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# A Profile of Latina Women in New York City, 2007

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Center for Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies

## A Profile of Latina Women in New York City, 2007

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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.

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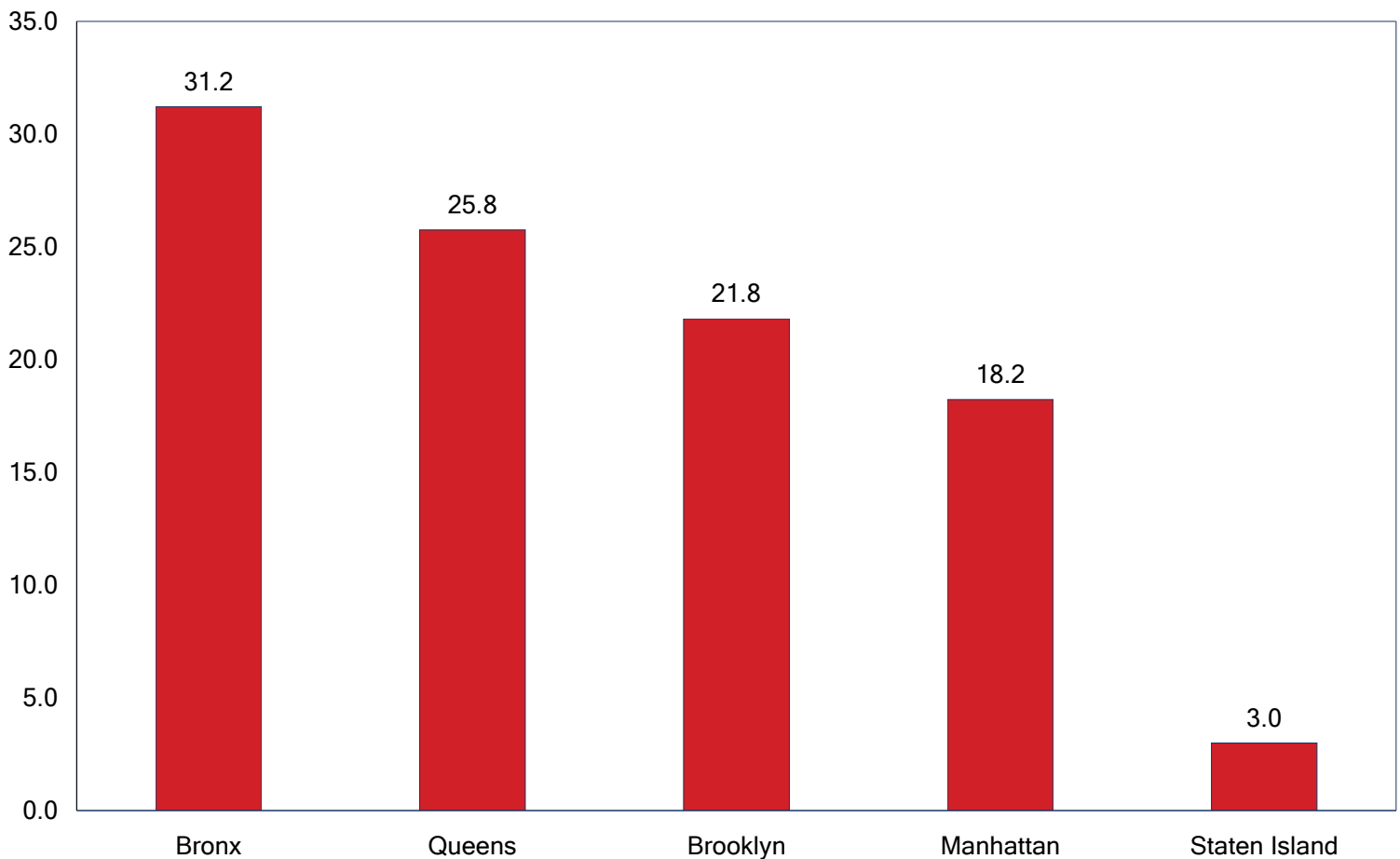
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Using the data released by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey for 2007, this report analyzes demographic and socio-economic indicators for Latina women in New York City. While in 2007, there was little difference in the sex breakdown between Latinos and non-Latinos in New York City (48% of all Latinos were women while 47.6% of non-Latinos were women), Latinas demonstrated very different social, demographic, and economic profiles from their non-Latina counterparts. There were also important differences among Latinas in New York City by national origin.<sup>1</sup>

### Residential Patterns among Latinas in New York City

In 2007 more Latinas lived in the Bronx than in any other borough (31.2%). Queens had the second highest percentage of Latinas across the five boroughs (25.8%). Only 3% of Latinas in 2007 were living in Staten Island. (See figure 1).

Figure 1  
Distribution of Latinas in New York City Boroughs, 2007  
(in percentages of total Latinas)



<sup>1</sup> All data in this report were derived from the U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Census and American Community Survey 2007 data from Steven Ruggles, Matthew Sobek, Trent Alexander, Catherine A. Fitch, Ronald Goeken, Patricia Kelly Hall, Miriam King, and Chad Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 3.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2004 found at <http://usa.ipums.org/usa>. Since these data were derived from samples, there is an unknown margin of error that the Census Bureau estimates at

Among the largest Latino populations groups there was wide variation in residential patterns. In 2007, Honduran, Puerto Rican and Dominican women were more likely to live in the Bronx than any other borough. The percentage of Colombian, Salvadoran and Peruvian women living in Queens over other boroughs was overwhelmingly high; 72.5% of Colombian women, 64.6% of Salvadoran and 60.8% of Peruvian women lived in Queens. Dominican (28.4%) and Cuban (25.3%) women were more likely than other groups to live in Manhattan, while Honduran women (7.5%) were the least likely group to live in Manhattan. Mexicans were more likely to live in Brooklyn (31%) over the other boroughs. None of the Latina nationalities lived in Staten Island in significant numbers. (See table 1).

