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## Ecuadorians in New York City 1990–2008

Howard Caro-López

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Center for Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies

# Ecuadorians in New York City 1990—2008

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Latino Data Project - Report 36 - April 2011

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/>

For additional information you may contact the Center at 212-817-8438 or by e-mail at [clacls@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:clacls@gc.cuny.edu).

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## Demographics

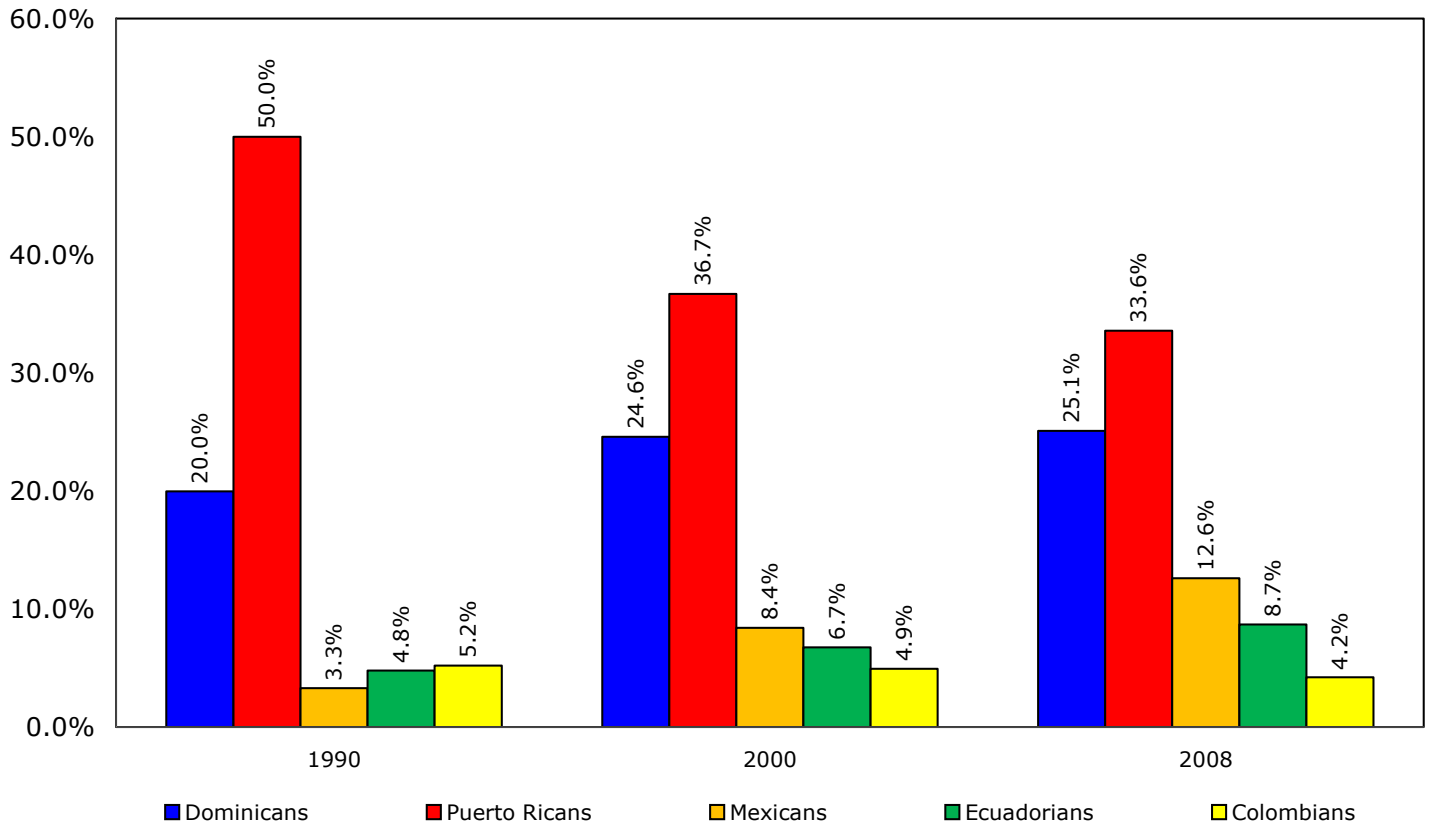
The Ecuadorian population has been one of the fastest growing Latino national groups in New York City over since 1990, surpassed only by the city's Mexican population, which is far and away the fastest growing Latino national sub-group. Despite a more than doubling of their population after 1990, as of 2008 Ecuadorians remain the fourth largest Latino nationality in the City as they remain significantly smaller in number than the Puerto Rican and Dominican populations, and have been surpassed by Mexicans over the 18 year period examined. (See Table 1 and Figure 1.) The Ecuadorian population's rapid growth has been driven in large measure by economic and political crises in Ecuador in the 1990s and early part of the last decade, characterized by hyperinflation, political violence and government instability. These factors produced large-scale out migration, mainly to the U.S. and Spain. Ecuador's recent return to a period of political stability under the leadership of a left-populist government slowed Ecuadorian migration in the short term although the long-term impact of these changes in Ecuador on migration patterns will take some time to gauge.

Table 1  
Population Trends for Largest Latino Nationalities in New York City, 1990-2008

	1990		2000		2008		Change since 1990
	Total Population	% of Latino Population	Total Population	% of Latino Population	Total Population	% of Latino Population	Percent Change
Dominicans	338,961	20.0%	547,379	24.6%	585,429	25.1%	72.8%
Puerto Ricans	848,374	50.0%	816,827	36.7%	783,911	33.6%	-7.5%
Mexicans	55,587	3.3%	187,259	8.4%	294,238	12.6%	429%
Ecuadorians	80,862	4.8%	149,897	6.7%	202,591	8.7%	150.5%
Colombians	88,259	5.2%	109,710	4.9%	98,558	4.2%	11.7%
Total Latino Population	1,697,379	100.0%	2,226,907	100.0%	2,335,341	100.0%	37.6%

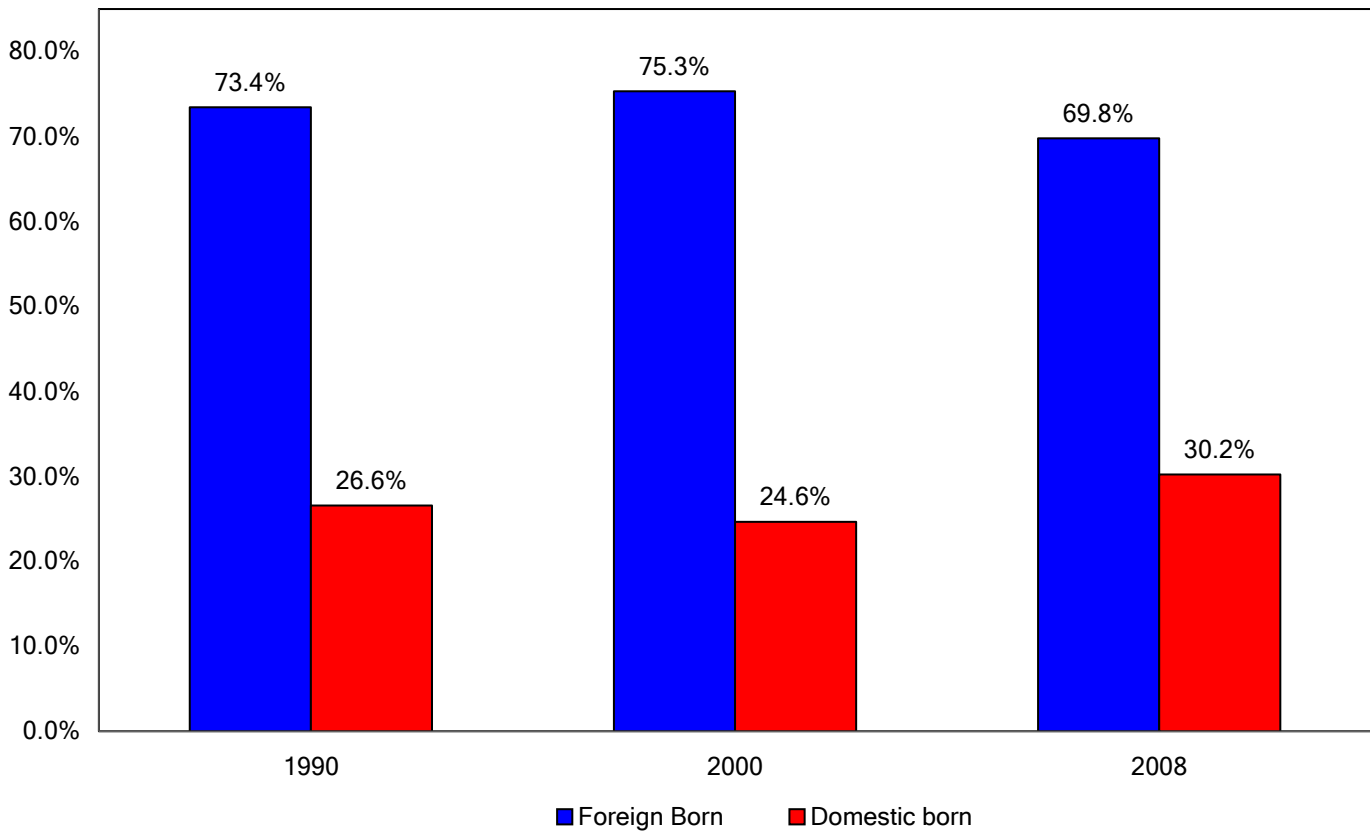
The Ecuadorian population has remained primarily foreign-born in its composition, fueled by increased migration from Ecuador after 1990. However between 2000 and 2008 there was a slight relative decline in the foreign born population to just under 70 percent of all Ecuadorians in the U.S. (See Figure 2 and Table 2.) Furthermore, while immigration from Ecuador has been the driving force in the city's Ecuadorian population growth, the number of domestic-born Ecuadorians has tripled in absolute terms despite remaining at about 30% of the total Ecuadorian population, which may reflect a tendency among Ecuadorian immigrants to permanently settle in New York City and establish households.

