



LIVING CITIES: THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

# ATLANTA

IN FOCUS: *A Profile from Census 2000*

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION CENTER ON URBAN AND METROPOLITAN POLICY

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*NOTE: The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the trustees, officers, or staff members of the Brookings Institution or the board or staff of Living Cities and its member organizations.*

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# PREFACE

The United States is undergoing a period of dynamic, volatile change, comparable in scale and complexity to the latter part of the 19th century.

Populations are aging—affecting settlement patterns, lifestyle choices, and consumption trends. Diversity is spreading across the map, thanks to the most significant wave of immigration in 100 years. And the nation continues to shift to a knowledge- and service-based economy, placing new demands on education and workforce systems.

For cities and their leaders, such changes make understanding the census much more than an academic exercise. In fact, Census 2000 data are “setting the paradigm” for major political, policy, and economic choices in the coming years, and defining the social context within which these choices are made.

Information about the residential patterns of poor and working poor families is beginning to shape debates on issues as diverse as federal welfare reform, school equity financing, and suburban job, housing, and transportation access. Data on population and economic decentralization are heightening concerns over metropolitan development patterns and their implications for low income workers and neighborhoods. New findings about the changing composition of city populations are affecting local debates over the appropriate mix of housing and city services. In short,

to understand the policy context for cities and neighborhoods requires understanding the census.

*Atlanta in Focus: A Profile from Census 2000* seeks to promote such understandings.

One of 23 city-focused databooks keyed to the 23 cities in which the Living Cities consortium focuses its investments, this report by the Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy seeks to gauge the health of Atlanta’s neighborhoods and families in an accessible, data-rich format that allows for easy comparisons among cities.

To that end, this and the other databooks have been prepared within a uniform framework. Each book places one of the 23 cities in the context of both the 23 cities in the Living Cities group and the largest 100 cities in the nation. Each organizes demographic and economic data pertaining to ten sets of indicators: population, race and ethnicity, immigration, age, households and families, education, work, commuting, income and poverty, and housing.

At the same time, while each city's databook includes the same indicators and comparisons, each is customized in important ways. The databooks provide tailored presentations and interpretations of every chart, table, and map for the specific city being examined. In addition, each databook presents a localized assessment in the form of an executive summary on how that particular city has performed on key indicators. These assessments focus principally on the central city in each region—in this case the City of Atlanta—as seen in the context of its region and other cities.

How accurate and current are these statistics and comparisons drawn in large part from Census 2000 in depicting unfolding realities in Atlanta and its region today? We believe very accurate.

Even though this report appears three years after much of the data was collected and a significant slowing of the national economy had set in, the basic profile etched at the height of the last business cycle remains compelling and relevant. First, many of the indicators assembled here are not subject to a great deal of change within three years. Second, the national slump likely alters the relative position of cities in city-by-city comparison only minimally. And finally, the 2000 data—collected at the culmination of an unprecedented period of expansion—represent a kind of high-water baseline that poses a daunting challenge to cities in the current decade. That also continues to make 2000 data compelling, especially since many of the social indicators were troubling even then prior to the weakening of the economy.

At any rate, as America's cities enter the 21st century, Census 2000 provides a unique window of opportunity to assess recent progress and future direction in Atlanta. We hope that these databooks provide individuals and organizations a clear picture of the diverse market and social environments in which cities and neighborhoods operate, and that the reports inform their efforts to create strong and sustainable communities for urban families.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Atlanta's population rebounded in the 1990s, but Census 2000 reveals that rapid suburban growth continued even as widening social and economic divisions split the core.

After losing population in the 1980s, the City of Atlanta gained 22,000 residents in the 1990s. Over the decade, however, Atlanta's suburbs grew by an astounding 44 percent, so that today only one in ten residents of the region lives in the central city. Nor was growth uniform across the city—most neighborhoods south of downtown actually lost residents over the decade. Even international immigrants to the region are moving straight to the suburbs. The result has been a rapid decentralization of jobs across the region. Suburb-to-suburb commutes predominate in greater Atlanta, and the economic primacy of the core is dissipating.

Despite these patterns, overall economic indicators in Atlanta moved in a positive direction in the 1990s. Median incomes rose, poverty dropped, and the number of middle-class households remained stable. And yet, these aggregate trends mask disturbing differences by race. Blacks, whites, and Hispanics in the city live in largely segregated neighborhoods. Annual household incomes for blacks trail those for whites by a stunning \$38,000. Families with children, most of whom are African American, face particular challenges—close to one-half live below or near the poverty line. These income and resource gaps are mirrored in homeownership trends by race over the decade: White homeownership increased, black homeownership was stagnant, and Hispanic homeownership declined.

Along these lines and others, then, *Atlanta in Focus: A Profile from Census 2000* concludes that:

**Atlanta's population “rebounded” during the 1990s, but the region still decentralized dramatically.** After losing 7 percent of its population in the 1980s, Atlanta grew by 6 percent, or 22,000 residents, in the 1990s. The city's downtown and northwestern neighborhoods experienced strong population growth. At the same time, though, Atlanta's suburbs added 2.1 million people—roughly 100 residents for every net new resident in the city. As a result, economic activity in the region is shifting outward. Fully three-fourths of the region's workers commute from homes in the suburbs to jobs in the suburbs, and nearly two-thirds of city residents drive alone to work. Despite a rise in downtown living, the core of the Atlanta region is losing ground as an employment destination.

**The city's racial and ethnic profile is changing.** Like many other cities in the South, Atlanta has a predominantly African American population. Yet the city actually lost black residents in the 1990s, while it gained modest numbers of Hispanic, white, and Asian residents. Atlanta's increasing diversity owes in part to a relatively small but fast-growing immigrant population. New arrivals from a varied set of world regions served to more than double the size of the city's foreign-born

population over the decade, to 27,000 in 2000. As with population generally in the Atlanta metro area, however, immigrants are choosing the suburbs over the city by wide margins. For every new foreign-born resident the city of Atlanta added in the 1990s, its suburbs added 21.

**Atlanta has a significant number of young professionals, but few married-couple families.** A large share of Atlanta's population is in its twenties and early thirties. Some members of this age group are recent immigrants to the U.S., evidenced by the fact that men outnumber women. Many, however, are young professionals who live alone or with friends—more than 50 percent of the city's households are “non-families.” The city's appeal for such young singles is confirmed by the large share (30 percent) of Atlanta residents who arrived within the last five years. Also underscoring the importance of the unattached is the fact that just 25 percent of Atlanta households contain a married couple, compared with 36 percent in the average Living City. In addition, trends in the 1990s suggest that young families continue to leave Atlanta: The number of married-couple families grew in the suburbs by 180,000, but declined in the central city.

**Stark differences in education, work, and income divide the city's race groups.** Atlanta's overall trends in human capital and income were quite positive in the 1990s. Median household income rose significantly, poverty dropped, and the number of middle-class households was relatively stable. The city owes this economic success in part to its proportion of college graduates, which is the fifth-highest among the 23 Living Cities. Behind these promising aggregate trends, however, lie dramatic differences by race. In particular, the typical household income for blacks lags that for whites by \$38,000; the Hispanic-white

gap is \$25,000. Nearly one in four Atlanta children, most of whom are African American, have no working parents. While more than two-thirds of white adults in Atlanta have a bachelor's degree, only 13 percent of blacks do. The result is that a third of the city's blacks live below the poverty line, as do 40 percent of its children—highest among the Living Cities.

**Whites made homeownership gains in Atlanta during the 1990s, but other groups did not.** Atlanta's overall homeownership rate increased marginally in the 1990s, and ranks low (83rd) among the 100 largest cities. In part, this reflects the city's housing stock, which contains more multifamily units than other cities. Yet it also reflects the lack of progress that the city's minority groups made on homeownership during the decade. More white households (55 percent) owned their homes in 2000 than in 1990. The homeownership rate for blacks (38 percent), however, stagnated, and the rate for Hispanics actually dropped. Meanwhile, rents rose in the city in the 1990s, increasing the need for affordable housing, and making it harder for moderate-income renters to save for homeownership opportunities.

By presenting the indicators on the following pages, *Atlanta in Focus: A Profile from Census 2000* seeks to give readers a better sense of where Atlanta and its residents stand in relation to their peers, and how the 1990s shaped the city, its neighborhoods, and the entire Atlanta region. Living Cities and the Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy hope that this information will prompt a fruitful dialogue among city and community leaders about the direction Atlanta should take in the coming decade.

# METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

The information presented in *Atlanta in Focus: A Profile from Census 2000* derives almost entirely from the U.S. decennial censuses conducted in April 1990 and April 2000. The decennial census is the most comprehensive source of information on the U.S. population, and because all U.S. households are interviewed, it is unique in its ability to describe population characteristics at very small levels of geography.

The decennial census is comprised of two separate but related surveys. In the “short form” survey, all households in the U.S. are asked a series of basic questions on age, race/ethnicity, sex, the relationships among household members, and whether or not the home was owned or rented. Approximately one in six households receive a “long form” survey that asks, in addition to the short form questions, more detailed questions on social, economic, and housing characteristics. The Census Bureau employs statistical weighting to extrapolate from the long form data to arrive at a representative portrait of all U.S. households.

Geography provides the framework for interpreting and understanding census data. The Census Bureau tabulates information from the decennial census for a range of geographies. In this databook, we present information for several different levels of geography:

**Cities**—Many of the tables and charts show citywide data. In this databook, Atlanta is compared to the other 22 Living Cities, to the other 99 cities among the 100 largest in the nation, and to other Living Cities located in the Southeast region of the U.S. (Baltimore, Miami, and Washington).

**Metropolitan areas**—Metro areas are established by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to represent a collection of highly-populated communities that exhibit a high degree of economic interdependence. As such, they roughly characterize regional labor markets. Where metro-area-level data are presented in this databook, those data represent either the OMB-defined Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA—a metro area not closely associated with another) or the Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA—a metro area representing one part of a larger area with one million or more people). In this databook, the Atlanta metro area—which OMB designates as the



Atlanta, GA MSA—consists of 20 Georgia counties: Barrow, Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Rockdale, Spalding, and Walton.

**Suburbs**—Information for suburbs is sometimes presented alongside that for cities. We define suburbs as the part of the metro area located outside the central city. In the case of Atlanta, the suburbs include parts of the 20-county region outside the City of Atlanta.

**Census tracts**—Census tracts are subdivisions of counties defined by the Census Bureau to contain between 1,000 and 8,000 people; most contain 3,000 to 4,000 people, and most researchers equate urban census tracts with neighborhoods. We map several indicators at the census tract level to demonstrate differences among neighborhoods in the City of Atlanta and its suburbs.