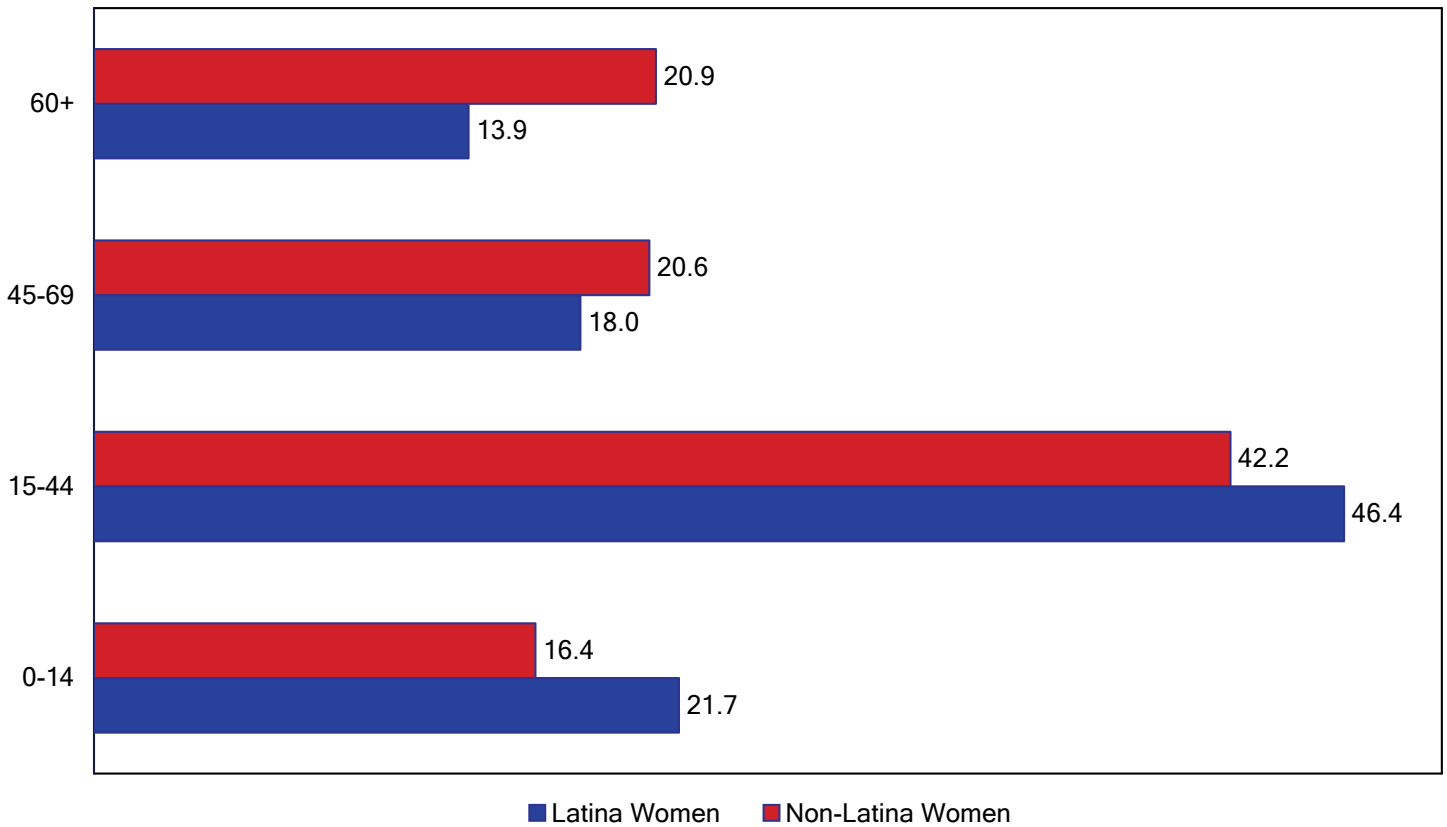
Table 1  
Percentage of Latinas by New York City Borough, 2007

	Bronx	Manhattan	Staten Island	Brooklyn	Queens
Mexican	24.2	13.6	4.0	31.0	27.2
Puerto Rican Island-Born	44.6	17.4	2.5	25.3	10.2
Puerto Rican US-Born	39.5	13.6	6.4	26.1	14.5
Cuban	16.4	25.3	7.0	16.8	34.6
Honduran	44.9	7.5	1.3	29.0	17.3
Salvadoran	7.3	10.6	0.8	16.7	64.6
Colombian	5.7	8.6	2.4	10.9	72.5
Ecuadorian	13.4	11.5	2.3	16.7	56.1
Peruvian	4.5	15.4	2.3	17.0	60.8
Dominican	38.9	28.4	0.5	16.3	16.0