Figure 1  
Percentage of Five Largest Latino Nationalities In New York City, 1990-2008



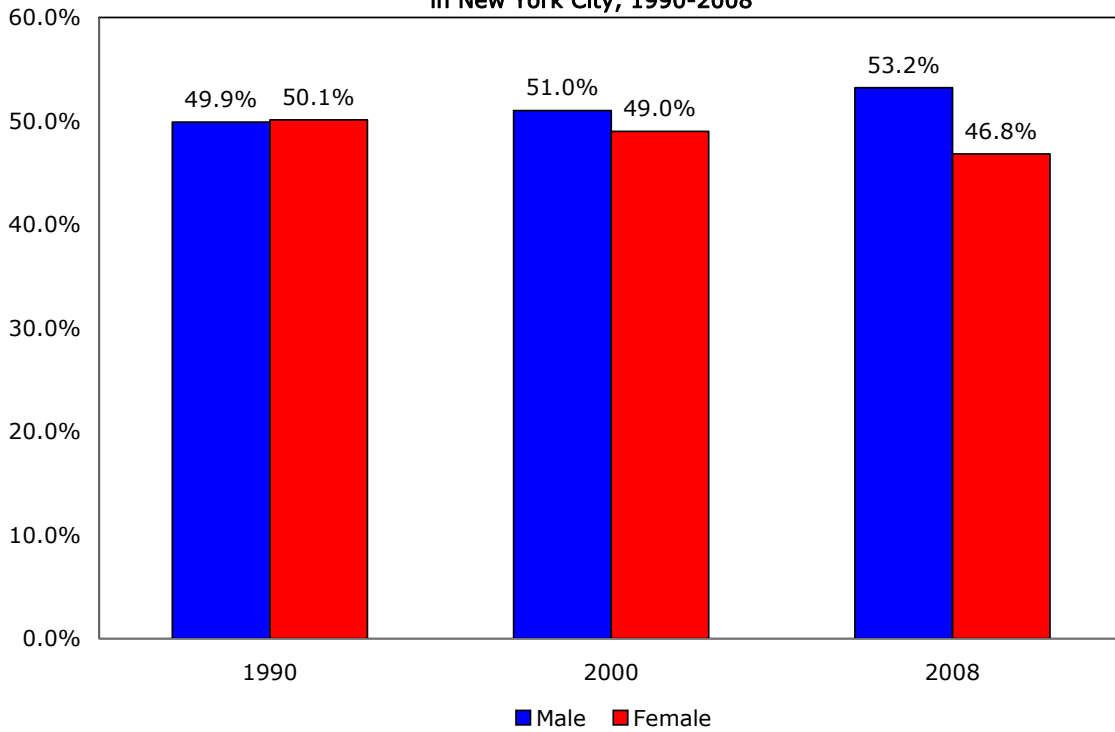
	Foreign Born		Domestic born		Total Population
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
1990	59,804	73.4%	21,630	26.6%	81,434
2000	112,953	75.3%	36,944	24.6%	149,987
2008	141,244	69.8%	61,167	30.2%	202,411

Figure 2  
Ecuadorian Population by Domestic -Born & Foreign-Born  
in New York City, 1990-2008

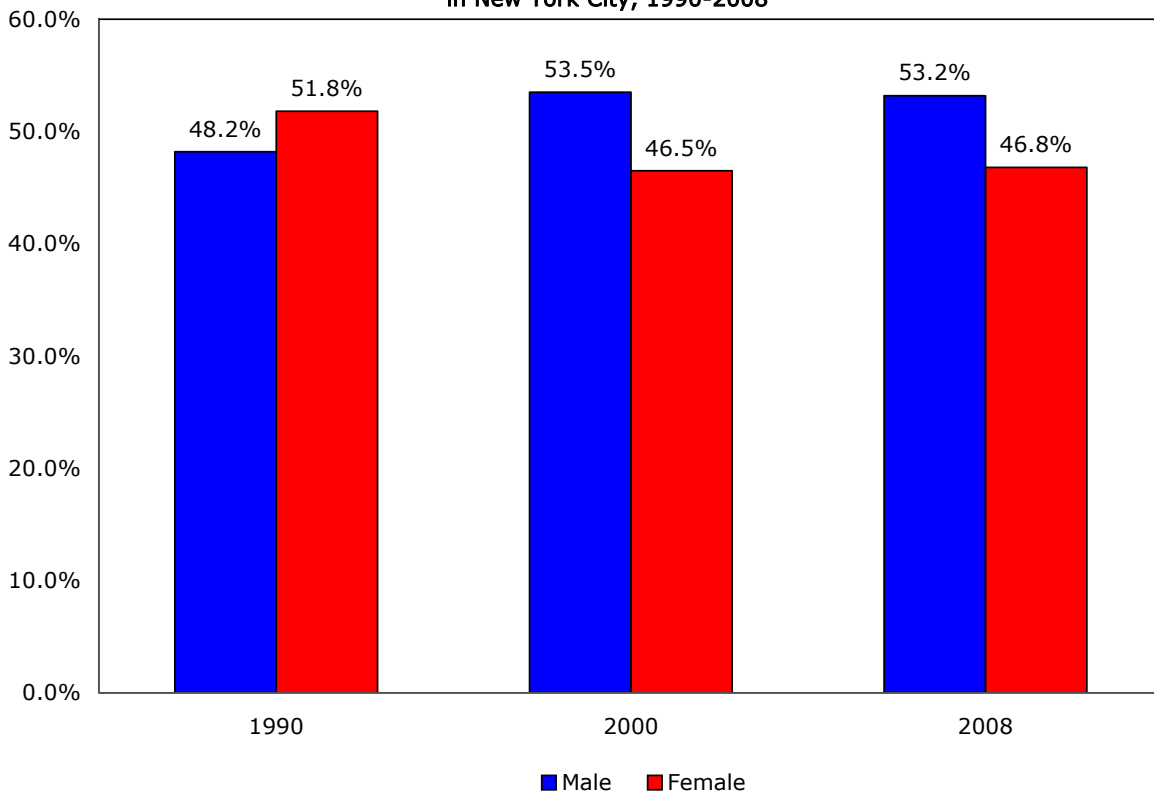


The Ecuadorian population remains relatively evenly split between men and women, though since 1990 men have started to outnumber women in the city (See Figures 3 and 4). The rise in the male population has occurred at roughly the same rate for both domestic-born and foreign-born Ecuadorians. However given the predominantly foreign-born character of the group's population during the period examined, the rise in the Ecuadorian male population in the last two decades appears to be the product of more Ecuadorian men migrating to New York City. This appears to reverse the trend prior to 1990, in which most of the Ecuadorian migrants in New York were women. The male-dominated character of the growing domestic-born population suggests that in the near future we may observe increased intermarriage between Ecuadorians and other population groups in the city, as the domestic born population reaches adulthood, which our data will illustrate shortly.

**Figure 3**  
**Ecuadorian Domestic-Born Population by Sex**  
**in New York City, 1990-2008**



**Figure 4**  
**Ecuadorian Foreign-Born Population by Sex**  
**in New York City, 1990-2008**



## Population by Borough

Since 1990, Ecuadorian population in New York City has been concentrated primarily in Queens. Within Queens the majority of Ecuadorians are found in those neighborhoods that run along Roosevelt Avenue, including Corona, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights and Woodside. Queens has remained the main settlement area for recent Ecuadorian immigrants, as evidenced by the fact that the borough's population has tripled between 1990 and 2008. Outside of Queens however we observed a shift in Ecuadorian population settlement, with the Bronx replacing Brooklyn as the borough with the second largest Ecuadorian population in the City. Brooklyn, which may have been a preferred choice for Ecuadorians due to its proximity to Queens, has continued to see growth among both domestic and foreign-born Ecuadorians, but at a significantly slower rate than Queens and the Bronx (see table 2 and figure 5.) This may be attributable to changes in the housing market in Brooklyn, a borough that has undergone significant gentrification since the 1990s, though it is also possible that a greater availability of housing within Queens would persuade Ecuadorians to settle in the borough in order to be closer to the hub of the city's Ecuadorian economic, cultural and social life. Since Queens is home to many commercial establishments that cater to the Ecuadorian community, such as restaurants, multi-services businesses and other professional services, as well as a Consular services branch in Woodside/Jackson Heights, living in or in proximity to Queens is a priority for Ecuadorians in New York.