This databook primarily focuses on how the population, employment, and housing characteristics of Atlanta and its neighborhoods compared to those in other cities in 2000, as well as how those characteristics changed between 1990 and 2000. Data from the Census 2000 short form have been available since summer 2001, and data from the long form followed one year later. Thus, many of the tables, charts, and maps shown in this databook derive from survey data collected a little over three years ago.

A note on the timeliness of this data: Though much of it dates to 2000, this data remains accurate, relevant, and compelling. The age profile of the population, characteristics of housing stock, and average size of house-

holds—none of these, for starters, are likely to change significantly within a period of a few years. At the same time, the numerous comparisons of cities on or another on these indicators likely hold. To the extent that larger national trends—aging of the population, or increasing enrollment in higher education—alter city conditions, they alter all cities. That means the relative rankings of cities are not subject to dramatic change. Finally, trends between 1990 and 2000 are important in their own right, as they show the progress cities made during a period of unprecedented economic expansion. That progress establishes a baseline for city performance during the 2000–2010 decade.

At the same time, though, the economy did enter a downturn soon after Census 2000 was conducted, and the effects are still being felt today in the labor market—through increased unemployment, stagnant incomes, and rising poverty. We have used post-census data, where available, to provide a more up-to-date picture of employment in cities. Most demographic surveys conducted between decennial censuses, however, do not include large enough samples to provide descriptions of changing conditions at the local level. In the Current Population Survey, for instance, states (and in some cases, metropolitan areas) are the smallest geographical units for which labor force statistics are available.

Some federal agencies do, however, collect annual demographic and economic data for sub-state levels of geography between decennial censuses. Following is a list of topics and intercensal data sources available from the federal government that individuals and organizations working at the local level can use to track and update changes in the indicators presented in this databook:

**Population**—The Census Bureau’s Intercensal Population Estimates Program provides population estimates for metropolitan areas, counties, cities, and towns between decennial censuses. These estimates are based on population counts from the most recent census, adjusted using data from local records. Data are published annually, delayed approximately one year from the date at which they are estimated. See [eire.census.gov/popest/estimates.php](http://eire.census.gov/popest/estimates.php).

**Age and race/ethnicity**—The same Census Bureau program publishes population estimates annually by age and race/ethnicity for geographies down to the county level—similar estimates are not available for cities. The first post-census update of these data (estimates as of July 2002) will be made available in summer 2003.

**Migration**—The Internal Revenue Service publishes county-to-county migration files that allow users to track, on an annual basis, the origins, destinations, and incomes of families migrating between counties and metropolitan areas. Data are released annually for migration flows two years prior. See “Tax Stats” at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

**Work**—The Bureau of Labor Statistics, through its Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, publishes monthly estimates of total employment and unemployment for counties, metropolitan areas, and cities with populations of at least 25,000. Data are released monthly on the employment situation two months prior. See [www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm).

**Income and poverty**—The Census Bureau Small Area Estimates Branch employs several federal data sources to produce annual estimates of poverty rates and median household incomes for all states and counties, as well as poverty rates for all school districts. These data are published with an approximate three-year lag. See [www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe.html).

**Housing**—The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council—a consortium of the federal banking regulators—publishes data annually on all mortgages originated in the U.S. by financial institutions, with detail down to the census tract level. These data can be used to track homeownership and home value trends in metro areas, counties, cities, and neighborhoods. Data are released each summer for mortgages originated in the prior year. See [www.ffiec.gov/hmda/publicdata.htm](http://www.ffiec.gov/hmda/publicdata.htm).

**State and local data**—To administer programs and make policy, state and local agencies also track a wealth of administrative data that can reveal much about the social and economic health of individuals and families in cities and neighborhoods. For a comprehensive guide to the types of state and local administrative data that can be used to describe small areas, see “Catalog of Administrative Data Sources,” by Claudia Coulton with Lisa Nelson and Peter Tatian, available at [www.urban.org/nnip/publications.html](http://www.urban.org/nnip/publications.html).

# POPULATION

Population growth does not by itself define a city's health. Nevertheless, the fact that people “vote with their feet” makes population change a good first-order indicator of the appeal of a place. This section accordingly details the basic population trajectory of Atlanta and its neighborhoods during the 1990s.

Nationwide, the U.S. added 32.7 million people in the 1990s, the largest intercensal population increase in its history. Growth was widespread—Every state in the union added people, the first time this had occurred in the 20th century. Moreover, historically high levels of international immigration supplemented significant “natural increase”—an excess of births over deaths—in fueling the nation's population growth.

And yet, not all places in the U.S. shared equally in the broader population increase. The South and West absorbed more than three-quarters of the nation's growth in the 1990s. Cities added population at a faster rate than they had in either the 1970s or 1980s, but suburbs grew nearly twice as fast. And even within cities, core neighborhoods around the downtown in many cases lost population, while “outer-ring” neighborhoods at the urban periphery expanded rapidly.

The indicators on the following pages begin to display these trends by depicting population change in the City of Atlanta and its metropolitan area, in other cities and regions, and in Atlanta's own neighborhoods.

## Atlanta is the 39th largest city in the U.S., and only 10 percent of its region’s residents live in the central city

*Total population, 2000: Living Cities and 100 largest cities*

Rank	Living Cities	Central City	Metro	Peer Cities	Rank	Central City	Metro
1	New York, NY	8,008,278	9,314,235	Long Beach, CA	34	461,522	9,519,338
2	Los Angeles, CA	3,694,820	9,519,338	Albuquerque, NM	35	448,607	712,738
3	Chicago, IL	2,896,016	8,272,768	Kansas City, MO	36	441,545	1,776,062
4	Philadelphia, PA	1,517,550	5,100,931	Fresno, CA	37	427,652	922,516
5	Phoenix, AZ	1,321,045	3,251,876	Virginia Beach, VA	38	425,257	1,569,541
6	Dallas, TX	1,188,580	3,519,176	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>416,474</b>	<b>4,112,198</b>
7	San Antonio, TX	1,144,646	1,592,383	Sacramento, CA	40	407,018	1,628,197
8	Detroit, MI	951,270	4,441,551	Oakland, CA	41	399,484	2,392,557
9	Indianapolis, IN	781,870	1,607,486	Mesa, AZ	42	396,375	3,251,876
10	Columbus, OH	711,470	1,540,157	Tulsa, OK	43	393,049	803,235
11	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	669,769	2,968,806	Omaha, NE	44	390,007	716,998
12	Baltimore, MD	651,154	2,552,994				
13	Boston, MA	589,141	3,406,829				
14	Washington, DC	572,059	4,923,153				
15	Seattle, WA	563,374	2,414,616				
16	Denver, CO	554,636	2,109,282				
17	Portland, OR	529,121	1,918,009				
18	Cleveland, OH	478,403	2,250,871				
19	Kansas City, MO	441,545	1,776,062				
<b>20</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>416,474</b>	<b>4,112,198</b>				
21	Oakland, CA	399,484	2,392,557				
22	Miami, FL	362,470	2,253,362				
23	Newark, NJ	273,546	2,032,989				
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>28,334,103</b>	<b>83,271,629</b>				

## Atlanta's population declined in the 1980s but rebounded in the 1990s

Percent population change, 1980–2000: Living Cities

Rank	Living Cities	Population			Percent Change		
		1980	1990	2000	1980–1990	1990–2000	Net
1	Phoenix, AZ	785,940	983,403	1,321,045	25.1%	34.3%	68.1%
2	San Antonio, TX	789,704	935,933	1,144,646	18.5%	22.3%	44.9%
3	Portland, OR	368,148	437,319	529,121	18.8%	21.0%	43.7%
4	Dallas, TX	904,599	1,006,877	1,188,580	11.3%	18.0%	31.4%
5	Columbus, OH	565,021	632,910	711,470	12.0%	12.4%	25.9%
6	Los Angeles, CA	2,968,528	3,485,398	3,694,820	17.4%	6.0%	24.5%
7	Oakland, CA	339,337	372,242	399,484	9.7%	7.3%	17.7%
8	Seattle, WA	493,846	516,259	563,374	4.5%	9.1%	14.1%
9	New York, NY	7,071,639	7,322,564	8,008,278	3.5%	9.4%	13.2%
10	Denver, CO	492,686	467,610	554,636	-5.1%	18.6%	12.6%
11	Indianapolis, IN	711,539	731,327	781,870	2.8%	6.9%	9.9%
12	Boston, MA	562,994	574,283	589,141	2.0%	2.6%	4.6%
13	Miami, FL	346,681	358,548	362,470	3.4%	1.1%	4.6%
14	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	641,271	640,618	669,769	-0.1%	4.6%	4.4%
15	Kansas City, MO	448,028	435,146	441,545	-2.9%	1.5%	-1.4%
<b>16</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>425,022</b>	<b>394,017</b>	<b>416,474</b>	<b>-7.3%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>
17	Chicago, IL	3,005,072	2,783,726	2,896,016	-7.4%	4.0%	-3.6%
18	Philadelphia, PA	1,688,210	1,585,577	1,517,550	-6.1%	-4.3%	-10.1%
19	Washington, DC	638,432	606,900	572,059	-4.9%	-5.7%	-10.4%
20	Cleveland, OH	573,822	505,616	478,403	-11.9%	-5.4%	-16.6%
21	Newark, NJ	329,248	275,221	273,546	-16.4%	-0.6%	-16.9%
22	Baltimore, MD	786,775	736,014	651,154	-6.5%	-11.5%	-17.2%
23	Detroit, MI	1,203,368	1,027,974	951,270	-14.6%	-7.5%	-20.9%
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>26,141,890</b>	<b>26,817,472</b>	<b>28,718,721</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>226,542,199</b>	<b>248,718,301</b>	<b>281,421,906</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>24.2%</b>