## Demographics

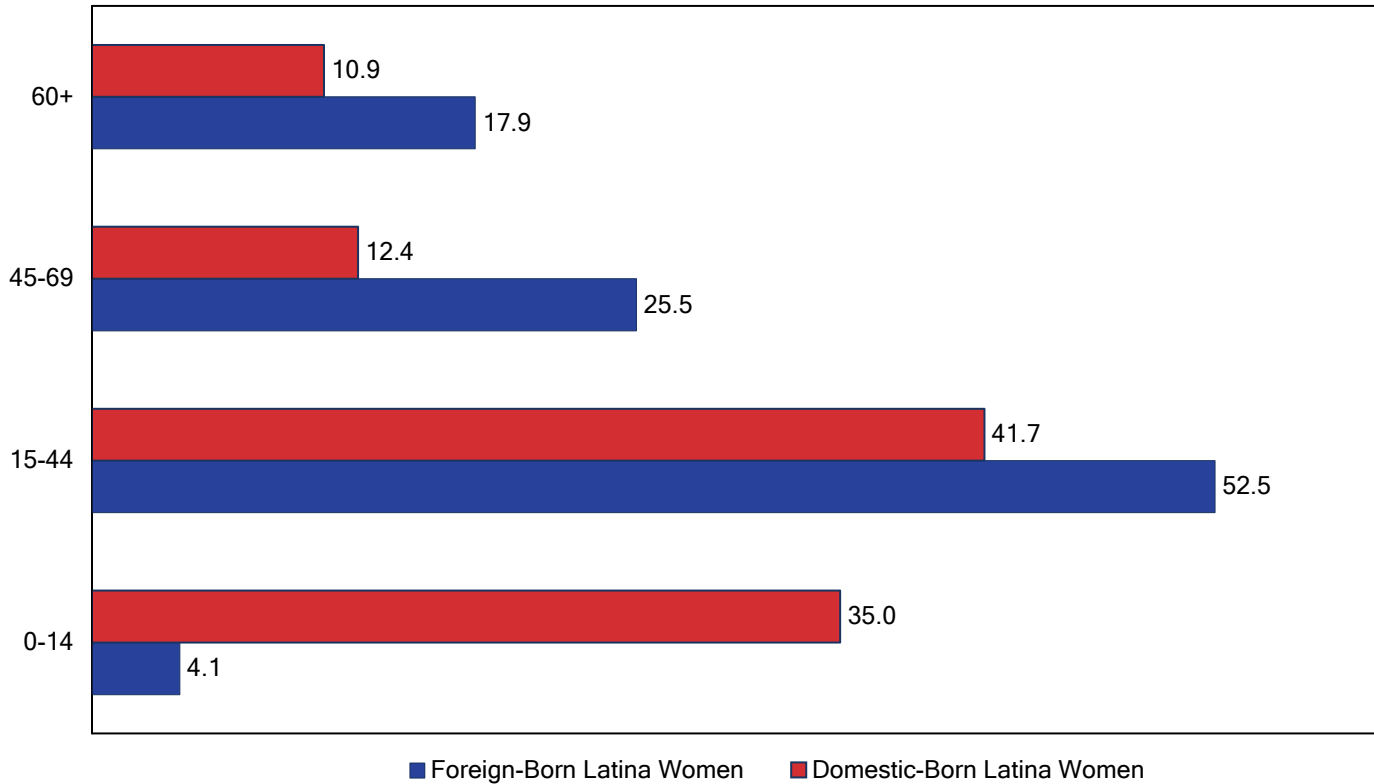
On average, in 2007, Latino women were younger than their non-Latina counterparts. In New York City the median age for Latino women was 33 compared with 39 for non-Latino women. In general, Latinas were more represented than non-Latinas in the younger age cohorts. About 22% of Latinas were in the 0-14 cohort, compared with 16.4% of non-Latinas. (See figure 2).

Figure 2  
Age Categories of Latina and Non-Latina Women, 2007  
(in percentages of total populations)



Domestic-born Latinas were younger than foreign-born Latinas. The median age of foreign-born Latinas was 41 while the median age of native-born Latinas was 22. The population of native-born Latinas was quite young; 35% of native-born Latinas were between the ages of 0-14, while only 4.1% of foreign-born Latinas were in the 0-14 year of age category. (See Figure 3).

Figure 3  
Age Categories Domestic-Born and Foreign-Born Latina Women, 2007  
(in percentages)



Although, large numbers of Latinas in New York City were concentrated in the 15-44 age categories there were important differences by national origin. Island-born Puerto Rican and Cuban women were significantly older than the other nationalities and had greater percentages of their respective populations in the 60 years of age and older grouping. This is likely because these groups were among the earlier immigrant groups to New York City. Mexican women, New York’s newest Latino immigrant group, were the least likely to be in the youngest age grouping (2.1%), as large concentrations were in the working-age category. (See table 2).

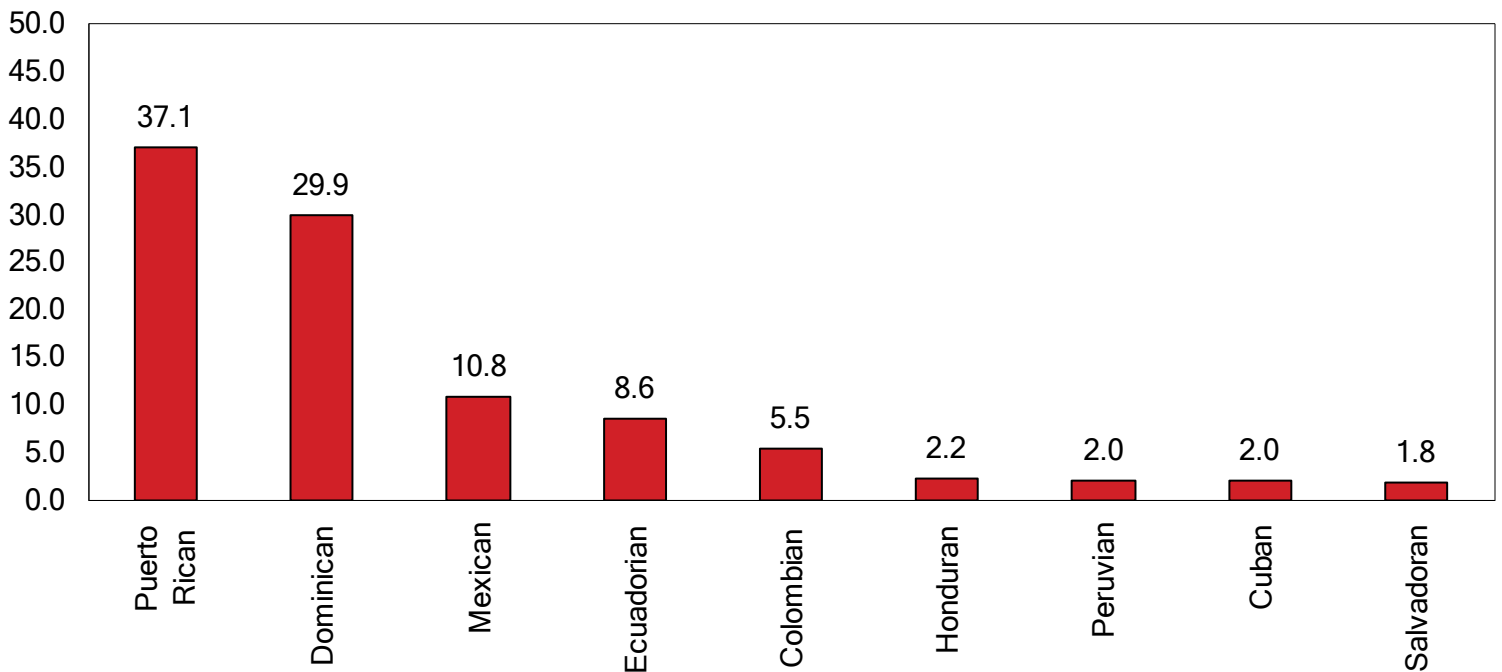
Table 2  
Age Categories of Latina Women by Nationality, 2007  
(in percentages)