Figure 5  
New York City Ecuadorian Population by Borough, 1990-2008

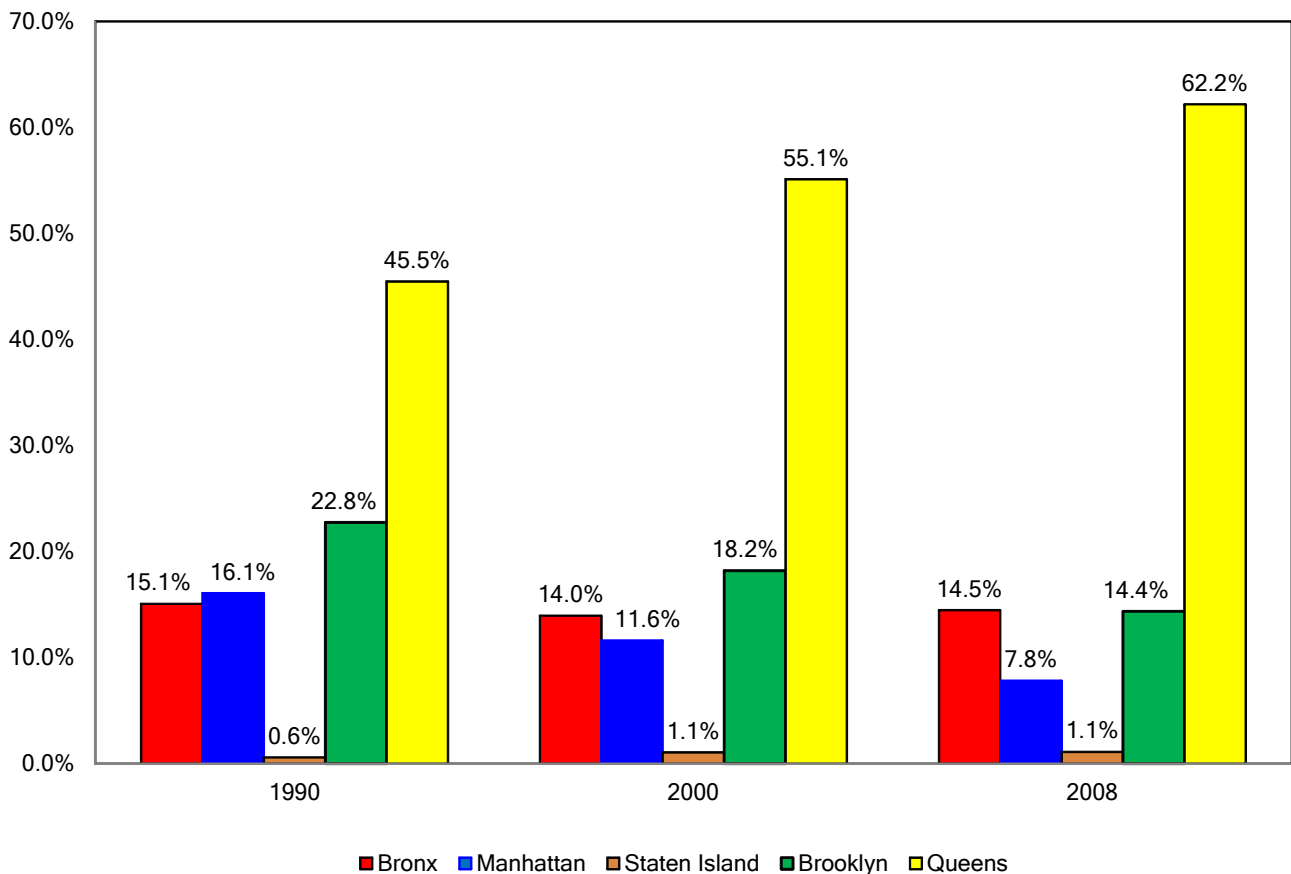




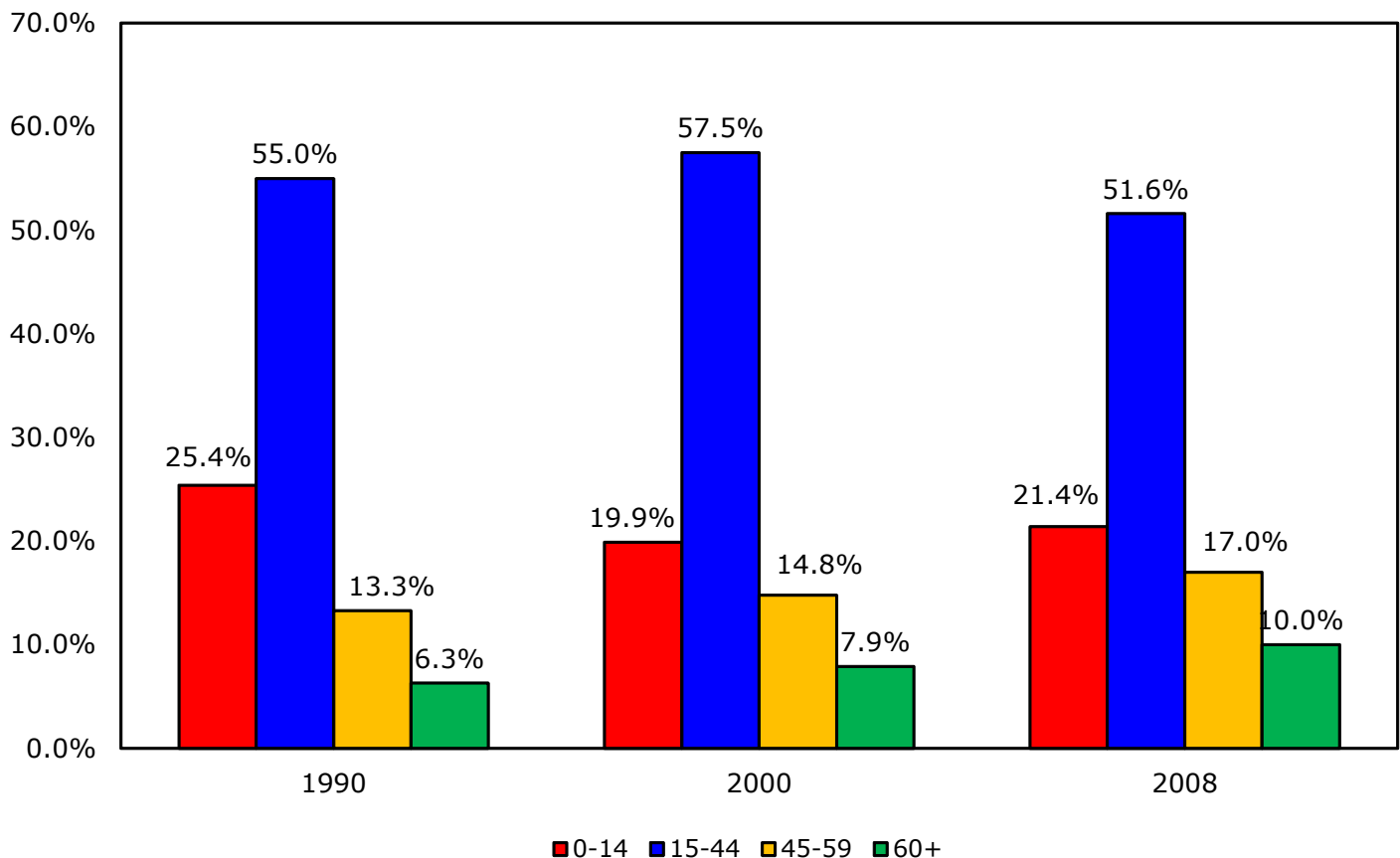
Table 3  
Ecuadorian Population by Borough in New York City, 1990-2008

1990				
	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Total	% of Total
Bronx	3,996	8,281	12,277	15.1%
Manhattan	3,117	9,989	13,106	16.1%
Brooklyn	4,844	13,690	18,534	22.8%
Queens	9,508	27,532	37,040	45.5%
Staten Island	165	312	477	0.6%
Total	21,630	59,084	81,434	100.0%
2000				
	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Total	% of Total
Bronx	5,677	15,248	20,925	14.0%
Manhattan	4,873	12,556	17,429	11.6%
Brooklyn	7,268	20,014	27,282	18.2%
Queens	18,464	64,170	82,634	55.1%
Staten Island	662	965	1,627	1.1%
Total	36,944	112,953	149,897	100.0%
2008				
	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Total	% of Total
Bronx	9,657	19,657	29,314	14.5%
Manhattan	3,804	12,053	15,857	7.8%
Brooklyn	7,017	22,070	29,087	14.4%
Queens	39,855	86,036	125,891	62.2%
Staten Island	834	1,428	2,262	1.1%
Total	220,631	141,244	202,411	100.0%

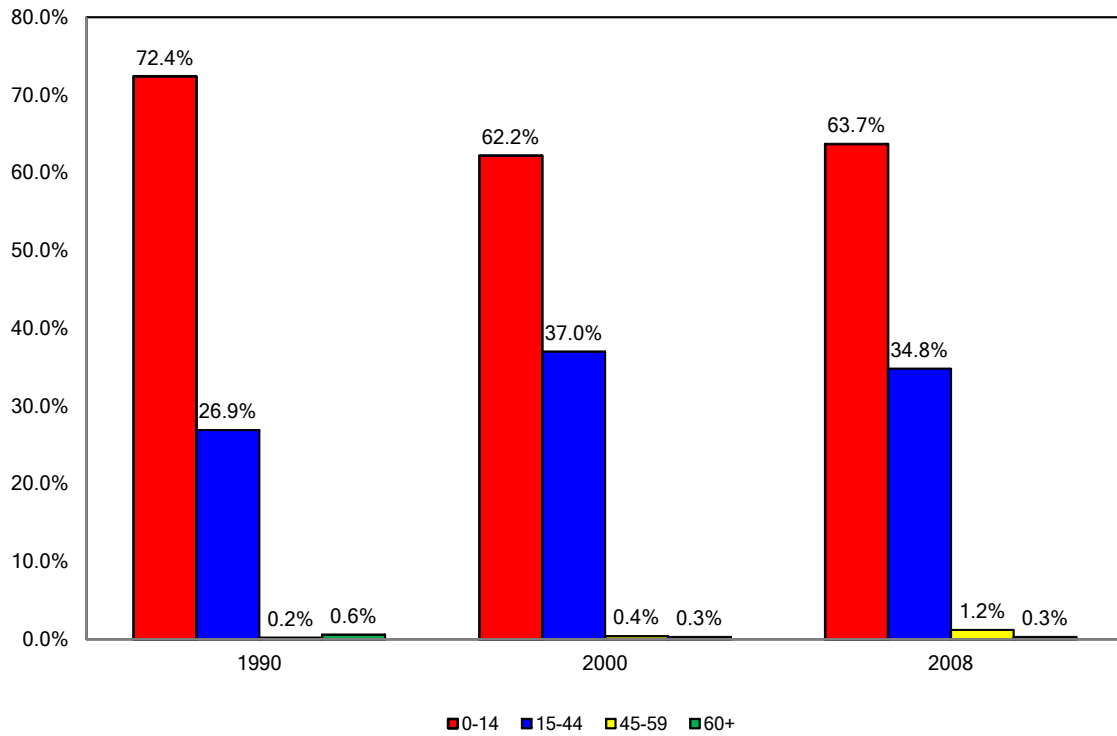
## Age Distribution

The general age profile of the Ecuadorian population is that of a young population, with approximately 3/4 of all Ecuadorians under the age of 45. This is due to the fact that the bulk of Ecuadorian population growth over the period examined has been driven by a steady flow of migrants coming from Ecuador to New York City. The youthful composition of the population is also driven by domestic population growth from live births since 1990, as demonstrated by the consistently high percentage of domestic-born Ecuadorians under the age of 14 (see figures 6 through 8.) At the same time the 60 years of age and older foreign-born population suggests that Ecuadorians, much like other immigrant groups, have opted for permanent residence in New York.

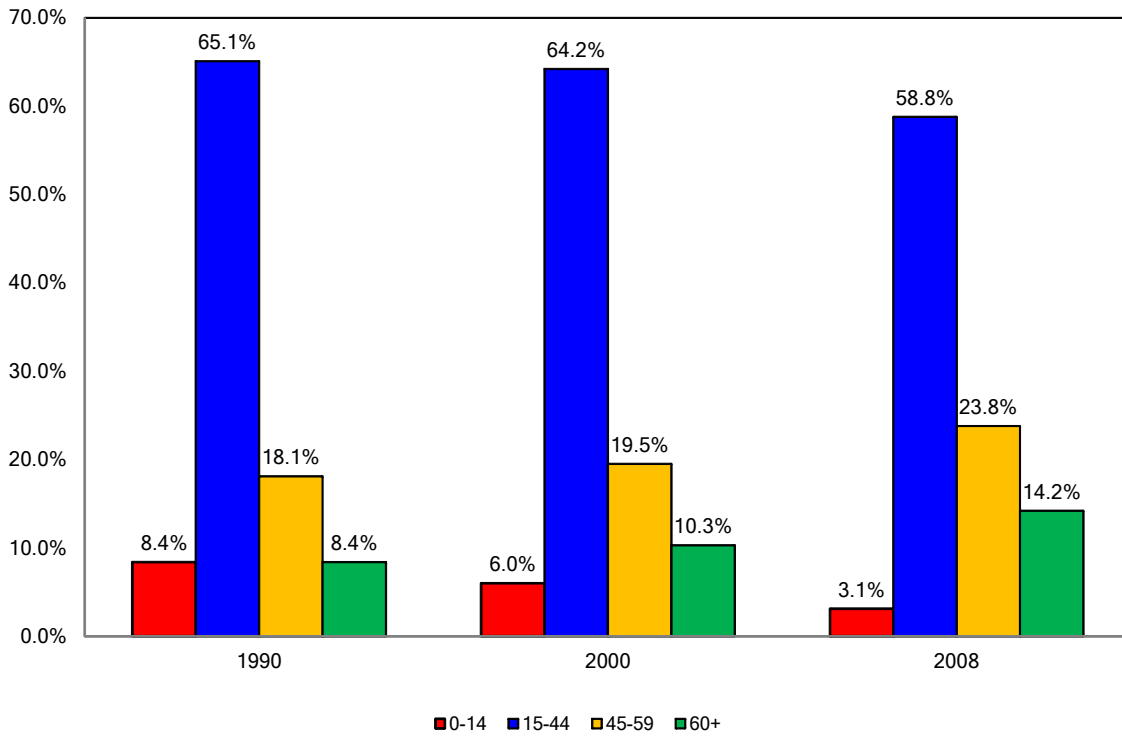
**Figure 6**  
Age Distribution Trends for Ecuadorian Population  
in New York City, 1990-2008