## POPULATION

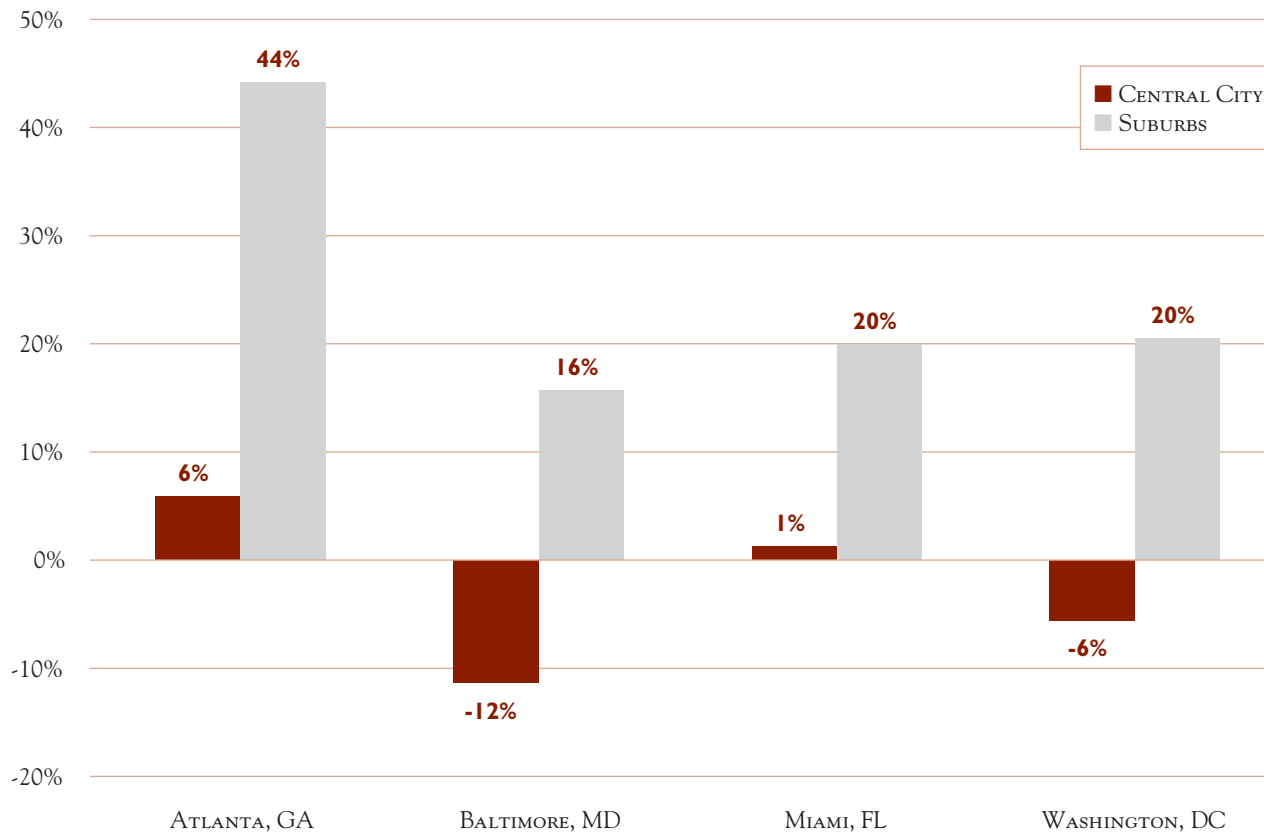
## The Atlanta metro area and its suburbs had the second-fastest population growth among Living Cities over the last two decades

*Percent population change, 1980–2000: Living Cities metro areas*

Rank	Living Cities	Metro Area		Suburbs	
		1980–1990	1990–2000	1980–1990	1990–2000
1	Phoenix, AZ	39.9%	45.3%	54.2%	53.8%
<b>2</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>32.5%</b>	<b>38.9%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>44.0%</b>
3	Dallas, TX	30.2%	31.5%	45.1%	39.6%
4	Denver, CO	13.6%	30.0%	23.4%	34.6%
5	Portland, OR	13.6%	26.6%	11.7%	28.8%
6	San Antonio, TX	21.7%	20.2%	30.0%	15.2%
7	Washington, DC	21.4%	16.6%	27.4%	20.3%
8	Seattle, WA	23.1%	18.8%	31.0%	22.0%
9	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	15.5%	16.9%	21.9%	21.1%
10	Indianapolis, IN	5.7%	16.4%	9.2%	27.2%
11	Miami, FL	19.1%	16.3%	23.4%	19.8%
12	Oakland, CA	18.2%	14.9%	20.3%	16.5%
13	Columbus, OH	10.8%	14.5%	9.7%	16.3%
14	Kansas City, MO	9.2%	12.2%	14.6%	16.3%
15	Chicago, IL	2.3%	11.6%	9.1%	16.2%
16	New York, NY	3.3%	9.0%	1.7%	6.7%
17	Los Angeles, CA	18.5%	7.4%	19.3%	8.3%
18	Baltimore, MD	8.3%	7.2%	16.5%	15.5%
19	Newark, NJ	-2.4%	6.1%	0.4%	7.2%
20	Boston, MA	2.7%	5.5%	2.8%	6.2%
21	Detroit, MI	-2.8%	4.1%	1.7%	7.8%
22	Philadelphia, PA	2.9%	3.6%	7.9%	7.4%
23	Cleveland, OH	-3.3%	2.2%	-0.5%	4.5%
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>17.6%</b>

## All Living Cities in the Southeast lagged far behind their suburbs in population growth

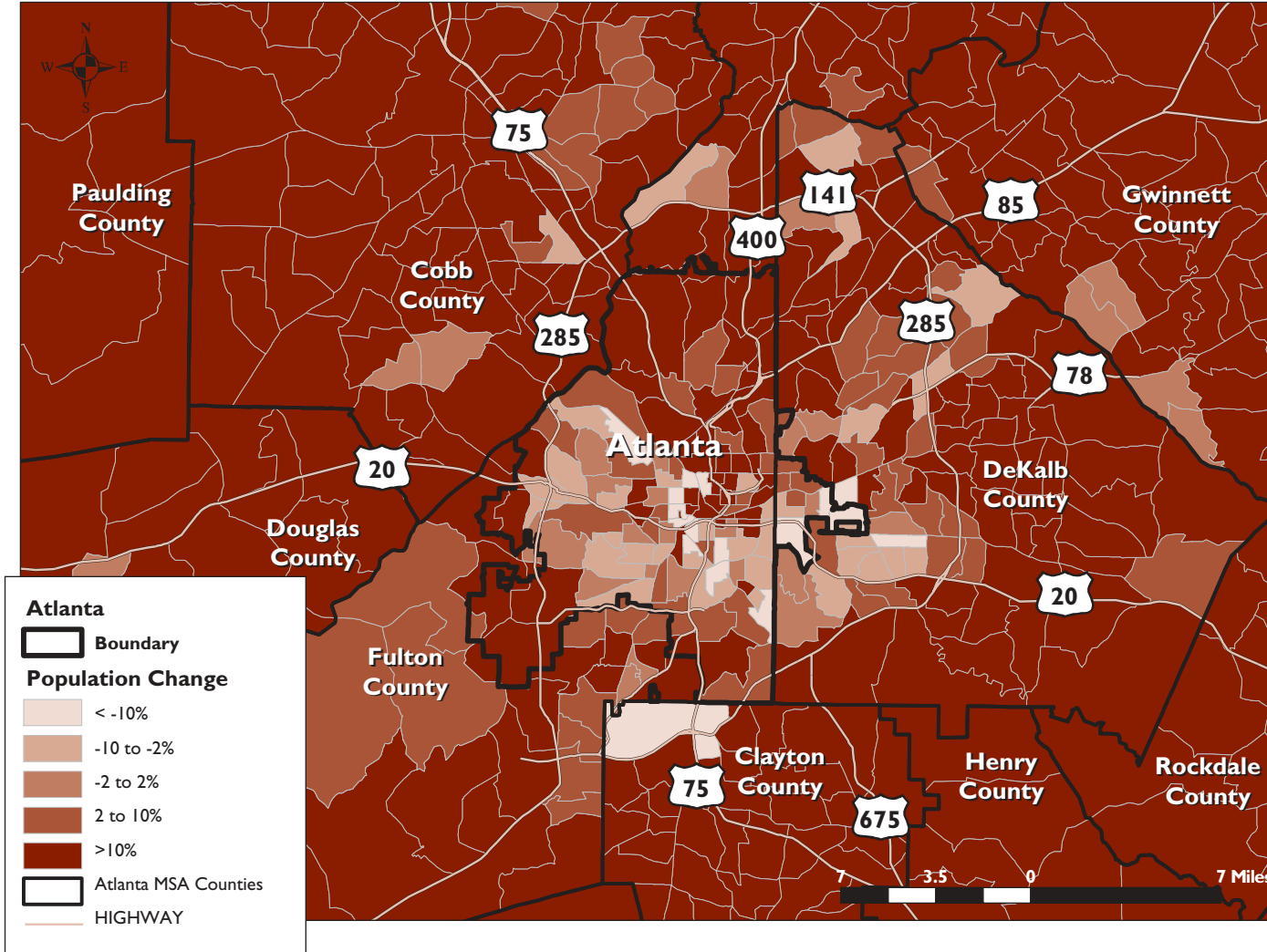
Percent population change, 1990–2000: Southeastern U.S. Living Cities metro areas



POPULATION

### Downtown Atlanta and northern and southern suburbs grew rapidly, but some neighborhoods south and east of downtown experienced declines

*Percent population change, 1990–2000: Atlanta metro area*





# RACE AND ETHNICITY

Cities also need to understand how their racial and ethnic compositions are changing, so they can decide how to fund and deliver services to meet the needs of increasingly diverse populations. In particular, the growing representation of Latinos, whose families tend to be younger and to have more children, suggests Atlanta and other cities need to take a closer look at schools, public health, and other programs that primarily serve the young.

The overall racial and ethnic profile of the U.S. population is changing rapidly. Census 2000 confirmed that nationwide, the Hispanic population had grown to roughly the same size as the African American population. Although smaller in size, the Asian population was also on the rise in the U.S. in the 1990s, and grew more than 50 percent over the decade. Adding richness to these trends was the fact that Census 2000 was the first census to offer respondents the option of selecting more than one race category to indicate their family members' racial identity. Nearly 7 million people, or 2.4 percent of the population, reported multiple races.

In keeping with these changes, Census 2000 revealed that for the first time, the 100 largest cities in the U.S. were "majority minority;" that is,

more than half of their combined population was either non-white or Hispanic. This trend owed to large gains in Latino population in nearly all cities, modest growth in Asian and African American populations, and widespread declines in non-Hispanic whites. Growing diversity was not confined to the cities, either. Minority population share in the largest suburbs also rose sharply, from 19 percent in 1990 to 27 percent in 2000.

This section compares Atlanta's racial and ethnic makeup to that of other cities, and examines how it changed in the 1990s. It also probes the differing racial profiles of the city's various age groups and neighborhoods.

## A NOTE ON RACE/ETHNICITY TERMINOLOGY

Many of the tables, charts, and maps presented in this and subsequent sections feature data specified for certain racial and ethnic groups. This note describes in greater detail how those groups are defined and shown in this databook.