Age Category	Mexican	Puerto Rican, Island Born	Puerto Rican, US Born	Cuban	Honduran	Salvadoran	Colombian	Ecuadorian	Peruvian	Dominican
0-14	29.5	2.1	31.6	10.2	24.6	24.7	13.9	21.4	15.3	22.6
15-44	59.2	24.1	52.0	32.4	48.7	45.3	42.4	51.9	39.8	47.4
45-59	9.2	28.2	14.0	20.1	18.4	18.7	24.8	14.6	26.5	18.5
60+	2.1	45.6	2.4	37.4	8.4	11.3	18.9	12.2	18.4	11.5

**National Origin Group and Country of Birth**

In New York City, 37% of Latinas in 2007 were Puerto Rican while Dominican women were the second largest national origin group (29%) and Mexican women, while only 11% of the Latina population, were the third largest group. (See figure 4).

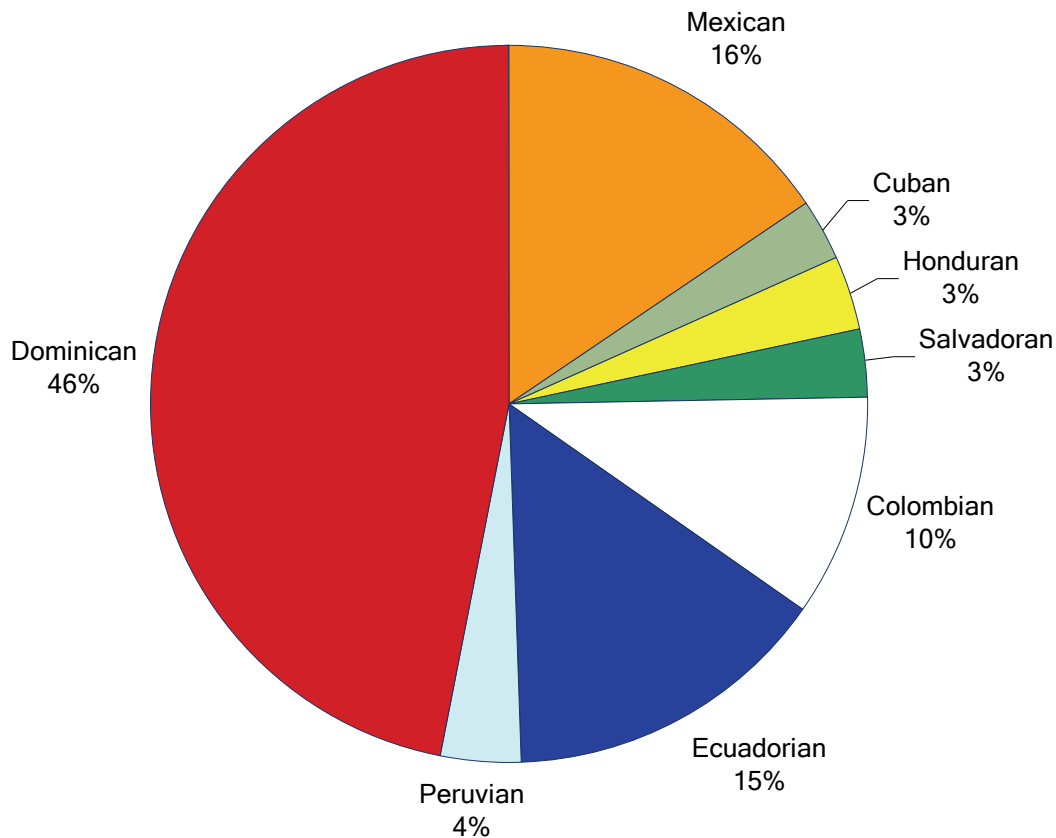
Figure 4  
Percentage of All Latinas by National Origin, 2007





Among immigrants, 46% of Latinas were born in the Dominican Republic. Mexicans were the second largest group of immigrant Latina women (16%), followed by Ecuadorians (15%). (See Figure 5).

Figure 5  
Birthplace of Foreign-Born Latino Women in New York City, 2007



### Year of Entry among Immigrant Latino Women

The majority of Latinas entered the U.S. mainland before 1981 (32.4%). Both Cuban and Island-born Puerto Rican women are among the earliest immigrants to the U.S. mainland. About 32% of Dominicans and 42% of Mexicans entered the U.S. between 1990 and 2000. In New York City, Peruvian, Mexican and Ecuadorian women were among the latest arrivals, about 30% of these immigrant groups arrived after 2001. (See Table 3).