**Figure 7**  
Age Distribution for Domestic-Born Ecuadorians  
in New York City, 1990-2008



**Figure 8**  
Age Distribution for Foreign-Born Ecuadorians  
in New York City, 1990-2008



## Socio-Economic Indicators

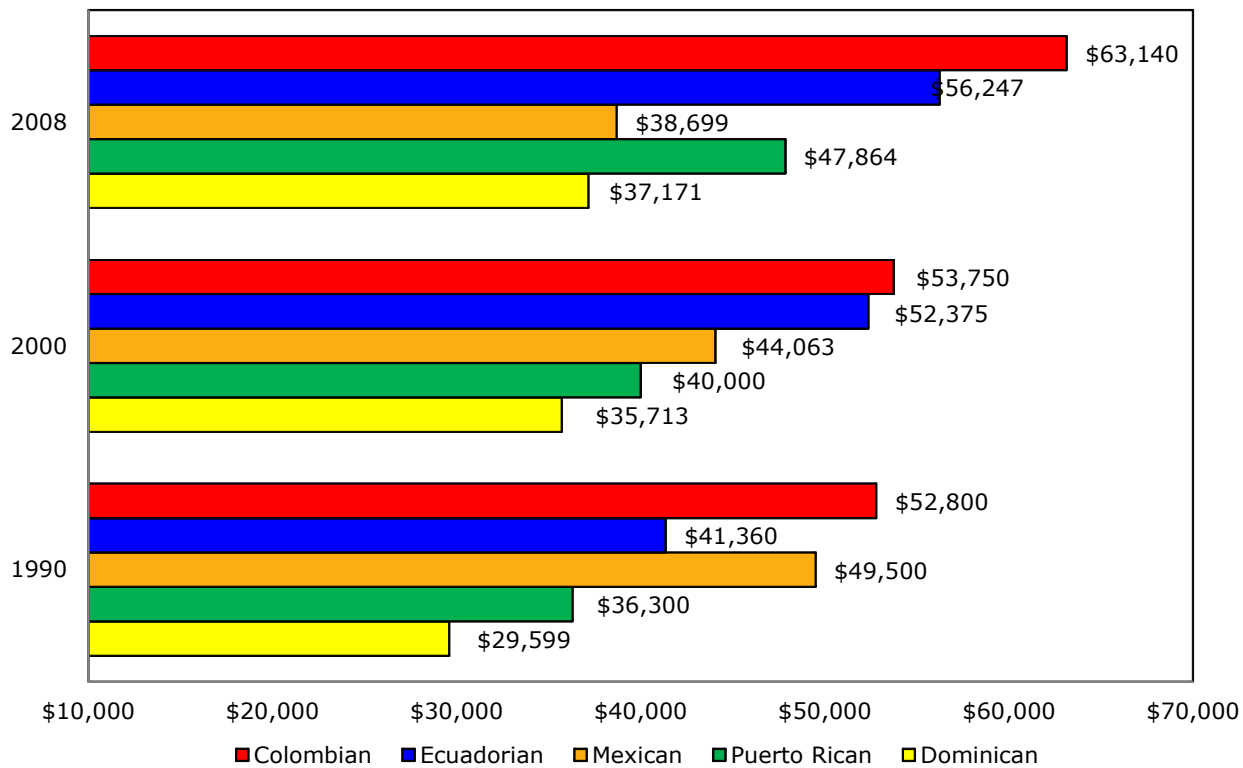
### Household Income

After adjusting for inflation, the median household income for Ecuadorians has increased significantly between 1990 and 2008 for both the domestic-born and foreign-born sectors of the population. Foreign-born Ecuadorian median household income has risen by approximately 29% between 1990 and 2008, while domestic-born Ecuadorian median household income increased by just over 55 percent during this same period. As of 2008 median household income among Ecuadorians, both foreign and domestic-born, was exceeded only by median household income for Colombians when compared with the five largest Latino national groups in New York City. (see Table 4 and Figures 9-10.)

Median household income growth has been more pronounced among domestic-born Ecuadorians than their foreign born counterparts. This may simply be a function of the aging of the domestic born population, as a greater number of second generation Ecuadorians have aged into the workforce who previously were not income earners. The fact that Ecuadorian median household income is the second highest among all major Latino nationalities in New York City may also be a function of demographic shifts in the city's Latino population. The slight decline of the city's Puerto Rican population since 1990 and the marginal growth of Dominicans may have driven median incomes for these Latino national sub-groups downward since more affluent Puerto Ricans and Dominicans left for the suburbs.

	1990		2000		2008	
	Foreign Born	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Domestic Born
Dominican	\$37,950	\$29,700	\$40,000	\$35,713	\$37,884	\$37,171
Mexican	\$56,890	\$50,787	\$50,000	\$44,063	\$45,216	\$38,699
Puerto Rican	\$25,909	\$34,650	\$22,125	\$37,500	\$25,659	\$47,864
Ecuadorian	\$52,618	\$44,550	\$53,750	\$52,375	\$55,428	\$56,724
Colombian	\$52,800	\$52,800	\$52,437	\$53,750	\$53,873	\$63,140

Figure 9  
Annual Median Household Income for Domestic-Born  
Latinos by Nationality in New York City, 1990-2008  
(in inflation adjusted 2008 dollars)



## Household Income Distribution

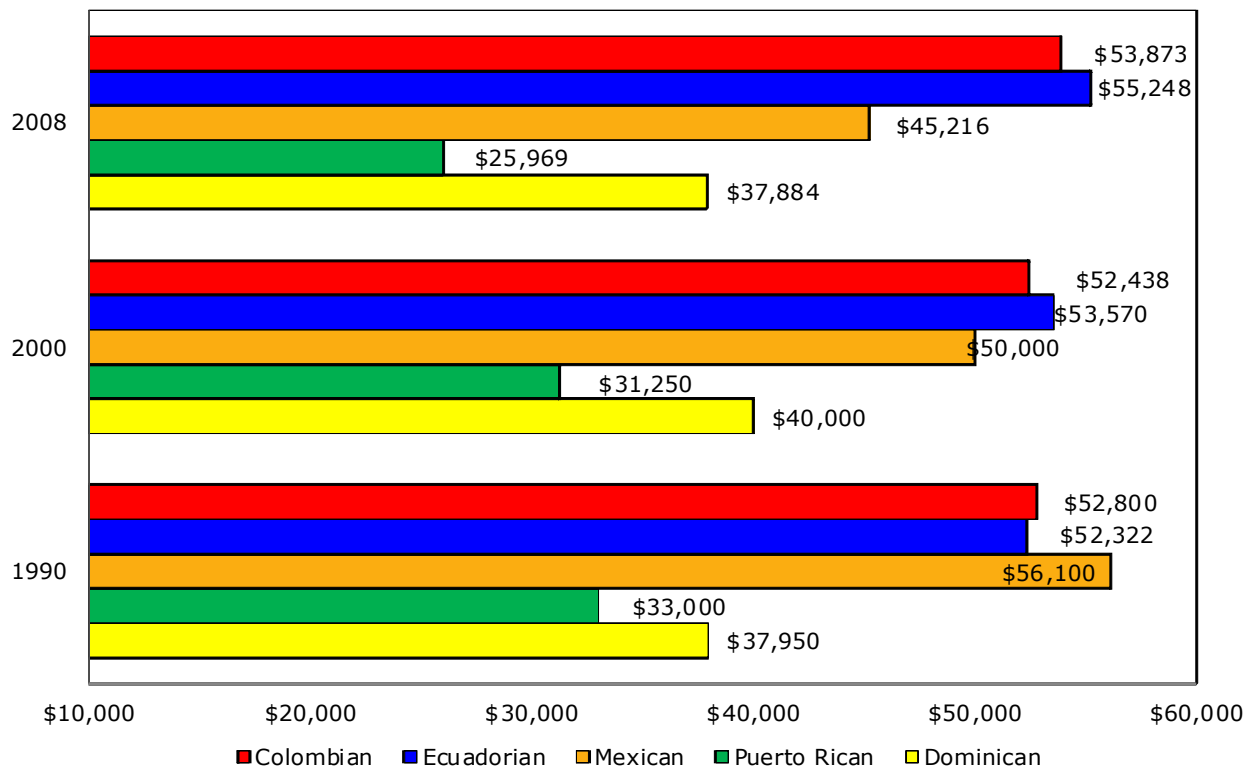
Income distribution trends for Ecuadorians point to a significant amount of upward economic mobility for the city's overall Ecuadorian population (see Table 5). We observed a significant increase in the higher income brackets for foreign-born Ecuadorian household; as of 2008 a majority of foreign born households (54%) had annual incomes greater than \$50,000, compared to approximately 42 percent in 1990. While this same figure has remained constant for domestic born Ecuadorians during the period we examined (48.3%), it is worth noting that the percentage of domestic born Ecuadorian households earning over \$100,000 annual has doubled between 1990 and 2008, which suggests considerable upward economic mobility for second plus generation Ecuadorians in recent years.

The stratification gap between the wealthiest and poorest Ecuadorian households has also narrowed between 1990 and 2008. In 1990, just over one in five (22%) foreign-born Ecuadorian households reported annual incomes under \$20,000. By 2008 that figure decreased by nearly half to just over 12.5 percent of all households. The same trend is observable among domestic-born Ecuadorian households, which saw a decrease in the percentage of households earning less than \$20,000 fall from one quarter (25.4%) in 1990 to approximately 13 percent in 2008.

This observed reduction in income stratification among Ecuadorians can probably be explained in some measure by rising levels of labor force participation (see Employment & Labor Force Participation section), as more domestic and foreign-born adults have entered the work force between 1990 and 2008. Upward income mobility may also be attributable to gains in educational attainment among both domestic and foreign-born Ecuadorians since 1990, where we observe a concurrent rise in the number of college educated Ecuadorians during the same period in which the income stratification gap decreased (See Educational Attainment section.) For the foreign-born segment of the population household income gains may also be driven by increases in the number of income earners per household, as newer migrants reside in multiple household dwellings. However it is also possible that income increases are the result of migrants taking on multiple jobs to meet their financial needs.

The overall profile of Ecuadorians therefore seems to suggest that migration to New York has been largely advantageous from an economic standpoint, which may provide incentives for Ecuadorians to come to the city in the near term. These findings also suggest that Ecuadorian migrants, at least for the time being, appear to be conforming to a traditional assimilation pattern for other upwardly mobile immigrant groups. However given that remittances to Ecuador are an important economic strategy for many Ecuadorians, it will be necessary to consider how remittances over the long term impact economic mobility for Ecuadorians in New York City.

Figure 10  
Annual Median Household Income for Foreign-Born Latinos  
by Nationality in New York City, 1990-2008  
(in inflation adjusted 2008 dollars)



	1990		2000		2008	
	Foreign Born	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Domestic Born	Foreign Born	Domestic Born
Less than 10,000	8.9%	4.4%	7.9%	5.8%	3.2%	4.2%
10,000-19,999	13.9%	21.3%	10.6%	8.7%	9.3%	9.1%
20,000-29,999	9.9%	19.4%	11.8%	11.4%	13.1%	20.1%
30,000-39,999	12.3%	12.6%	12.0%	14.7%	11.3%	8.3%
40,000-49,999	10.2%	0.3%	11.8%	5.1%	6.6%	5.9%
50,000-74,999	22.0%	12.8%	21.5%	23.9%	22.4%	16.2%
75,000-99,999	12.1%	15.5%	12.9%	13.4%	15.5%	11.5%
100,000-199,999	10.2%	11.0%	11.0%	16.9%	16.7%	20.1%
200,00+	0.4%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	2.0%	0.5%

## Employment & Labor Force Participation

On the whole labor force participation has increased for Ecuadorians in New York City (see Table 6.) Between 1990 and 2008 not only did the number of employed Ecuadorians nearly tripled, but the employment rate increased by almost six percentage points. The jump in labor force participation is even more significant between 2000 and 2008, where the Ecuadorian employment rate jumped by over 15 percentage points. The overall labor force participation rate is clearly indicative of greater employment opportunities. Much of the employment gain, particularly for foreign-born Ecuadorians, appears to be linked to increased opportunities in sectors such as construction (10.1%) and food service (9.7%) (Source 2008 ACS), which have been critical sectors in the New York City economy over the past decade. Meanwhile US-born Ecuadorians seem to be concentrated mainly in service and sales jobs (6.6%) or in office/administrative employment (5.4%), also important sectors of the local economy.