The federal government considers race and Hispanic origin distinct concepts and therefore captures information on them in two separate questions on census forms. On the Census 2000 survey, respondents were first asked to identify whether they were of “Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino” origin, and were then asked whether they are white, black, one of several Asian ethnicities, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or “some other race.” For the first time, respondents could check off more than one race to describe themselves. Combining the race and Hispanic origin responses yields 126 possible race-ethnic combinations.

To simplify the presentation of data, and to conform with many of the tables generated by the Census Bureau itself, this databook uses shorthand terms for the racial and ethnic descriptors respondents chose to characterize themselves and their family members:

- “Hispanic or Latino” is used to refer to individuals or households who indicate Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin, regardless of their race. Nationally, nine out of ten Census 2000 respondents who indicated Hispanic origin, reported their race as either “white” alone or “some other race” alone.
- Where available, information for individuals who indicate more than one race is presented in a “Two or more races” category. Nationally, only 2.4 percent of Census respondents identified more than one race.

Remaining race categories in this databook include respondents who reported that race alone, not in combination with any other race. However, because Hispanic origin is determined in a separate question, people of these races may also be Hispanic or Latino. Generally, race-specific population and household counts include only non-Hispanics. Race-specific economic variables generally include members of those groups who also reported Hispanic origin.

- “Black/African American” refers to individuals who chose this race designation.
- “Asian/Pacific Islander” was combined from two race totals, “Asian” and “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander,” for comparability with the 1990 Census.
- In general, “Other race” is used to refer to individuals who indicated “some other race” or “American Indian or Alaska Native” race.
- “White” at all times (even for economic variables) refers to non-Hispanic whites.

This streamlined set of race/ethnic categories, as well as the format in which the Census Bureau makes the data available, precludes the presentation of data for country-specific groups, such as Mexicans or Vietnamese, or for foreign-born individuals in general. Individuals and households in these groups are included in the broader race/ethnic categories shown here. Readers interested in profiles for many of these groups can access data online through Census 2000 Summary File 2 (SF 2) and Summary File 4 (SF 4) at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

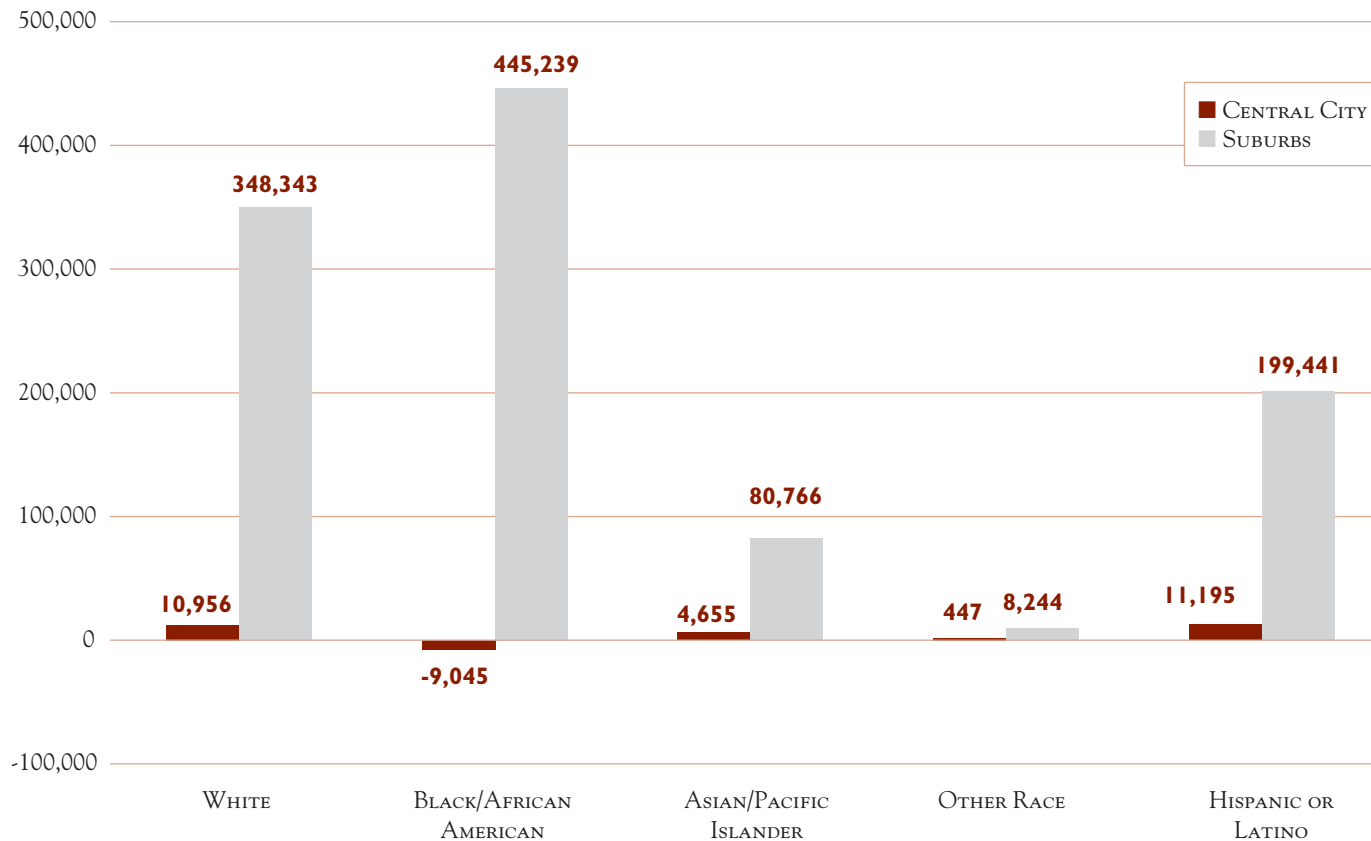
## Atlanta's population has the eighth-highest proportion of minorities among Living Cities, including the third-highest proportion of African Americans

Share of population by race/ethnicity, 2000: Living Cities

Rank	Living Cities	Total Non-White or Hispanic	White	Black/African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic or Latino	Other Race	Two or More Races
1	Detroit, MI	89.5%	10.5%	81.2%	1.0%	5.0%	0.2%	2.0%
2	Miami, FL	88.2%	11.8%	19.9%	0.6%	65.8%	0.1%	1.7%
3	Newark, NJ	85.8%	14.2%	51.9%	1.2%	29.5%	0.7%	2.2%
4	Oakland, CA	76.5%	23.5%	35.1%	15.6%	21.9%	0.3%	3.2%
5	Washington, DC	72.2%	27.8%	59.4%	2.7%	7.9%	0.3%	1.7%
6	Los Angeles, CA	70.3%	29.7%	10.9%	10.0%	46.5%	0.2%	2.4%
7	Baltimore, MD	69.0%	31.0%	64.0%	1.5%	1.7%	0.2%	1.3%
<b>8</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>68.7%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
9	Chicago, IL	68.7%	31.3%	36.4%	4.3%	26.0%	0.1%	1.6%
10	San Antonio, TX	68.2%	31.8%	6.5%	1.6%	58.7%	0.1%	1.1%
11	Dallas, TX	65.4%	34.6%	25.6%	2.7%	35.6%	0.1%	1.1%
12	New York, NY	65.0%	35.0%	24.5%	9.8%	27.0%	0.7%	2.8%
13	Cleveland, OH	61.2%	38.8%	50.5%	1.3%	7.3%	0.2%	1.7%
14	Philadelphia, PA	57.5%	42.5%	42.6%	4.5%	8.5%	0.2%	1.6%
15	Boston, MA	50.5%	49.5%	23.8%	7.5%	14.4%	1.4%	3.1%
16	Denver, CO	48.1%	51.9%	10.8%	2.8%	31.7%	0.2%	1.9%
17	Phoenix, AZ	44.2%	55.8%	4.8%	2.0%	34.1%	0.1%	1.6%
18	Kansas City, MO	42.4%	57.6%	31.0%	1.9%	6.9%	0.2%	1.9%
19	Minneapolis-St Paul, MN	36.8%	63.2%	15.0%	8.8%	7.7%	0.2%	3.4%
20	Columbus, OH	33.1%	66.9%	24.3%	3.5%	2.5%	0.3%	2.4%
21	Indianapolis, IN	32.5%	67.5%	25.4%	1.4%	3.9%	0.2%	1.4%
22	Seattle, WA	32.1%	67.9%	8.3%	13.5%	5.3%	0.3%	3.9%
23	Portland, OR	24.5%	75.5%	6.5%	6.6%	6.8%	0.2%	3.5%
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>61.8%</b>	<b>38.2%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>69.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>

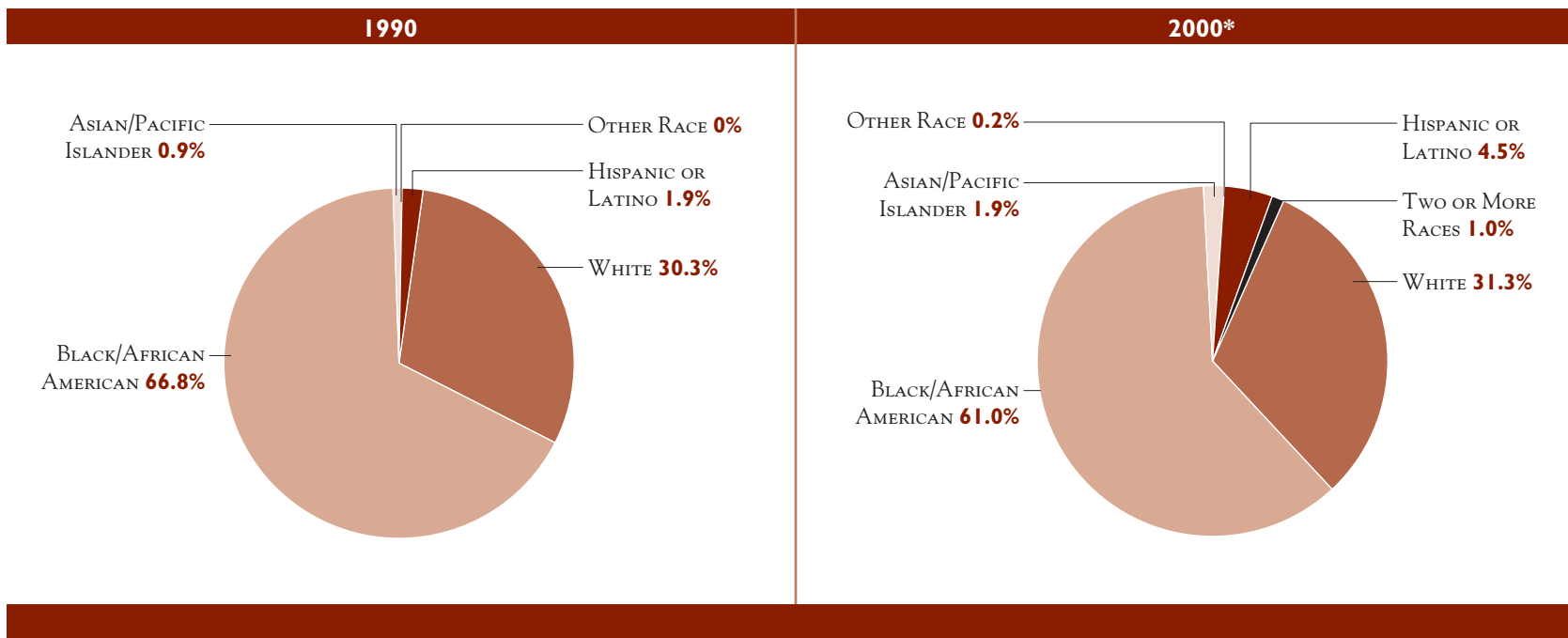
## The black population dropped in the city of Atlanta in the 1990s, while the white and Hispanic population grew modestly; the population of all racial/ethnic groups exploded in the suburbs