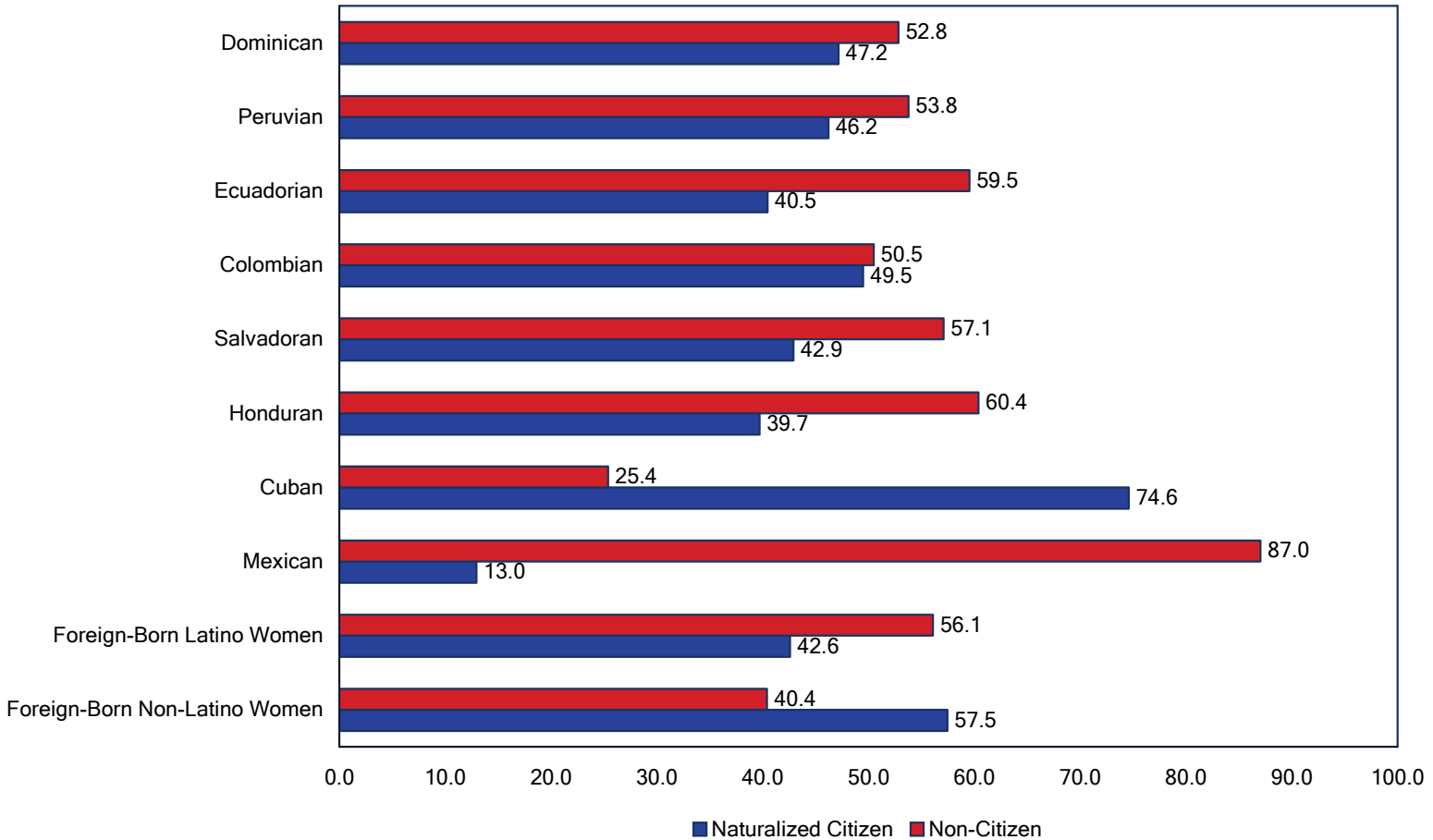
Table 3  
Year of Entry of Foreign-Born Latino Women in New York City, 2007  
(in percentages)

	Total Latinas	Mexican	Puerto Rican Island - Born	Cuban	Honduran	Salvadoran	Colombian	Ecuadorian	Peruvian	Dominican
2001 and Later	21.2	33.8	6.4	3.8	23.6	23.4	24.4	31.2	29.7	22.4
1990-2000	25.8	42.0	8.1	9.2	40.9	34.6	24.5	29.7	27.0	31.9
1980-1990	20.7	18.0	14.8	13.3	21.5	20.7	26.3	17.9	21.3	25.0
Pre-1981	32.4	6.2	70.7	73.7	14.1	21.4	24.8	21.3	22.0	20.7

### Citizenship

In New York City, foreign-born Latinas were less likely to be naturalized citizens than their non-Latina counterparts. In 2007, 42.6% of Latinas were naturalized U.S. citizens while 57.5% of non-Latina immigrant women were naturalized citizens. Among the different Latino national origin group, Cuban women had the highest rates of naturalization; 74.6% of Cuban women were naturalized citizens. About half of Colombian and Dominican women were naturalized citizens. Mexicans had by far the lowest rates of naturalization; only 13% of foreign-born Mexican women were naturalized citizens; a rate far lower than other Latino national-origin group. (See Figure 6).

Figure 6  
Citizenship Status Among Foreign-Born Latina Women in New York City, 2007  
(in percentages)



### English Language Abilities

The majority of Latino women in New York City reported speaking English well or better than well (53.4%). While only 8.7% of Latinas reported not speaking English at all, this number varies once nativity (native-born versus foreign-born) is controlled for, as well as Latino national origin. 18% of foreign-born Latinas reported speaking no English, yet only 1.7% of native-born Latinas spoke no English. Among the largest national origin groups, Cuban women and U.S.-born Puerto Rican women had the highest rates of monolingualism; 29.2% of Cuban and 30.7% of U.S.-born Puerto Rican women spoke only English. 15.2% of Mexican women and 13.9% of Dominican women reported not speaking English at all. (See table 4).

Table 4  
English Language Ability Among New York City Latinas by Nationality, 2007  
(in percentages)

	Total Latina	Native-Born Latina	Foreign-Born Latina	Mexican	Puerto Rican Island Born	Puerto Rican US Born	Cuban	Honduran	Salvadoran	Colombian	Ecuadorian	Peruvian	Dominican
Does Not Speak English	8.7	1.7	18.0	15.2	7.6	0.1	7.3	9.4	7.5	11.0	12.1	11.6	13.9
Speaks English But Not Well	16.9	5.8	31.6	22.9	21.2	2.1	19.4	19.8	22.8	23.5	25.7	17.2	22.4
Speaks Only English	13.1	19.8	4.2	7.8	7.1	30.7	29.2	9.7	6.1	7.5	4.5	11.3	4.5
Speaks English Well Or Better Than Well	53.4	59.2	45.8	40.1	63.6	56.9	40.5	49.5	53.7	52.7	49.4	54.2	51.4

### Marital Status

About 37% of adult Latino women in New York City reported never having married, similar to the percentage of non-Latino women in New York City who had never married (35.9%). Non-Latino women had a higher rate of marriage (40%) than Latinas and a lower rate of separation or divorce (12.9%). While Latino women had a higher rate of divorce or separation (21.5%), they were less likely to be widowed than their non-Latina counterparts, most likely due to the differences in age among Latinas and non-Latinas. Salvadoran and Mexican adult women were more likely to be married than other Latino national origin group, while U.S.-born Puerto Rican women were least likely to be married (53.8%). Divorce and separation rates varied widely across the different groups; Dominican women (28.2%) and Island-born Puerto Rican women (27.2%) had some of the highest divorce and separation rates while Mexican women (10.2%) had the lowest rates of divorce/separation among Latinas. (See table 5).