A noticeable difference between domestic-born and foreign-born Ecuadorians is that the employment rate is significantly higher for foreign-born than for US-born Ecuadorians in the city. It is important to note that the rate of domestic-born Ecuadorians who are not in the labor force, while declining, has remained significantly higher than the rate for their foreign-born counterparts, and barely exceeds 50 percent (as compared to 72% of foreign-born Ecuadorians in 2008.) One explanation for this is that many of the domestic-born adults, most of whom are under 30, may be pursuing full-time educational opportunities that the foreign born adults are not. The fact that rate of domestic-born Ecuadorians not active in the labor force has decreased since 1990 may mean that US-born Ecuadorians are delaying workforce participation until after pursuing educational opportunities.

When disaggregated by sex we find a number of significant differences in employment status for Ecuadorian men and women. However these differences play themselves in opposite ways between the domestic-born and foreign-born segments of the population. Among foreign-born Ecuadorians we find that women are significantly more likely to be unemployed or outside of the labor force (39.1%) than their male counterparts (13.4%) (See Figure 12.) While the percentage of foreign-born women not actively working dropped significantly in the from 2000 to 2008, the employment gap between male and female Ecuadorian immigrants has actually widened during that time frame, going from an 18 percentage point difference in 2000 to women being three times as likely to not be employed as of 2008. It is not clear whether the lower rates of labor force participation among foreign born women is driven by traditional gender roles, changes in the occupational sectors in which Ecuadorian women participate or the decision to go to school that accounts for lower labor force participation. That said, it should be noted that the majority of foreign-born women are now active in the labor force, presumably to provide needed income to foreign-born households.

The employment gender disparity trend among domestic-born Ecuadorians is reversed (See Figure 11.) Among US-born Ecuadorians it is men who are more likely to not be active in the labor force, as over half of the male population (53.1%) is not actively part of the labor force. Meanwhile domestic-born women have increasingly joined the labor force since 1990, and now a majority of whom are working. However the disparity between men and women is far less pronounced among the domestic-born Ecuadorian population than their foreign-born counterparts, though the fact that women have overtaken men in the domestic-born labor force is significant. One possibility is that US-born Ecuadorian men are opting to continue school, though it is also possible that changes in the city's labor market over the last decade have affected men more than women.

## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment for Ecuadorians 25 year of age and older improved significantly since 1990, despite a slight increase in the percentage of the population that lacks a high school degree between 2000 and 2008. While the percentage of Ecuadorians without a high school degree remained roughly constant during the period examined, the segment of the population with a bachelors degree or higher increased nearly five-fold between 1990 (1.9%) and 2000 (9.7%) before declining slightly by 2008 (8.5%) (See Table 7 and Figure 13.)

Foreign-born educational attainment improved noticeably between 1990 and 2008, particularly in terms of the percentage of Ecuadorian immigrants with a college degree for both foreign-born men and women. The percentage of foreign-born men with a bachelors degree or higher increased fourfold between 1990 and 2008, while women reported a tenfold increase in the percentage with bachelor's degrees during that period. Yet we still observed only minor changes in the percentage of foreign-born Ecuadorians with less than a high school education, for both men and women (see figures 16 and 17). This may be due in part to the influx of migrants, who may be arriving with lower levels of educational attainment. Nevertheless the data suggests that Ecuadorian migrants have made noticeable educational gains over the past few decades.

The domestic born population educational attainment trends are less encouraging, particularly between 2000 and 2008, where the percentage of domestic born adults with less than a high school education jumped dramatically (see Figures 14 and 15.) As the domestic-born population has grown the number of Ecuadorian adults who have not completed high school has spiked from just under one in five to over six in ten.



Table 6  
Employment Status For Foreign and Domestic-Born Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2008

1990										
	Domestic Born				Foreign Born				Total Population	
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Employed	1,230	47.0%	1,254	45.4%	21,051	83.4%	13,187	53.5%	36,722	66.4%
Unemployed	298	11.4%	232	8.4%	1,739	6.9%	2,346	9.5%	4,615	8.4%
Not in Labor Force	1,091	41.6%	1,277	46.2%	2,450	9.7%	9,110	37.0%	13,298	25.2%
Total	2,619	100.0%	2,763	100.0%	25,240	100.0%	24,643	100.0%	55,265	100.0%
2000										
	Domestic Born				Foreign Born				Total Population	
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Employed	4,082	62.7%	3,306	51.8%	34,335	66.5%	19,180	44.7%	60,903	56.7%
Unemployed	473	7.3%	472	7.4%	3,087	6.0%	3,289	7.6%	7,321	6.8%
Not in Labor Force	1,954	30.0%	2,600	40.8%	14,258	27.6%	20,477	47.7%	39,239	36.5%
Total	6,509	100.0%	6,378	100.0%	51,860	100.0%	42,946	100.0%	107,463	100.0%
2008										
	Domestic Born				Foreign Born				Total Population	
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Employed	5,631	46.7%	5,052	55.7%	57,549	50.6%	31,621	61.9%	99,853	72.0%
Unemployed	1,380	11.5%	7,41	8.2%	2,327	10.0%	3,128	6.1%	7,576	5.5%
Not in Labor Force	5,040	41.8%	3,278	36.1%	6,566	39.4%	16,358	32.0%	31,242	22.5%
Total	12,051	100.0%	9,071	100.0%	66,542	100.0%	51,107	100.0%	138,671	100.0%

Figure 11  
Unemployed and Not in Labor Force Rates for Domestic-Born Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2008

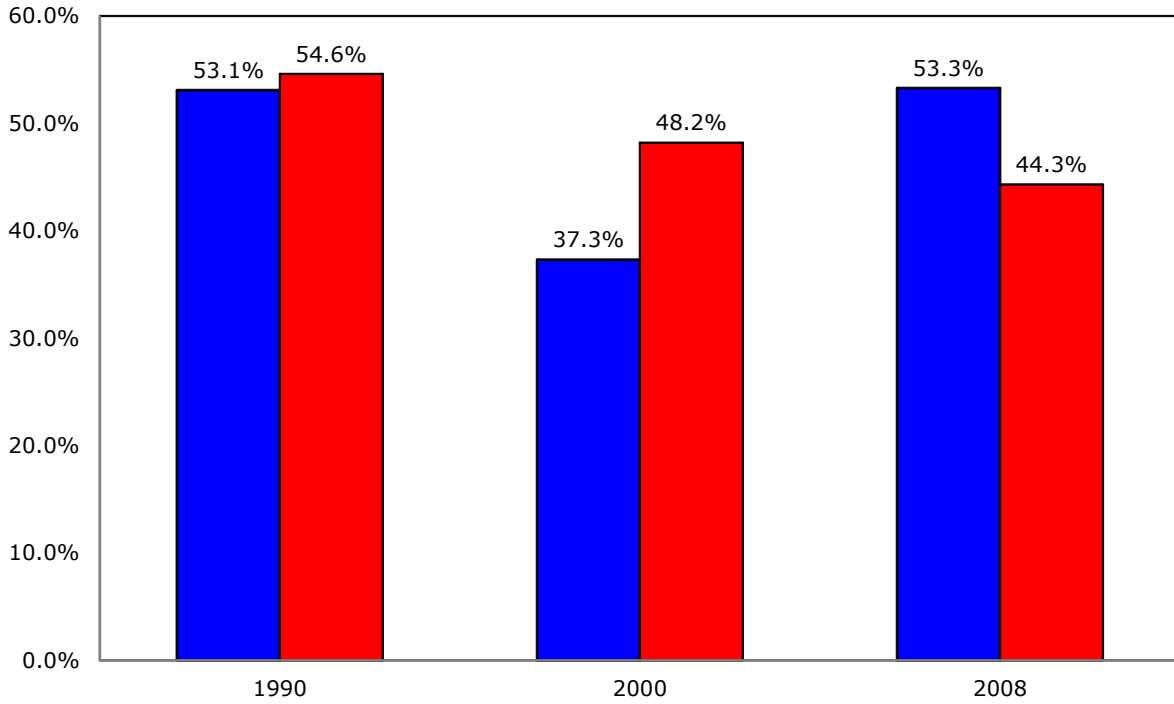


Figure 12  
Unemployed and Not in Labor Force Rates for Foreign-Born Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2008

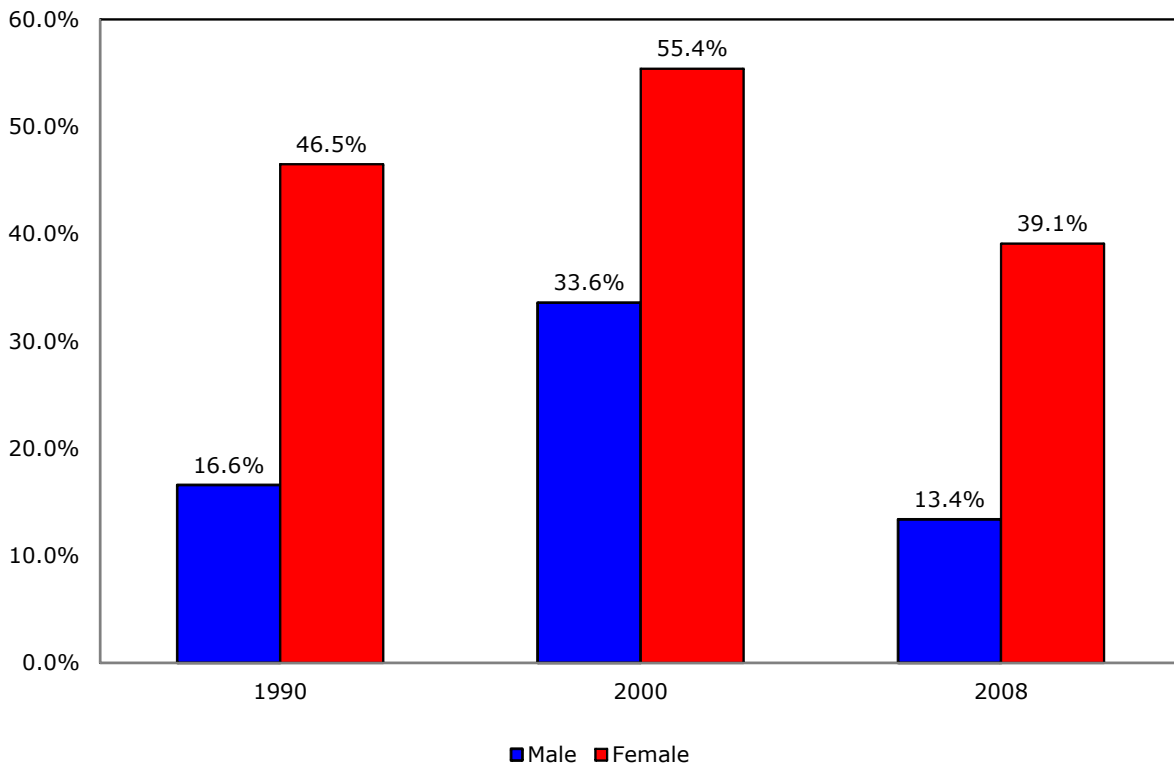


Table 7  
Educational Attainment by Sex for Domestic-Born and Foreign-Born  
Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2008

