Household Income		\$42,909
Less than 20,000	15.1%	2.7%
More than 75,000	23.2%	56.5%

One other measure of the socioeconomic well-being of Mexicans is the percentage of the population living in poverty. Fewer Mexican-origin persons in New York City lived in poverty in 2007 (26.6%) compared with Dominicans (30.7%) or Puerto Ricans (28.3%); but this was substantially greater than Cubans living in poverty (17.4%), Ecuadorians (16.7%), or Colombians (12.8%). (See Figure 7). The ranking of Mexicans in this hierarchy was similar to the patterns found when considering median household income.

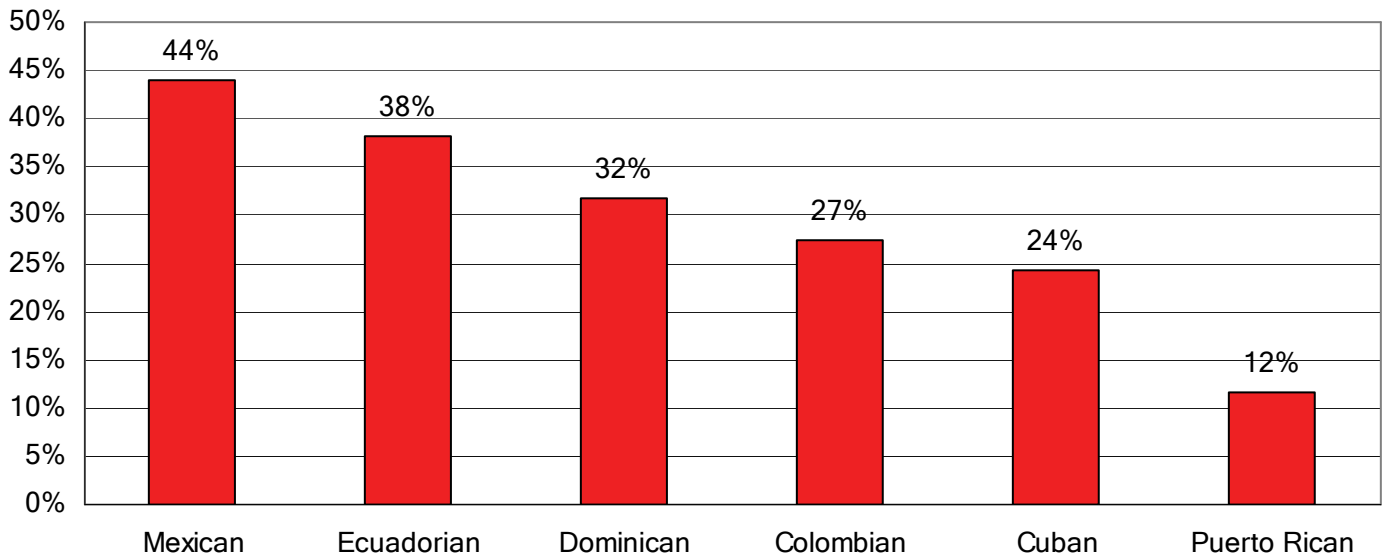
Figure 7
 Percentage of Total Population Living in Poverty in New York City by Latino Nationality, 2007



The New York Mexican-origin community had the poorest developed English-language abilities of any of the Latino nationalities in 2007, as would be expected within a population heavily comprised of foreign-born migrants who arrived fairly recently. About 44% of the Mexican population 5 years of age and older reported not speaking English well or not at all. This compares to 38% of Ecuadorians; 32% of Dominicans; 27% of Colombians; 24% of Cubans; and 12% of Puerto Ricans. (See Figure 8). It may be anticipated that this will change as more Mexicans are born in the U.S. and the foreign-born gradually acquire better English language skills. A correlation between better English language abilities and higher median incomes has been fairly well established.¹

¹ See the Latino Data Project report by Carolina Barrera-Tobón *Latino Language-Use Patterns in New York City, 2005* found at the following internet address: <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/lastudies/latinodataprojectreports/LatinoLanguage-Use Patterns in New York City, 2005.pdf>

Figure 8
 Percentage of New York City Latino Nationalities Reporting Not Speaking English at all or Speaking English Poorly, 2007



When compared with other Latino nationalities, educational attainment patterns among Mexicans in New York City in 2007 were sharply bifurcated. Mexicans had the highest percentage of its adult population 25 years of age and older who did not graduate high school (48.6%) and this was comparable to the second highest nationality, Dominicans, of whom 45% were not high-school graduates. Some 9.2% of adult Mexicans had achieved a B.A. degree or higher, but this was sharply lower than the rate found among all other Latino national groups with the exception of Ecuadorians of whom 8.5% had graduated from college or went on to higher degrees. (See Figure 9 on p. 11).

Each of these socioeconomic indicators among New York Mexicans will inevitably change in subsequent census years. CLACLS will be documenting these as new data are released each year by the American Community Survey in anticipation of the detailed data which will be forthcoming in Census 2010.

Figure 9
 Percentage of Population 25 Years of Age or Older with B.A. degree or Higher and who did not Graduate High School in New York City by Latino Nationality, 2007