Table 5  
Marital Status among Latina, Non-Latina and Latino National Origin Group, 2007  
(in percentages)

	Latina	Non-Latina	Mexican	Puerto Rican Island Born	Puerto Rican US-Born	Cuban	Honduran	Salvadoran	Colombian	Ecuadorian	Peruvian	Dominican
Married	34.5	39.8	48.2	28.5	25.4	33.6	35.6	52.5	45.2	46.7	42.7	30.5
Separated/Divorced	21.5	12.9	10.2	27.2	17.6	16.3	18.3	16.0	21.2	17.4	14.2	28.2
Widowed	7.2	11.4	1.5	16.3	3.2	17.4	3.8	2.8	8.0	4.6	9.6	6.4
Never Married	36.8	35.9	40.2	28.0	53.8	32.7	42.3	28.7	25.6	31.3	33.6	34.9

**Educational Attainment**

In 2007, Latino women in New York were less educated than their non-Latina counterparts. About 37% of Latinas did not have a high-school degree, compared to only 16% of non-Latinas. The rates are reversed for holders of BA degrees or higher. Latinas were much less likely (16%) to hold BA degrees or higher than non-Latinas (38%). Among national origin groups, Mexican and Island-born Puerto Rican women were among the least educated; 49.7% of Mexicans and 51.6% of Island-born Puerto Ricans reported not holding a high school degree. Peruvians and Cubans were among the most educated of the Latino origin group and more likely to hold BA degrees or higher. (See table 6).

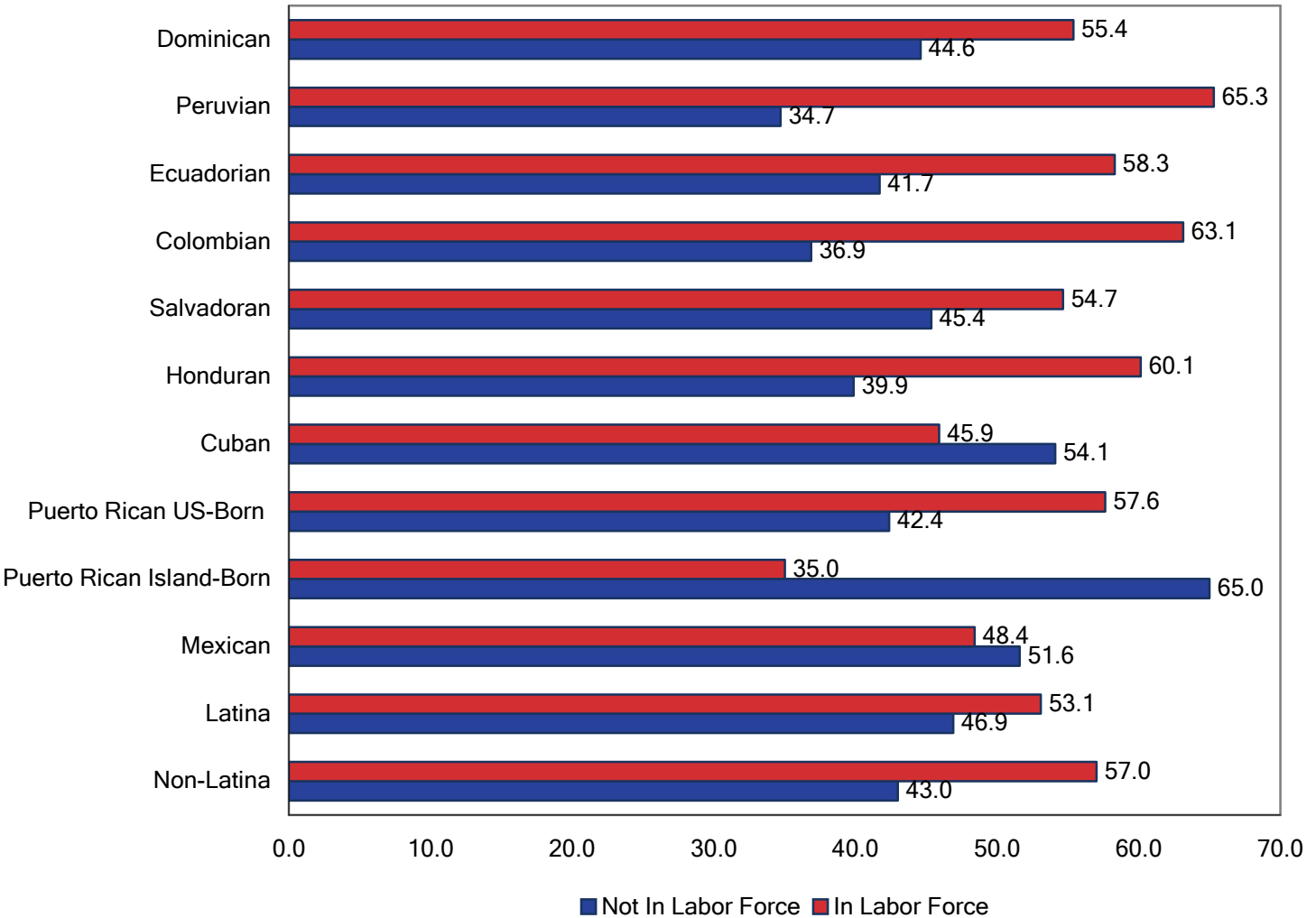
Table 6  
Educational Attainment among Latino, Non-Latina, and Latina National-Origin Group, 2007  
(in percentages)

	Non-Latina	Latina	Mexican	Puerto Rican Island Born	Puerto Rican US Born	Cuban	Honduran	Salvadoran	Colombian	Ecuadorian	Peruvian	Dominican
Did Not Graduate High School	16.0	37.3	49.7	51.6	20.4	28.2	35.6	46.3	25.5	36.3	19.9	45.5
High School Graduate	26.6	26.0	29.3	22.9	26.7	25.6	27.0	27.1	32.0	32.2	27.7	21.9
Some College, No Degree	12.5	13.6	8.2	9.1	22.8	13.1	14.7	4.7	12.6	13.8	19.3	11.7
AA Degree	6.9	7.0	2.2	6.1	11.4	9.0	7.8	5.3	7.3	7.1	1.5	7.1
BA or Higher	38.0	16.2	10.5	10.3	18.8	24.0	14.9	16.5	22.7	10.6	31.6	13.9

**Labor Force Participation Rates**

In general non-Latino women reported higher labor force participation rates than their Latina counterparts. About 57% of non-Latino women were working or actively looking for work, compared to 53.1% of Latinas. Peruvian and Colombian women had some of the highest labor force participation rates across Latino national origin groups; 65.3% of Peruvians and 63.1% of Colombians were in the labor force. Island-born Puerto Rican women was the group least likely to be participating in the labor force; in fact 65% of Island-born Puerto Ricans reported not working or actively seeking for work. (See figure 7).