1990										
	Domestic Born				Foreign Born				Total Population	
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Did Not Graduate High School	205	27.2%	137	20.4%	10,324	47.1%	11,799	49.0%	22,465	47.4%
BA or Higher	45	6.0%	-	0.0%	563	2.6%	291	1.2%	899	1.9%
All Others	504	66.8%	535	79.2%	11,015	50.3%	12,002	49.8%	24,056	50.7%
Total	754	100.0%	672	100.0%	21,902	100.0%	24,092	100.0%	47,420	100.0%
2000										
	Domestic Born				Foreign Born				Total Population	
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Did Not Graduate High School	523	17.7%	340	12.6%	22,228	48.0%	19,926	46.4%	43,017	45.3%
BA or Higher	564	19.1%	852	31.5%	3,837	8.3%	3,962	9.2%	9,215	9.7%
All Others	1,873	63.3%	1,513	55.9%	20,228	43.7%	19,021	44.3%	42,635	44.9%
Total	2,960	100.0%	2,705	100.0%	46,293	100.0%	42,909	100.0%	94,867	100.0%
2008										
	Domestic Born				Foreign Born				Total Population	
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Did Not Graduate High School	19,329	59.3%	15,422	53.9%	33,555	44.7%	29,209	44.1%	97,515	48.1%
BA or Higher	1,332	4.1%	1,450	5.1%	7,155	9.5%	7,411	11.3%	17,348	8.5%
All Others	11,908	36.6%	11,726	41.0%	34,370	45.8%	29,544	44.6%	87,548	43.2%
Total	32,569	100.0%	28,598	100.0%	75,080	100.0%	66,164	100.0%	202,411	100.0%

Figure 13  
Educational Attainment for Ecuadorians  
25 Years of Age and Older In New York City, 1990-2008

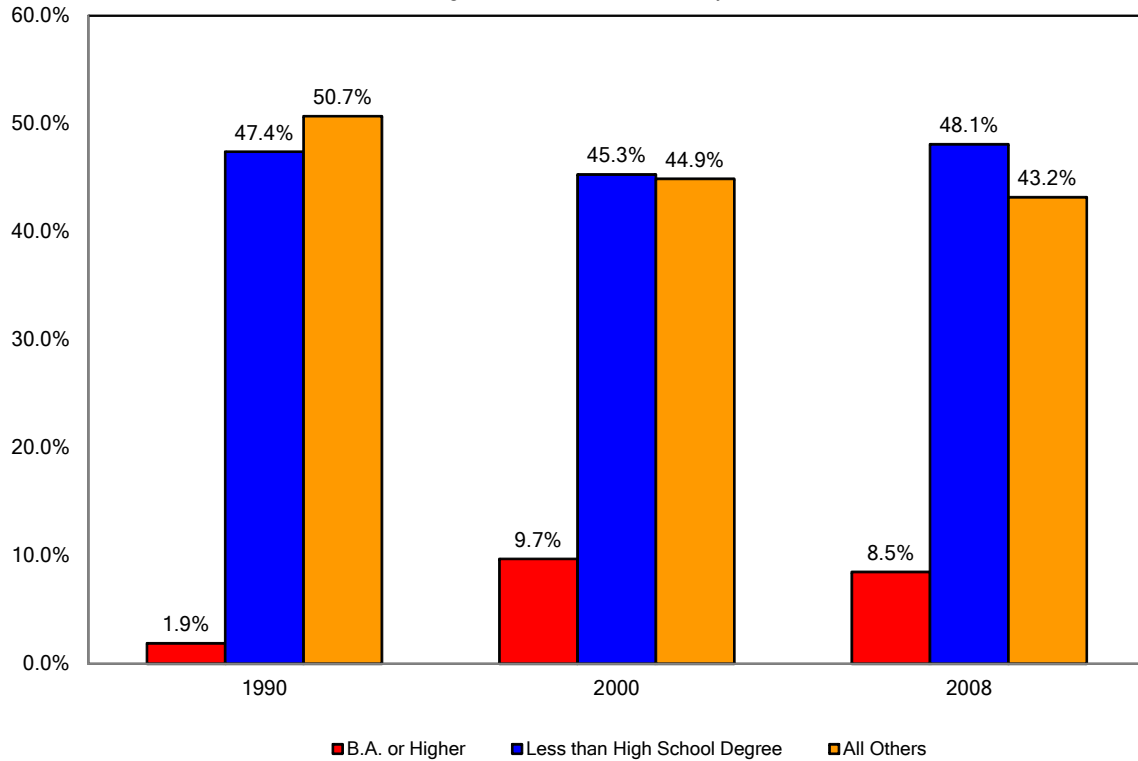


Figure 14  
Educational Attainment for Domestic-Born  
Ecuadorian Men 25 Years of Age and Older in New York City, 1990-2008

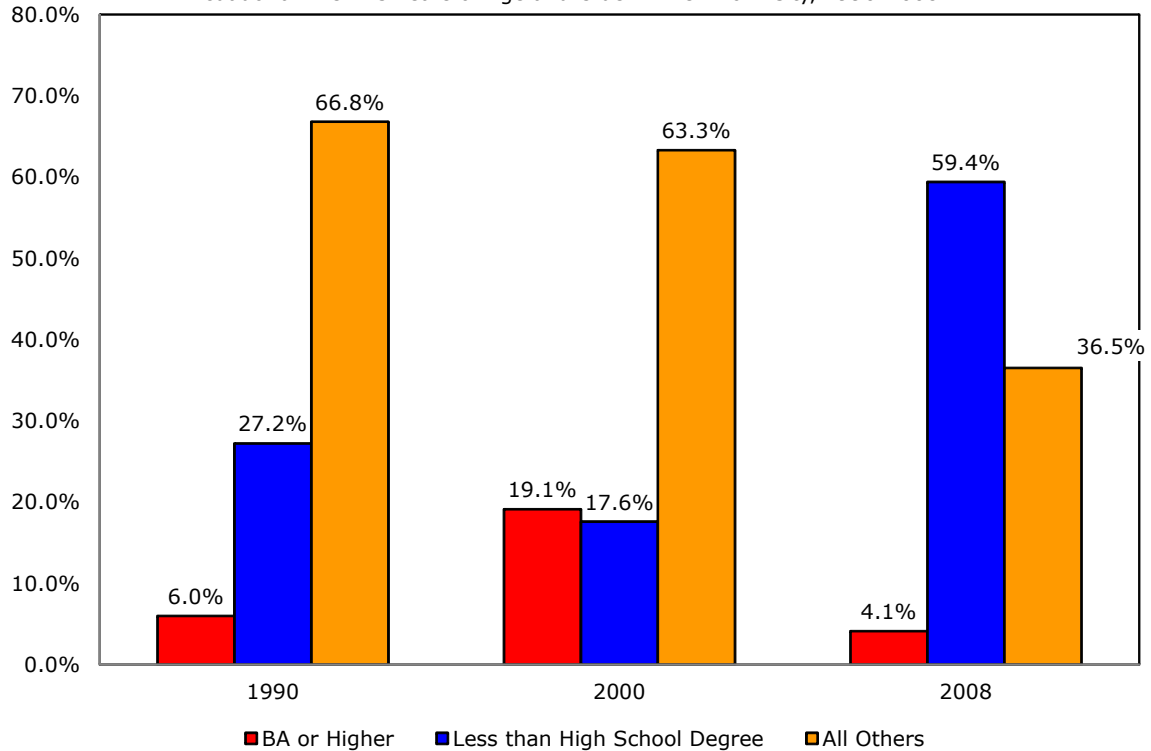


Figure 15  
Educational Attainment for Domestic-Born  
Ecuadorian Women 25 Year of Age and Older in New York City, 1990-2008

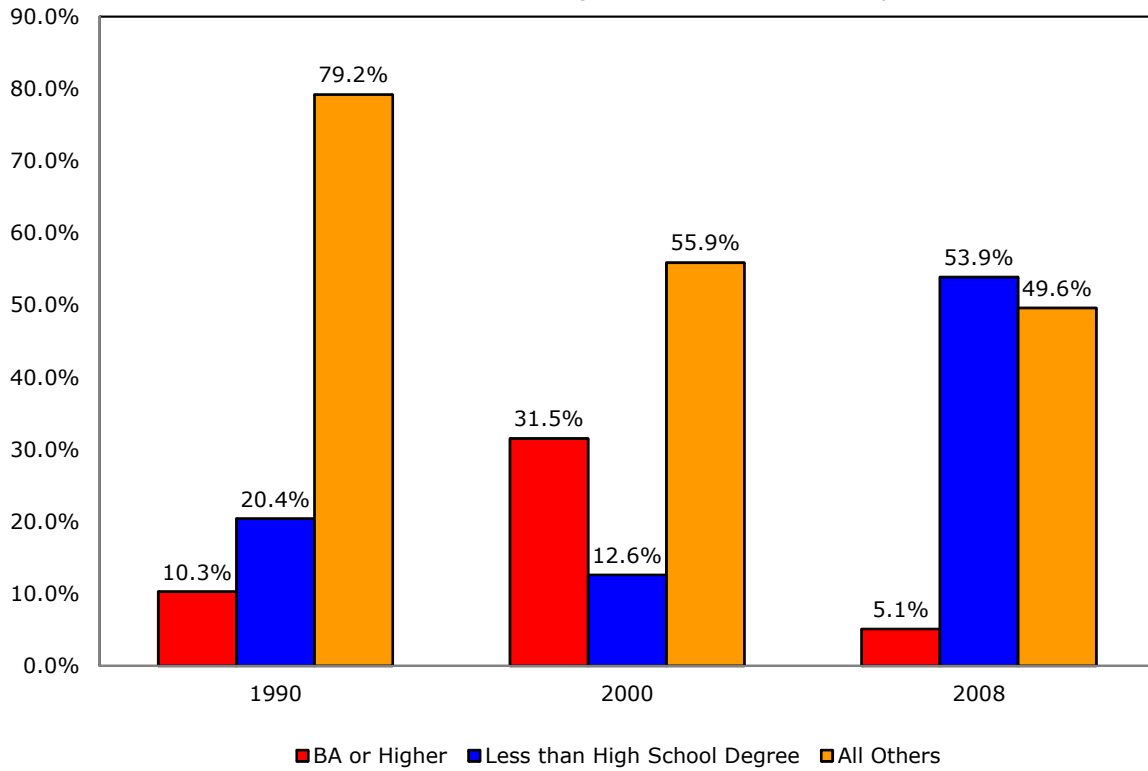


Figure 16  
Educational Attainment for Foreign-Born Ecuadorian Men  
25 Years of Age and Older in New York City , 1990-2008