*Population change by race/ethnicity, 1990–2000: Atlanta metro area*



# Atlanta's black population share dropped in the 1990s, while its Hispanic population share more than doubled

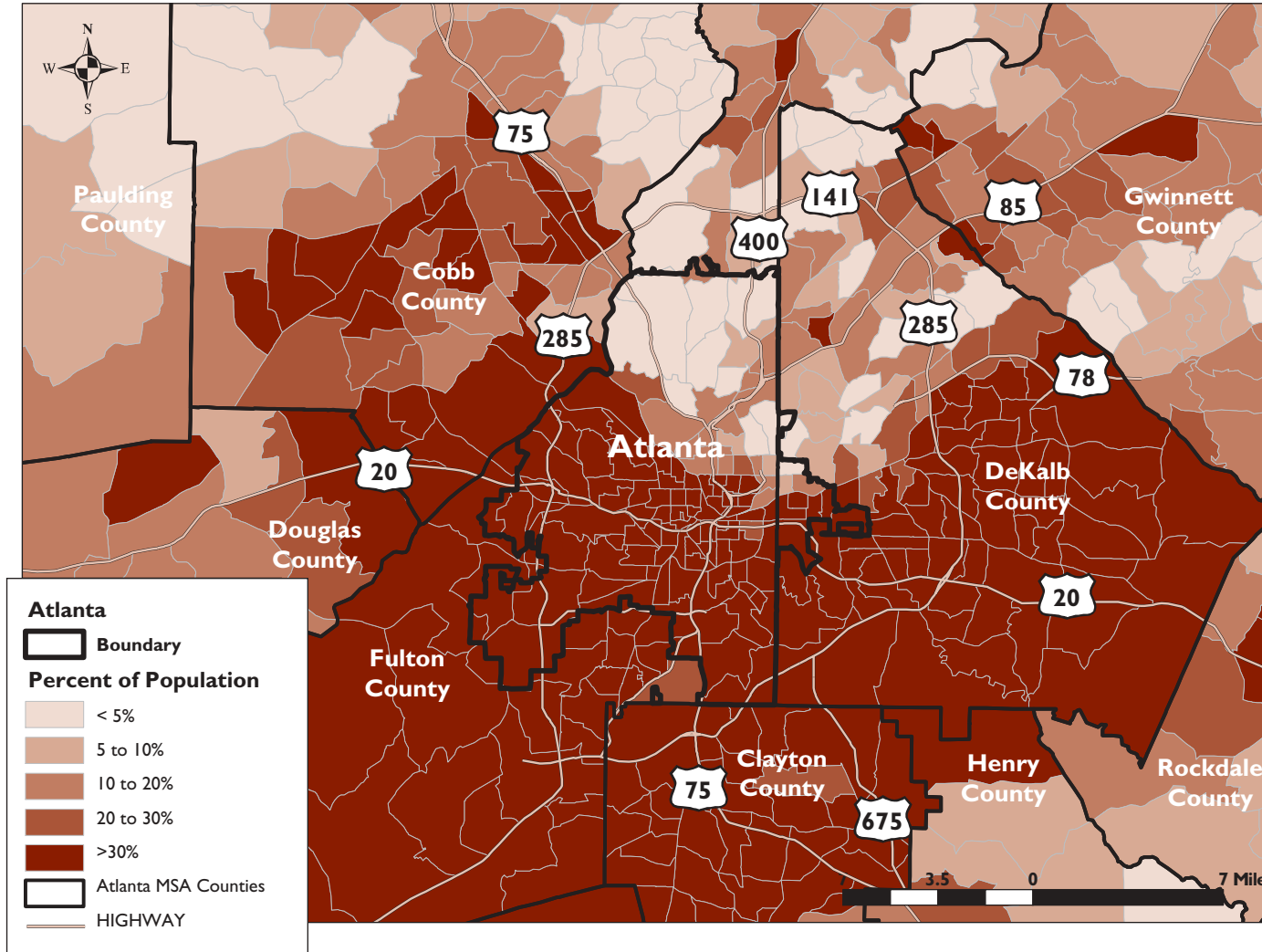
Population share by race/ethnicity, 1990–2000: Atlanta



\*Census 2000 was the first census in which respondents could choose more than one race to classify themselves

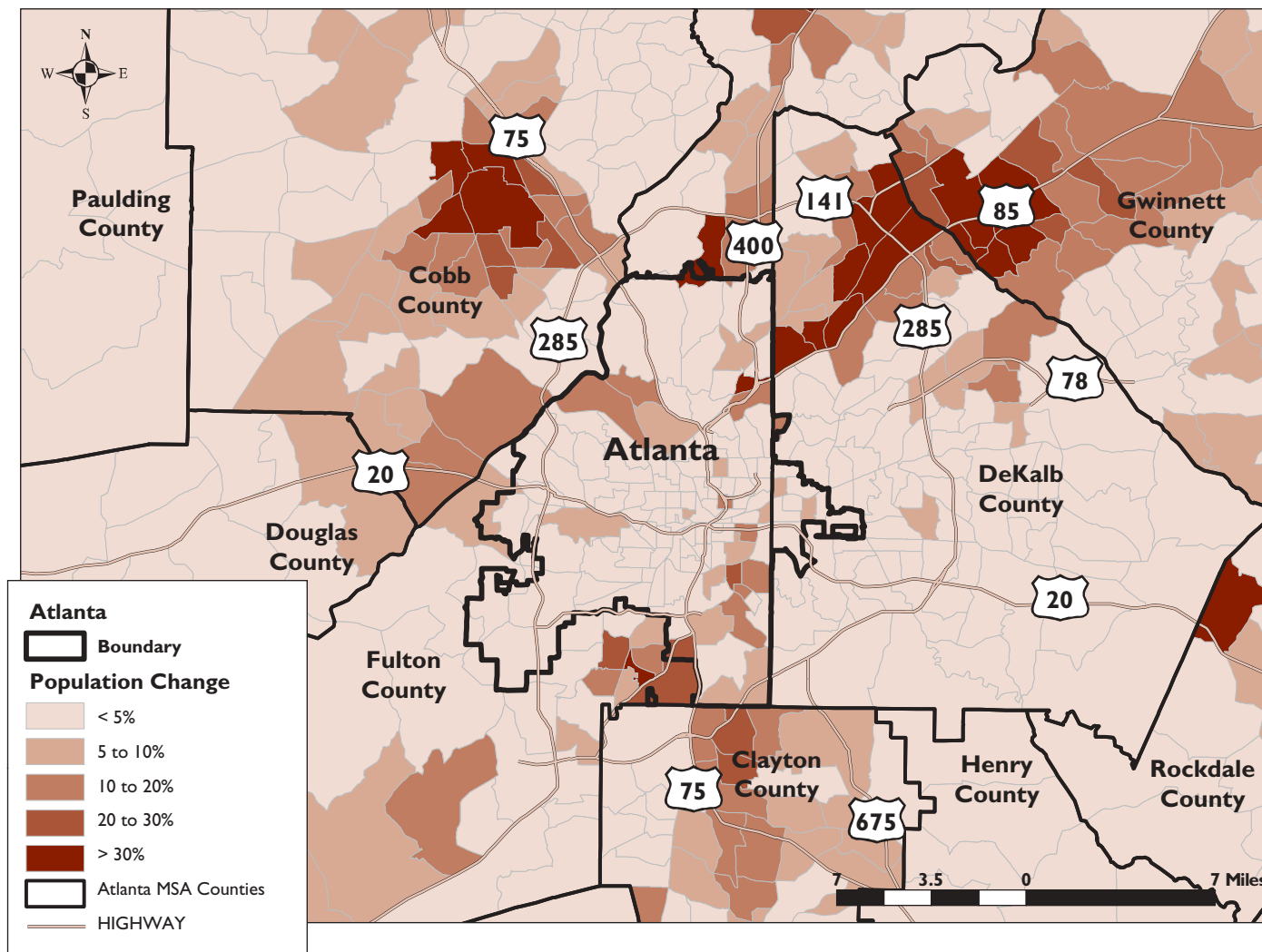
# African Americans in greater Atlanta are concentrated in the southern portions of the city and DeKalb County, and in other suburbs to the south

*Black/African American population share, 2000: Atlanta metro area*



# The Hispanic population in greater Atlanta is clustered in areas to the northeast and northwest of the central city

*Hispanic or Latino population share, 2000: Atlanta metro area*



## Atlanta has the third-highest level of white-black segregation among large U.S. cities

Dissimilarity index\* by race/ethnicity, 2000: Living Cities and 100 largest cities