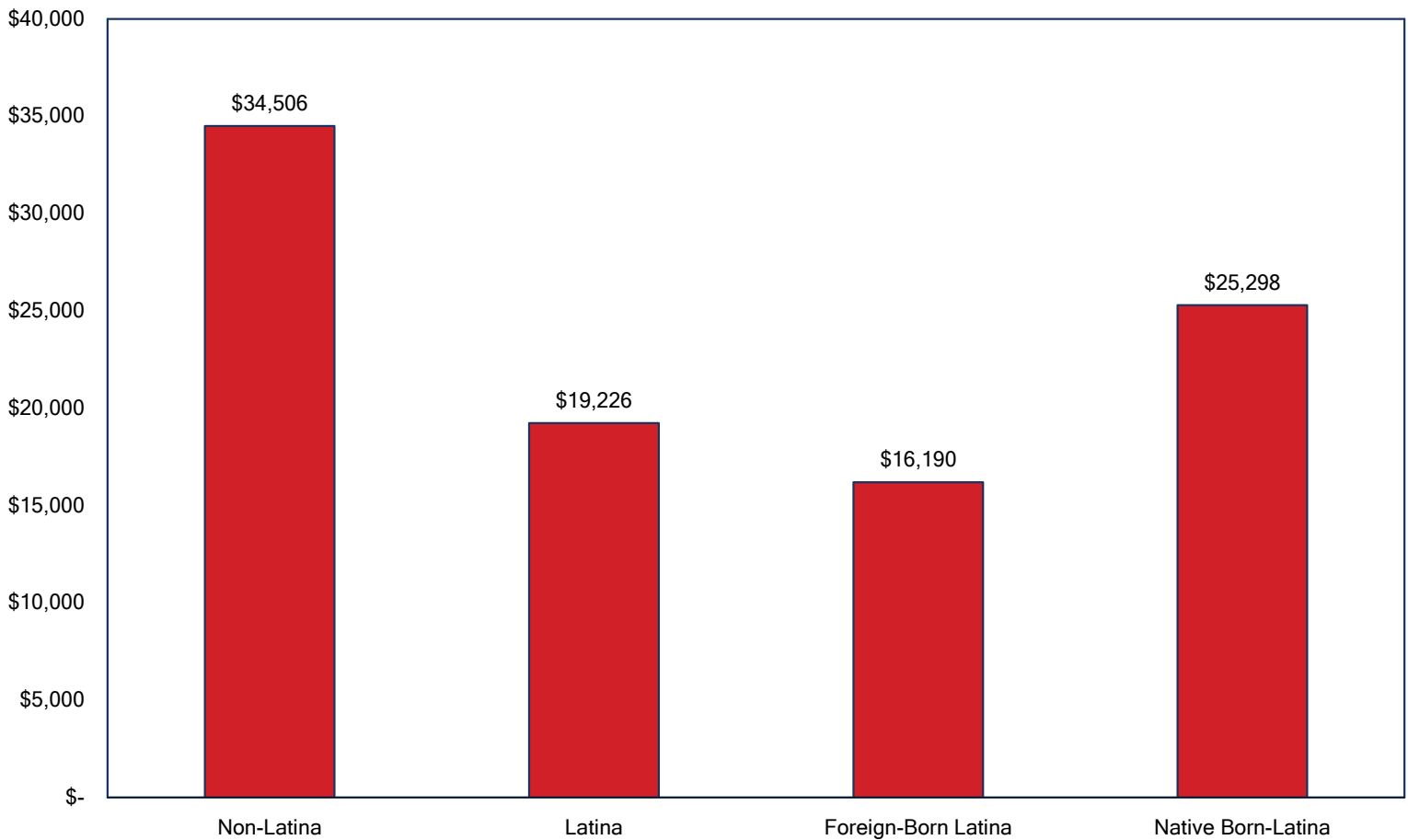
Figure 7  
Labor Force Participation Rates among Latinas, Non-Latinas and Latina National Origin Groups, 2007  
(in percentages)