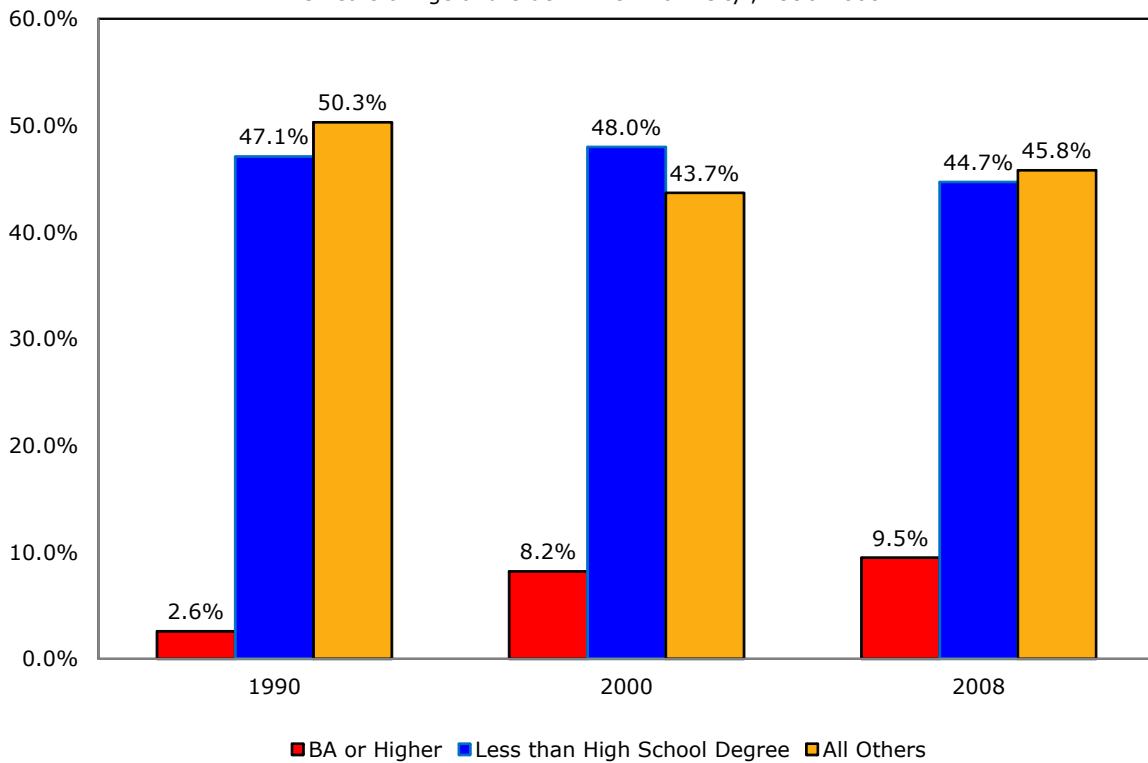
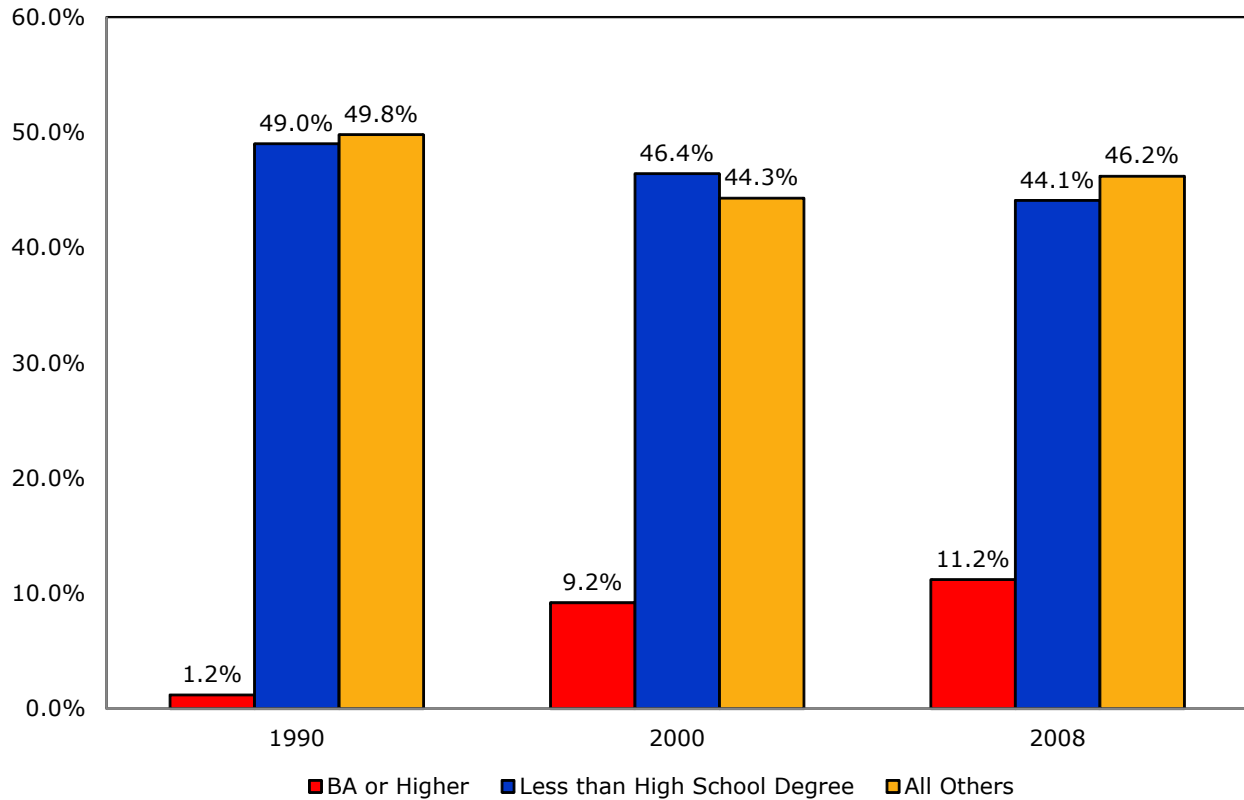


Figure 17  
Educational Attainment for Foreign-Born Ecuadorian Women  
25 and Older in New York City, 1990-2008



## Poverty

In general poverty rates among the city's Ecuadorian population have remained relatively constant between 1990 and 2008, with approximately one out of five Ecuadorians living below the poverty threshold (see Figure 18.) In fact since 2000 the poverty rate among Ecuadorians declined by three percentage points. This finding would appear to be consistent with the fact that employment rates and household income have improved for the Ecuadorian population during this time period.

When we disaggregated poverty data by domestic and foreign-born groups, we observed noticeable differences between these two groups (see Figure 19.) While poverty rates for among both groups have declined, US-born Ecuadorians remain more susceptible to poverty, as nearly a quarter of this group still lived below the poverty line as of 2008. On the one hand higher poverty rates for US-born Ecuadorians may reflect a transition for the younger Ecuadorians into the workforce. On the other hand, the fact that educational attainment rates for the domestic born population are actually lower than the foreign-born population may be associated with higher poverty rates among the domestic-born population. If this pattern persists as domestic-born Ecuadorians continue to age, then it will be important to consider whether or not we will in fact observe inter-generational upward social mobility in the future for the Ecuadorian population in New York City, despite the previously observed income gains for the Ecuadorian community

Figure 18  
Poverty Status of the Ecuadorian Population In New York City, 1990-2008

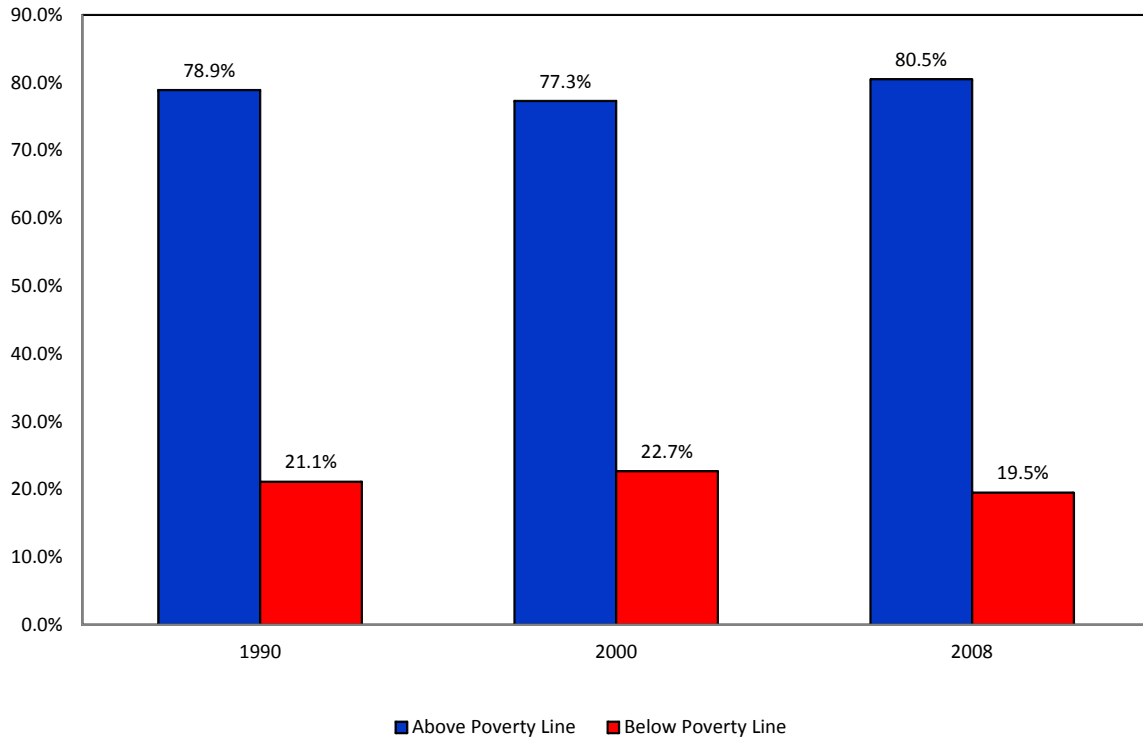
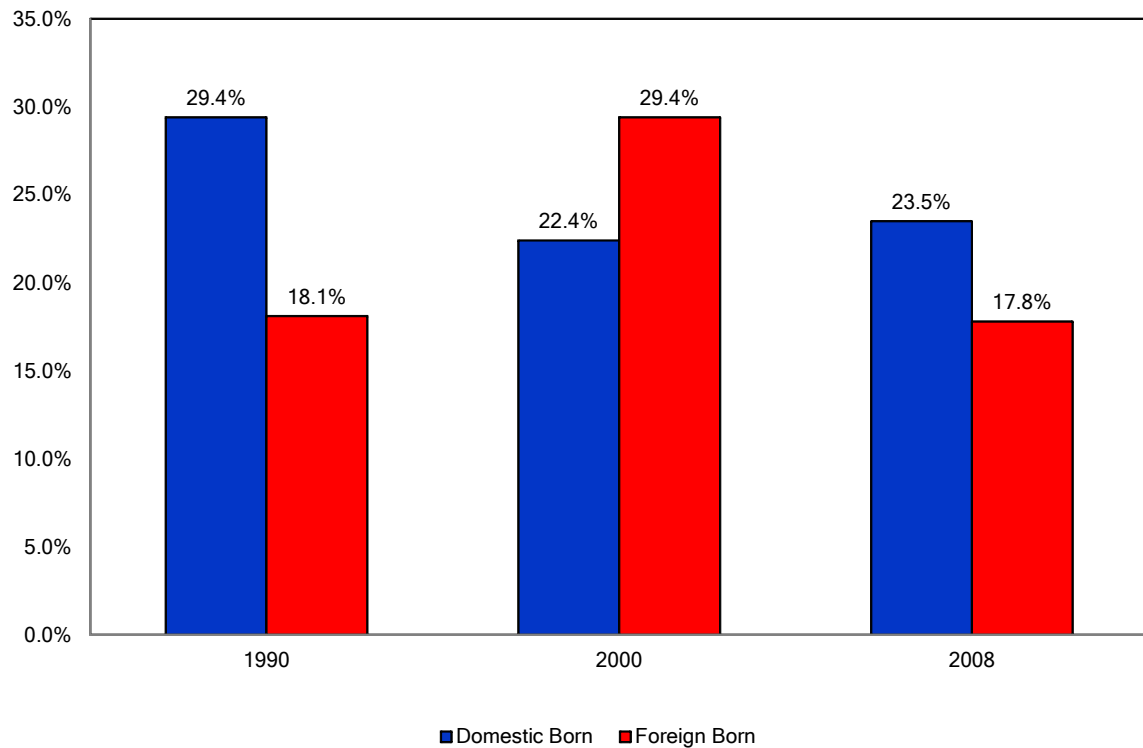