Rank	Living Cities	Black - White	Black - Hispanic	Hispanic - White	Peer Cities	Rank	Black - Wht	Black - Hisp	Hispanic - Wht
1	New York, NY	82.9	57.1	66.9	New York, NY	1	82.9	57.1	66.9
2	Chicago, IL	82.5	81.4	59.2	Chicago, IL	2	82.5	81.4	59.2
<b>3</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>57.8</b>
4	Washington, DC	79.4	66.2	55.3	Washington, DC	4	79.4	66.2	55.3
5	Miami, FL	79.3	80.6	49.6	Miami, FL	5	79.3	80.6	49.6
6	Newark, NJ	77.8	67.7	46.6	Newark, NJ	6	77.8	67.7	46.6
7	Philadelphia, PA	76.7	70.1	68.2	Fort Lauderdale, FL	7	77.7	60.2	35.9
8	Cleveland, OH	74.8	77.9	45.4	Philadelphia, PA	8	76.7	70.1	68.2
9	Detroit, MI	72.8	80.9	60.0	Cleveland, OH	9	74.8	77.9	45.4
10	Baltimore, MD	70.7	58.2	39.9	Dayton-Springfield, OH	10	74.0	57.2	24.9
11	Los Angeles, CA	67.5	49.7	64.5	Detroit, MI	11	72.8	80.9	60.0
12	Boston, MA	66.4	43.8	51.1	<b>100-City Average</b>		<b>56.9%</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>44.5%</b>
13	Dallas, TX	64.8	57.1	57.1					
14	Kansas City, MO	63.8	62.5	51.6					
15	Oakland, CA	63.3	35.3	65.2					
16	Denver, CO	63.0	62.3	57.1					
17	Indianapolis, IN	61.8	50.7	40.4					
18	Columbus, OH	59.2	45.6	30.7					
19	Seattle, WA	54.9	38.1	32.9					
20	Minneapolis-St Paul, MN	50.4	38.0	46.5					
21	Portland, OR	48.9	38.6	28.5					
22	San Antonio, TX	48.9	50.9	50.7					
23	Phoenix, AZ	46.4	30.4	55.0					
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>56.7%</b>	<b>51.3%</b>					

Source: Lewis Mumford Center on Urban and Regional Research. 2002. "Segregation - Whole Population." SUNY Albany (<http://mumford1.dyndns.org/cen2000/data.html> [January, 2003]).

\*The dissimilarity index can be interpreted as the proportion of one group that would have to move to another neighborhood to achieve the same population distribution as the other group. Indices are based on census tracts for all central cities in each Living City's respective metro area.



# IMMIGRATION

At the turn of the 21st century, understanding the characteristics of growing foreign-born populations is central to understanding the social, economic, and political dynamics of cities. The following pages, for this reason, chart the magnitude, recency, and sources of international immigration to Atlanta and its suburbs.

A growing foreign-born population in U.S. cities and suburbs underlies Census 2000 findings on race and ethnicity. An influx of immigrants, mostly from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia, helped to sustain population growth in a majority of the nation's largest cities in the 1990s. All told, Census 2000 identified 31 million foreign-born individuals living in the U.S., representing approximately 11 percent of the population. This was up dramatically from 1970, when slightly less than 5 percent of the U.S. population was foreign-born. Overall, just over one-half of the total foreign-born population in the U.S. came from Latin America, and more than 40 percent of U.S. immigrants arrived after 1990. In 2000, the 100 largest cities alone were home to over 11 million immigrants, accounting for one in five residents.

While immigrant populations grew in nearly every large U.S. city in the 1990s, a growing proportion of the foreign-born are living in suburbs. The suburbanization of immigrants is especially pronounced in fast-growing "emerging gateway" metropolitan areas in the South and West, including Atlanta, Dallas, and Washington, D.C. In these metros, a majority of recent immigrants to the area are bypassing cities and settling directly in the suburbs. Even central cities with a long-established and continuing immigrant presence, like New York and Los Angeles, are witnessing rapid growth of foreign-born populations in their own suburbs.

## IMMIGRATION

## Atlanta has the sixth-lowest proportion of foreign-born residents among the 23 Living Cities, and ranks 70th among the 100 largest cities

*Foreign-born population share, 2000: Living Cities and 100 largest cities*

Rank	Living Cities	Total Population	Foreign-born Population	Percent	Peer Cities	Rank	Percent Foreign-born
1	Miami, FL	362,470	215,739	59.5%	Colorado Springs, CO	65	7.0%
2	Los Angeles, CA	3,694,820	1,512,720	40.9%	Corpus Christi, TX	66	6.7%
3	New York, NY	8,008,278	2,871,032	35.9%	Columbus, OH	67	6.7%
4	Oakland, CA	399,484	106,116	26.6%	Virginia Beach, VA	68	6.6%
5	Boston, MA	589,141	151,836	25.8%	Omaha, NE	69	6.6%
6	Dallas, TX	1,188,580	290,436	24.4%	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>6.6%</b>
7	Newark, NJ	273,546	66,057	24.1%	Tulsa, OK	71	6.5%
8	Chicago, IL	2,896,016	628,903	21.7%	Jacksonville, FL	72	5.9%
9	Phoenix, AZ	1,321,045	257,325	19.5%	Lexington-Fayette, KY	73	5.9%
10	Denver, CO	554,636	96,601	17.4%	Lincoln, NE	74	5.9%
11	Seattle, WA	563,374	94,952	16.9%	Kansas City, MO	75	5.8%
12	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	669,769	96,613	14.4%	<b>100-City Average</b>		<b>20.4%</b>
13	Portland, OR	529,121	68,976	13.0%			
14	Washington, DC	572,059	73,561	12.9%			
15	San Antonio, TX	1,144,646	133,675	11.7%			
16	Philadelphia, PA	1,517,550	137,205	9.0%			
17	Columbus, OH	711,470	47,713	6.7%			
<b>18</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>416,474</b>	<b>27,352</b>	<b>6.6%</b>			
19	Kansas City, MO	441,545	25,632	5.8%			
20	Detroit, MI	951,270	45,541	4.8%			
21	Indianapolis, IN	781,870	36,067	4.6%			
22	Baltimore, MD	651,154	29,638	4.6%			
23	Cleveland, OH	478,403	21,372	4.5%			
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>28,716,721</b>	<b>7,035,062</b>	<b>24.5%</b>			
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>281,421,906</b>	<b>31,107,889</b>	<b>11.1%</b>			

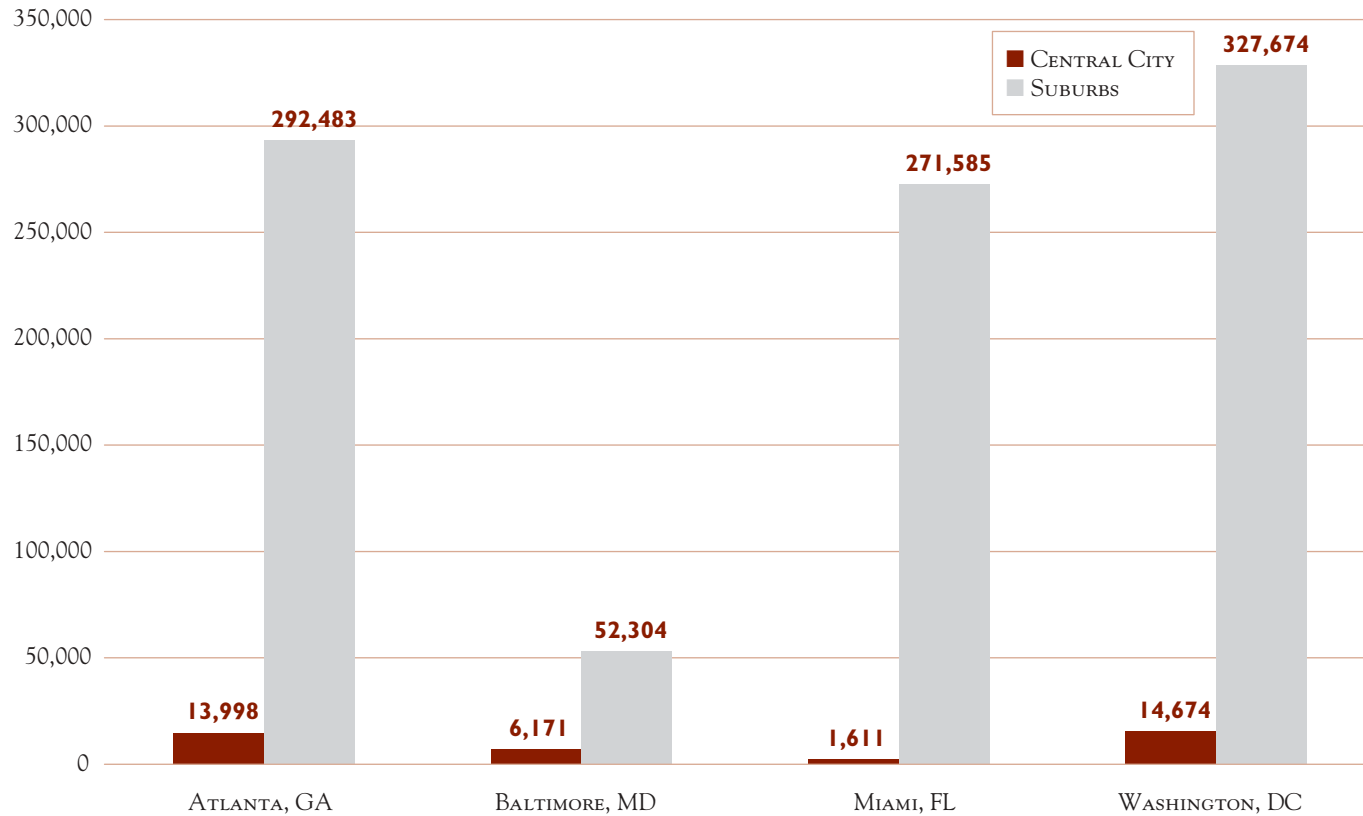
## Atlanta's immigrant population more than doubled in size during the 1990s

Percent change in foreign-born population, 1990–2000: Living Cities and 100 largest cities