**Income**

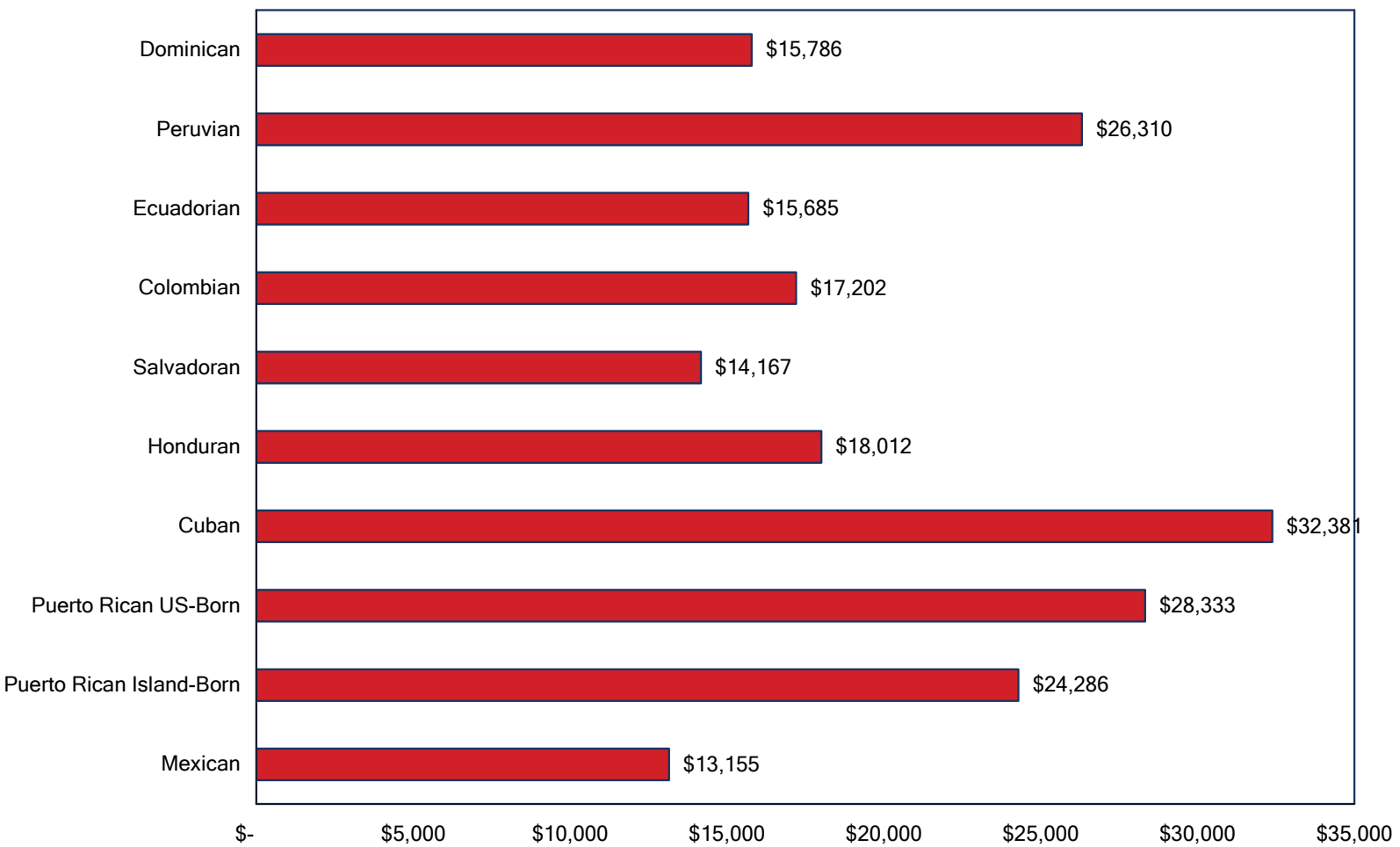
Latinas in the labor force earned considerably less than their non-Latina counterparts. In 2007, the median personal earned income for Latinas in the labor force was \$19,226, while non-Latino women in New York had a median income of \$34,506. Native-born Latinas reported higher incomes than foreign-born Latinas in New York City; the median personal income for native-born Latinas was \$25,298 compared to \$16,190 reported by foreign-born Latinas. (See figure 8).

Figure 8  
Median Annual Earned Income among Non-Latinas and Latinas (Domestic and Foreign-Born), 2007



Cuban, Peruvian and U.S.-born Puerto Rican women reported the highest median personal earned income in 2007. The median income for Cuban women was \$32,381, which approached the median for non-Latino women in New York City in 2007. Mexican women reported the lowest median average income among the Latino national origin groups (\$13,155), far below the median earning for all Latinas in New York City. (See figure 9).

Figure 9  
Median Annual Earned Income among Latina National Origin Groups , 2007





Occupations

Non-Latinas were more likely than Latinas to work in management and professional occupations; 39.6% of non-Latino women reported working in high-skilled, white collar professions compared to 20.6% of Latinas. On average, Latinas were more likely to work in the service sector over any other. In 2007, 37.9% of Latinas reported working in the service sector. Among Latino national origin groups, Honduran (59.9%) and Mexican (47%) women were more likely to be employed in the service sector. Peruvian, Cuban and U.S.-born Puerto Rican women had higher rates of employment in the management and professional sector than other Latino women. U.S.-born Puerto Rican women were also more likely to work in the technical, sales, or administrative sector than other groups. Salvadoran and Mexican women had higher rates of employment in the production, transportation and material moving sector which includes blue-collar factory work and manufacturing. (See table 7).

Table 7  
Occupational Categories for Non-Latina, Latina and Latina National Origin Groups, 2007  
(in percentages)

	Management, Professional and Related Fields	Technical/Sales/Administrative	Service	Construction, Extraction and Maintenance	Production, Transportation and Material Moving
Non-Latina	39.6	35.2	21.3	0.3	3.6
Latina	20.6	32.5	37.9	0.5	8.4
Mexican	10.7	24.7	47.0	0.0	17.7
Puerto Rican Island-Born	21.9	31.6	37.4	0.2	9.0
Puerto Rican US-Born	30.4	44.3	21.6	0.4	3.4
Cuban	35.3	30.1	27.0	0.0	7.7
Honduran	13.0	22.4	59.9	0.0	4.8
Salvadoran	14.6	22.4	46.3	0.0	16.7
Colombian	21.5	29.0	44.0	0.3	5.1
Ecuadorian	10.8	30.8	39.2	2.1	17.1
Peruvian	32.3	21.4	36.4	1.3	8.7
Dominican	13.5	31.6	45.6	0.5	8.8

## Conclusion

Latino women in New York City were, on average, younger, less educated and earned less money than non-Latino women. They were less likely to hold professional or management jobs and much more likely to work in lower-skilled and lower-paying jobs in the service sector. Latina immigrants were also less likely to be naturalized citizens than their non-Latina counterparts.

The findings show that it is important to break down Latinas by national origin group. Wide variations are found across groups with some national origin groups reporting much higher educational, income, citizenship and language patterns than others. In general Peruvian women had higher labor force participation rates and were better educated than other Latino national origin groups. Cuban women had the highest median earned income as well as the highest rates of employment in the professional and management sector. Mexicans, one of the newest immigrant groups, reported low levels of education, lower median earnings and lower citizenship rates than other Latina national origin group. It will be interesting to see how the patterns among women from different Latino national origin groups change as their migration status and length of stay changes. Will Mexicans make gains on education, income and occupational status as their tenure in New York City lengthens? It is also important to continue to look at divergences and convergences between Latina and their counterparts. Will Latinas achieve the same socio-economic status of non-Latinas; how will Latina immigrants continue to fare in comparison to non-Latina immigrants? These questions will only be answered when future data becomes available.