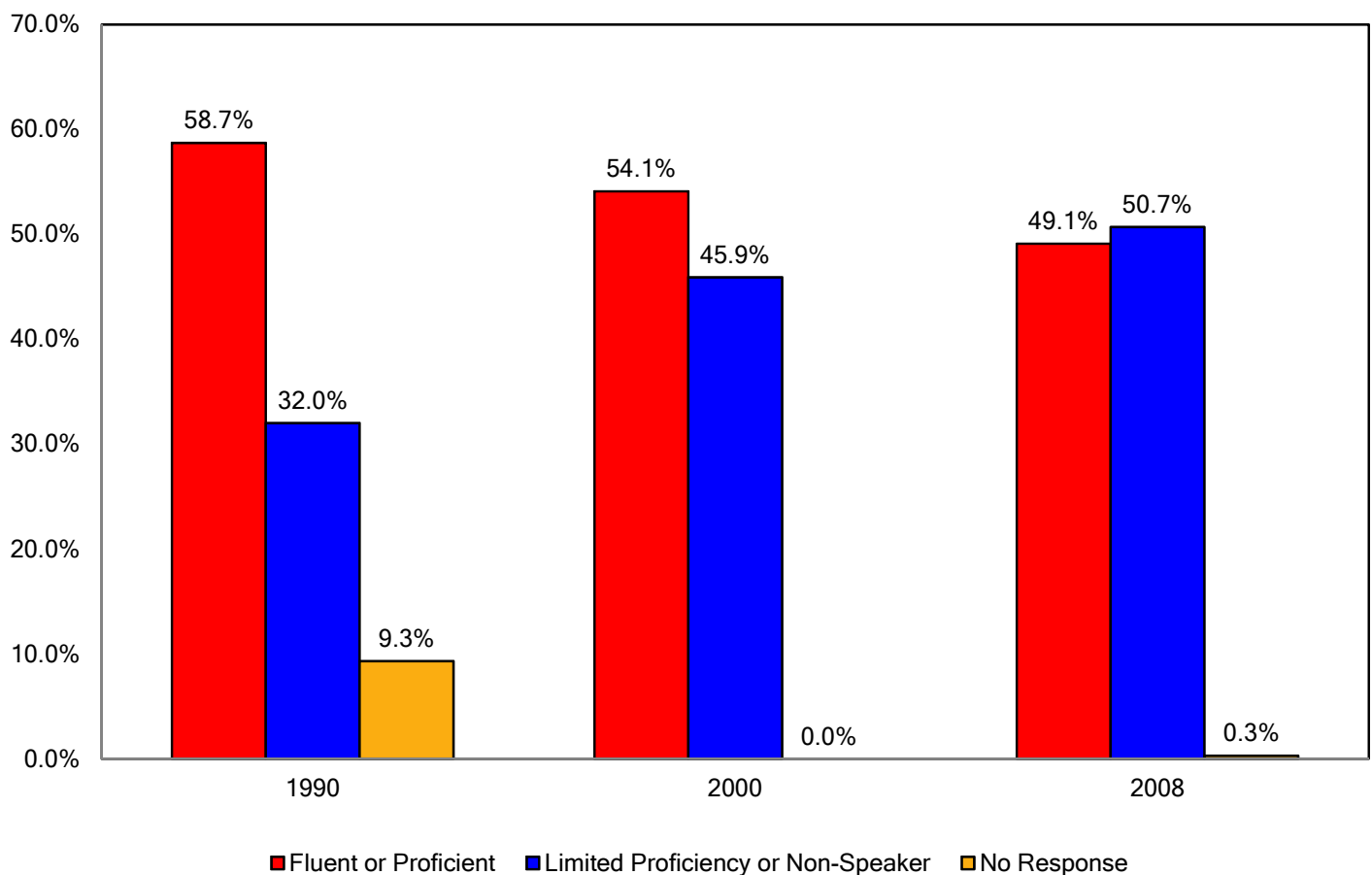
Figure 19  
Poverty Rates for Ecuadorians by Nativity in New York City, 1990-2008



## English Proficiency

Language proficiency has emerged as a significant issue for the majority of Ecuadorian immigrants in New York City (See Figure 20.) Proficiency among the foreign-born population has declined between 1990 to 2008, while not in dramatic fashion, sufficiently so as to make the Ecuadorian population a predominantly non-English speaking group in New York City. While a slight majority (53.7%) of foreign-born Ecuadorian migrants reported having English proficiency in 1990, by 2008 just over half (50.8%) reported having limited or no English proficiency. This trend is likely due to the rapid influx of Ecuadorian immigrants during this period, though it will be important to monitor language proficiency trends and assess its impact on socio-economic performance in the near future.

Figure 20  
English Language Proficiency Among Foreign-Born  
Ecuadorians in New York City, 1990-2008

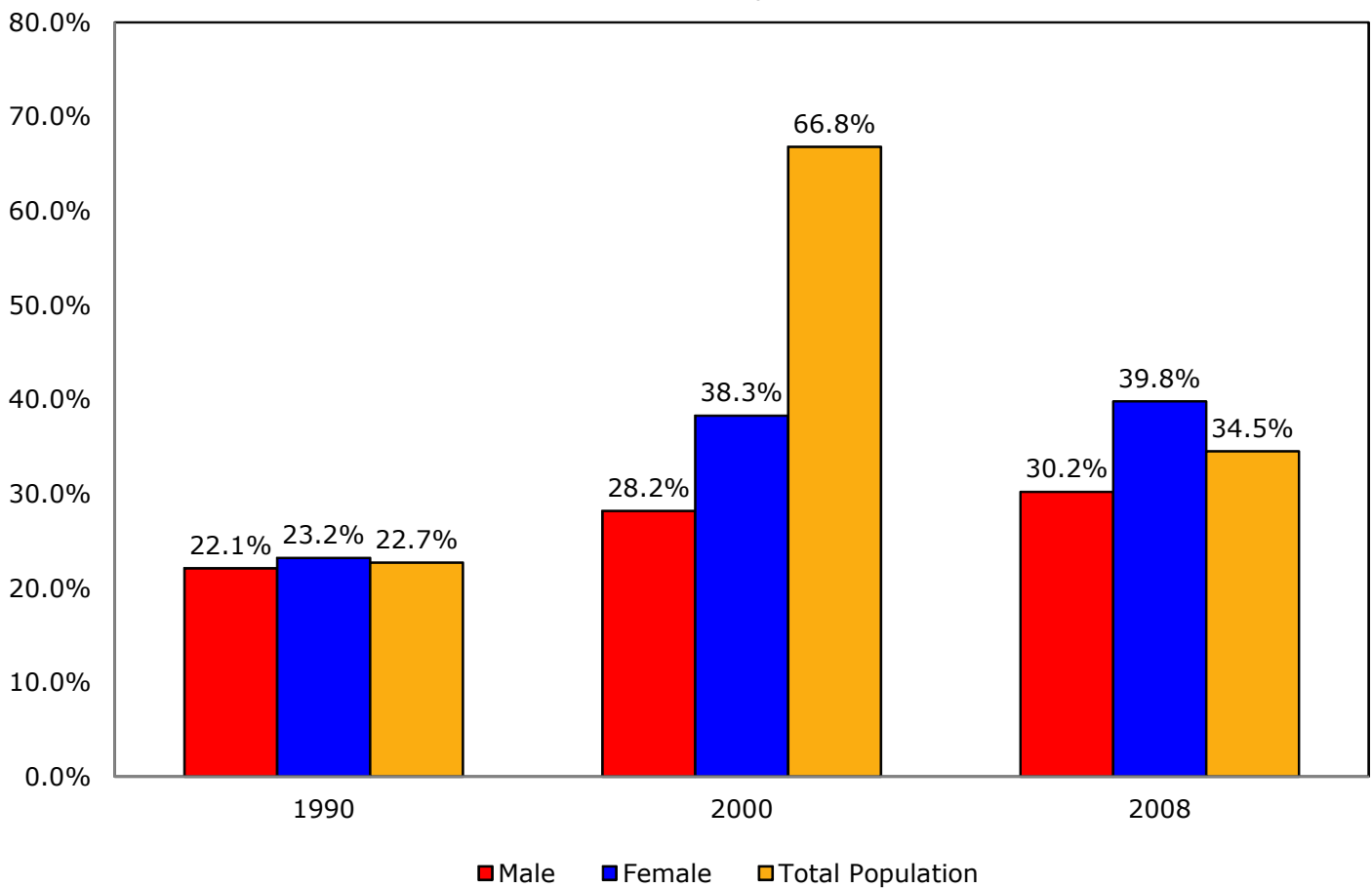




## Citizenship

Citizenship rates for the foreign-born Ecuadorian population have increased since between 1990 and 2008, (see Figure 21.) Approximately one third (34.5%) of foreign-born Ecuadorian adults are citizens in 2008, as compared to just over one-fifth in 1990 (22.7%) Given the rapid growth of the foreign-born population during this period the increase in the citizenship rates is significant and points to a concerted effort by Ecuadorians to obtain legal status. This citizenship increase, coupled with the population growth, also points to the growth of the Ecuadorian community as potentially significant electoral constituency in the future. Between the rising citizenship rates and the maturation of the US-born Ecuadorian population, the prospects for Ecuadorians to have some clout in New York City electoral politics seem encouraging.

Figure 21  
Citizenship Rates for Foreign-Born Ecuadorians  
Over 18 in New York City, 1990-2008



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## Highlights

- The Ecuadorian population in New York City doubled between 1990 and 2008 becoming the fourth largest Latino nationality behind Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Mexicans.
- Queens had the greatest concentration of Ecuadorians in the city with over three-fifths of all Ecuadorians living there in 2008.
- Nearly three-quarters of all Ecuadorians in the City were under 45 years of age in 2008.
- Ecuadorians earned higher median household incomes in 2008 than Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, or Mexicans but lower than Colombians.
- About 13% of Ecuadorian households earned under \$20,000 in median incomes in 2008 but 32% earned more than \$75,000.
- About 9% of Ecuadorian adults had earned a B.A. degree or higher in 2008, although this percentage was lower than in 2000 primarily because of the arrival of so many less educated migrants from Ecuador.
- Poverty rates for Ecuadorians in the City have not fluctuated significantly between 1990 and 2008 remaining around 20%.
- About half of all Ecuadorians in the City demonstrated good English language skills in 2008.
- About two-thirds of all foreign-born Ecuadorians had acquired U.S. citizenship by 2008.