Rank	Living Cities	Foreign-born 1990	Foreign-born 2000	Percent Change	Peer Cities	Rank	Percent Change
1	Phoenix, AZ	84,672	257,325	203.9%	Fort Worth, TX	35	116.2%
2	Denver, CO	34,715	96,601	178.3%	Kansas City, MO	36	106.9%
3	Indianapolis, IN	13,963	36,067	158.3%	St. Paul, MN	37	106.8%
4	Dallas, TX	125,862	290,436	130.8%	Richmond, VA	38	105.5%
5	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	42,517	96,613	127.2%	Portland, OR	39	105.3%
6	Kansas City, MO	12,387	25,632	106.9%	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>104.8%</b>
7	Portland, OR	33,601	68,976	105.3%	Columbus, OH	41	103.3%
<b>8</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>13,354</b>	<b>27,352</b>	<b>104.8%</b>	Jacksonville, FL	42	100.6%
9	Columbus, OH	23,471	47,713	103.3%	St. Louis, MO	43	94.8%
10	San Antonio, TX	87,549	133,675	52.7%	Colorado Springs, CO	44	90.7%
11	Oakland, CA	73,524	106,116	44.3%	Albuquerque, NM	45	86.6%
12	Seattle, WA	67,736	94,952	40.2%	<b>100-City Average</b>		<b>45.5%</b>
13	New York, NY	2,082,931	2,871,032	37.8%			
14	Chicago, IL	469,187	628,903	34.0%			
15	Boston, MA	114,597	151,836	32.5%			
16	Detroit, MI	34,490	45,541	32.0%			
17	Philadelphia, PA	104,814	137,205	30.9%			
18	Newark, NJ	51,423	66,057	28.5%			
19	Baltimore, MD	23,467	29,638	26.3%			
20	Washington, DC	58,887	73,561	24.9%			
21	Los Angeles, CA	1,336,665	1,512,720	13.2%			
22	Cleveland, OH	20,975	21,372	1.9%			
23	Miami, FL	214,128	215,739	0.8%			
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>5,124,915</b>	<b>7,035,062</b>	<b>37.3%</b>			
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>19,767,316</b>	<b>31,107,889</b>	<b>57.4%</b>			

## Like other Southeastern metro areas, most immigrants to the Atlanta area settled directly in the suburbs

Foreign-born population change, 1990–2000: Southeastern U.S. Living Cities metro areas

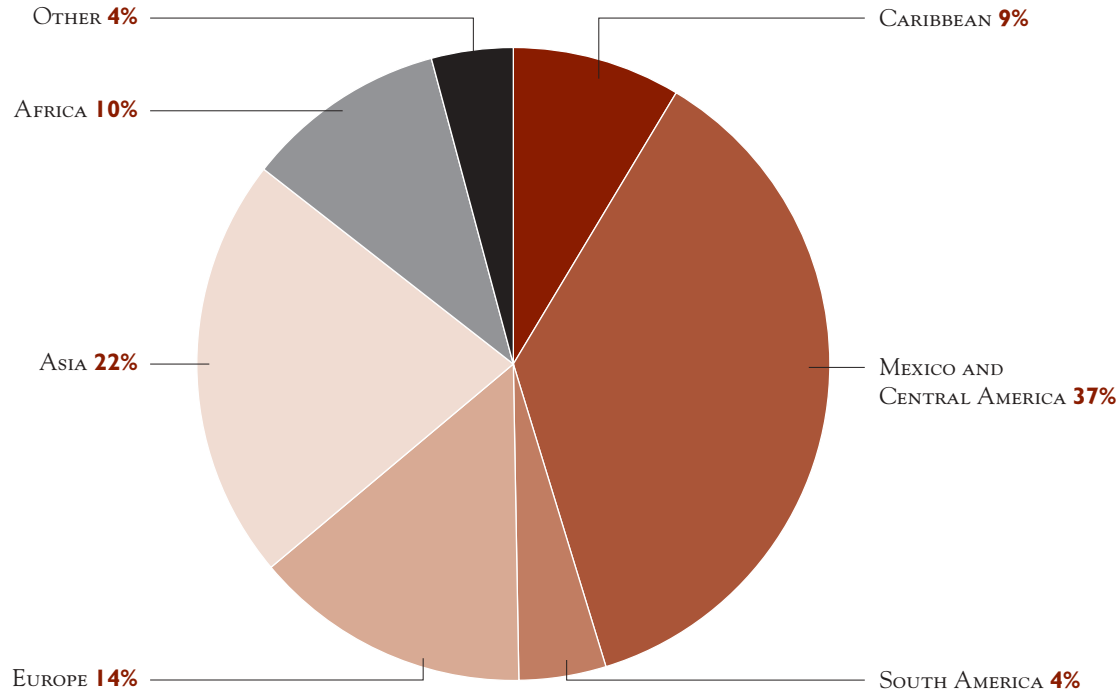


## Two-thirds of Atlanta's foreign-born entered the U.S. in the 1990s, so that only one in four is a naturalized citizen

Foreign-born population by citizenship and year of entry, 2000: Living Cities

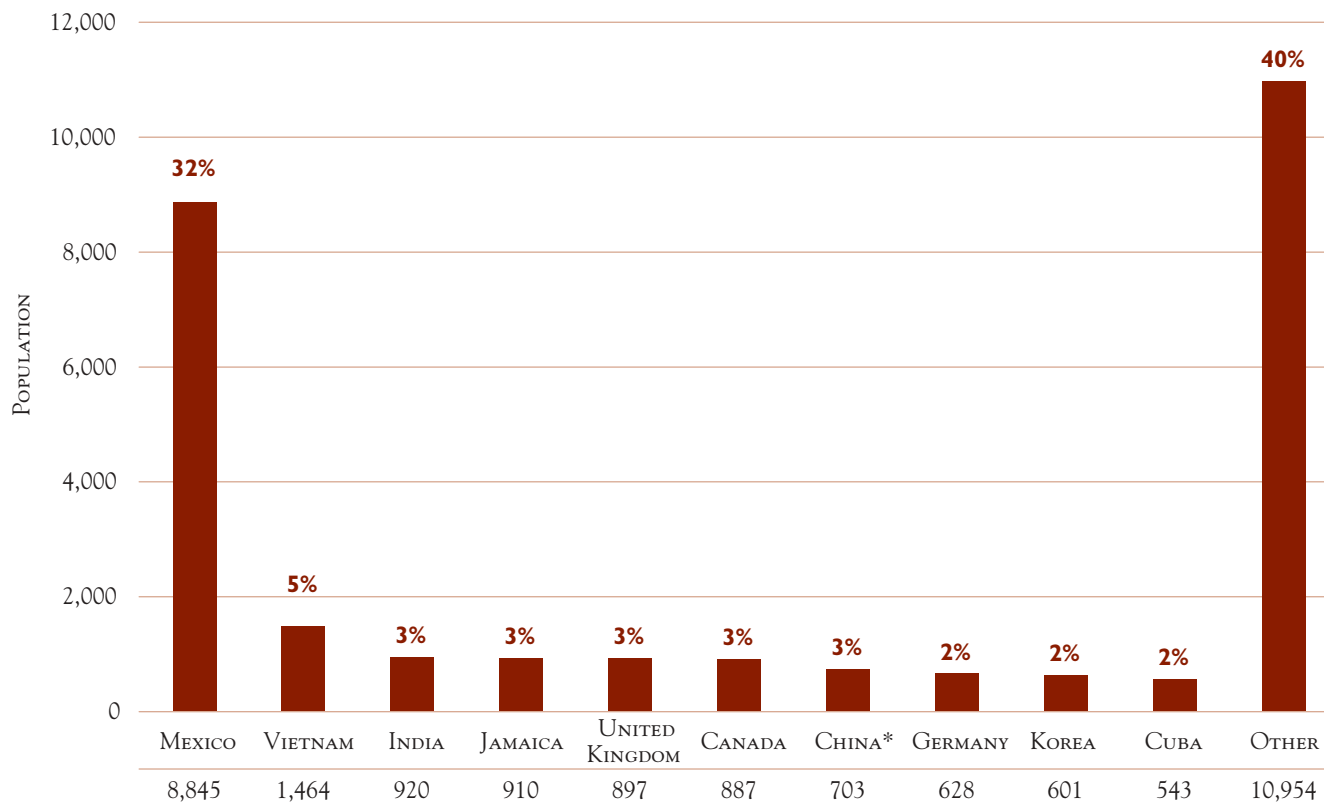
Rank	Living Cities	Foreign-born Population	Foreign-born that are Naturalized	Percent	Foreign-born Entering U.S. in 1990s	Percent
1	Philadelphia, PA	137,205	64,786	47.2%	63,624	46.4%
2	Seattle, WA	94,952	44,334	46.7%	44,145	46.5%
3	Cleveland, OH	21,372	9,755	45.6%	9,267	43.4%
4	Baltimore, MD	29,638	13,521	45.6%	14,057	47.4%
5	New York, NY	2,871,032	1,278,687	44.5%	1,224,524	42.7%
6	Miami, FL	215,739	89,727	41.6%	80,911	37.5%
7	San Antonio, TX	133,675	54,322	40.6%	47,309	35.4%
8	Boston, MA	151,836	56,681	37.3%	73,670	48.5%
9	Portland, OR	68,976	24,617	35.7%	37,624	54.5%
10	Chicago, IL	628,903	223,984	35.6%	291,785	46.4%
11	Oakland, CA	106,116	37,783	35.6%	46,805	44.1%
12	Los Angeles, CA	1,512,720	509,841	33.7%	569,771	37.7%
13	Detroit, MI	45,541	15,320	33.6%	25,720	56.5%
14	Indianapolis, IN	36,067	12,100	33.5%	21,821	60.5%
15	Kansas City, MO	25,632	8,392	32.7%	15,032	58.6%
16	Newark, NJ	66,057	21,412	32.4%	33,680	51.0%
17	Washington, DC	73,561	22,050	30.0%	37,533	51.0%
18	Columbus, OH	47,713	14,197	29.8%	30,409	63.7%
19	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	96,613	25,910	26.8%	59,546	61.6%
<b>20</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>27,352</b>	<b>6,715</b>	<b>24.6%</b>	<b>18,326</b>	<b>67.0%</b>
21	Denver, CO	96,601	22,144	22.9%	60,316	62.4%
22	Phoenix, AZ	257,325	52,874	20.5%	150,406	58.4%
23	Dallas, TX	290,436	55,607	19.1%	174,351	60.0%
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>7,035,062</b>	<b>2,664,759</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>3,130,632</b>	<b>44.5%</b>
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>31,107,889</b>	<b>12,542,626</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>13,178,276</b>	<b>42.4%</b>

## IMMIGRATION

**Atlanta's foreign-born population hails from a diverse set of world regions***Share of foreign-born by region of birth, 2000: Atlanta*

## About one-third of Atlanta’s foreign-born came to the U.S. from Mexico; the remainder hail from a large number of countries

Population and share of foreign-born by country of birth, 2000: Atlanta



\*Excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan

# AGE

The age profile of a city's population can answer some very basic questions about a city's ability to provide for its residents.

For instance, the number of working-age residents from whom the city can raise revenue influences the level of services it can provide for more “dependent” residents like the elderly and children. Likewise, the city's ability to “compete” nationally, within its region, and within its neighborhoods for younger workers may hint at its prospects for continued vitality in the future.

Age profiles nationwide, and in most cities and metro areas, are dominated by the aging of the Baby Boom generation. In 2000, that generation roughly corresponded with the 35-to-54 year-old age group, which represented nearly 30 percent of the U.S. population. The movement of Baby Boomers into these age groups in the 1990s meant that by Census 2000, for the first time, more than half the nation's population was age 35 and over. The Northeast was the nation's oldest region, with a median age just under 37; the West was the youngest, with a median age under 34.

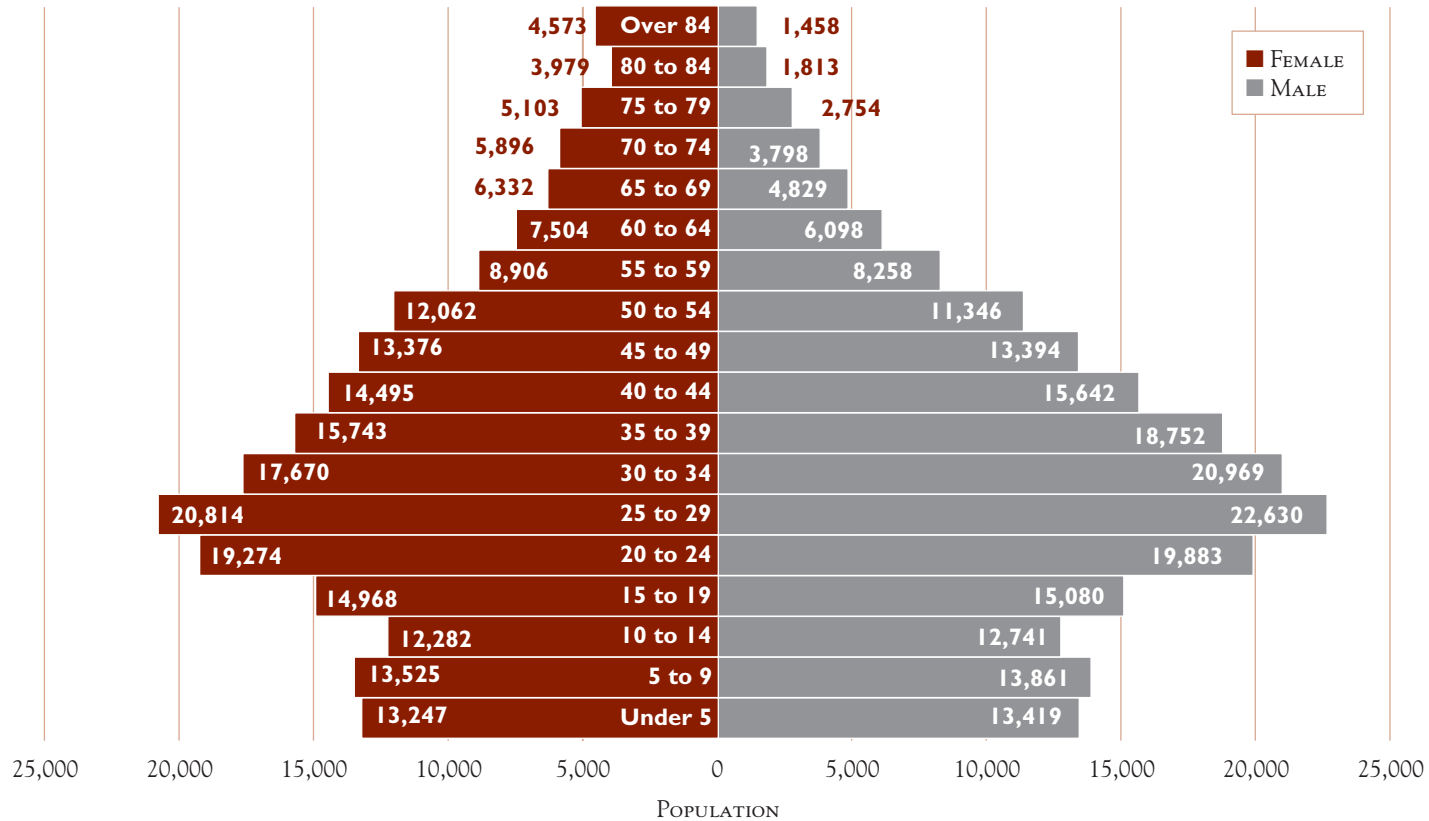
Cities are younger places in general than suburbs—46 percent of central city residents in 2000 were more than 35 years old, compared to 51 percent of suburban residents. And the older population in cities barely grew at all in the 1990s, due in large part to the earlier migration of pre-retirees and seniors to suburbs. Despite the continued appeal of cities for young professionals, in 2000 a majority (63 percent) of 25-to-34 year-olds in major metro areas lived in the suburbs. Over the 1990s, though, the number of children in cities rose, thanks to higher birth rates among the growing population of younger immigrant families.

To probe such trends, the following indicators profile the relative size and age of Atlanta's population and its sub-groups in the city and its neighborhoods, and identify changes over the 1990s.



# Young adults aged 25 to 29 make up Atlanta's largest age group, and the city has more men than women in the 25 to 44 age range

*Population by 5-year age groups, 2000: Atlanta*



## Every 100 working-age adults in Atlanta help to support 47 children and seniors, the third-lowest ratio among the 23 Living Cities

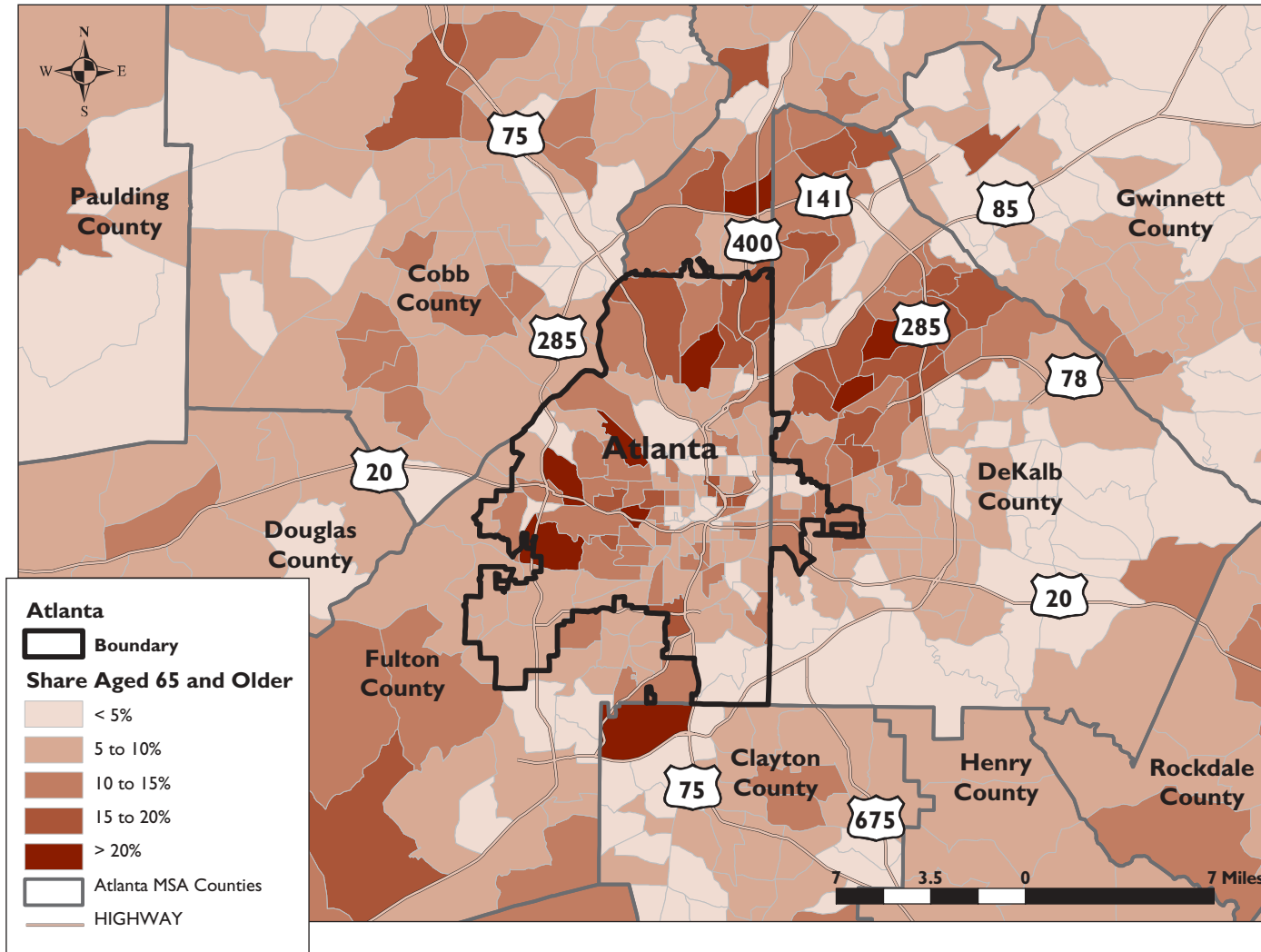
*Dependency ratio\* and share of population by age group, 2000: Living Cities*

Rank	Living Cities	Dependency Ratio	Children (0–17)	Working-age (18–64)	Elderly (65+)
1	Detroit, MI	71	31.1%	58.5%	10.4%
2	Cleveland, OH	70	28.5%	59.0%	12.5%
3	Philadelphia, PA	65	25.3%	60.6%	14.1%
4	San Antonio, TX	64	28.5%	61.0%	10.4%
5	Miami, FL	63	21.7%	61.2%	17.0%
6	Baltimore, MD	61	24.8%	62.0%	13.2%
7	Newark, NJ	59	27.9%	62.8%	9.3%
8	Kansas City, MO	59	25.4%	62.9%	11.7%
9	Phoenix, AZ	59	28.9%	63.0%	8.1%
10	Indianapolis, IN	58	25.7%	63.4%	11.0%
11	Chicago, IL	58	26.2%	63.4%	10.3%
12	Los Angeles, CA	57	26.6%	63.8%	9.7%
13	New York, NY	56	24.2%	64.1%	11.7%
14	Oakland, CA	55	25.0%	64.6%	10.5%
15	Dallas, TX	54	26.6%	64.8%	8.6%
16	Minneapolis-St Paul, MN	51	24.2%	66.2%	9.6%
17	Denver, CO	50	22.0%	66.8%	11.3%
18	Columbus, OH	49	24.2%	67.0%	8.9%
19	Portland, OR	48	21.1%	67.4%	11.6%
20	Washington, DC	48	20.1%	67.7%	12.2%
<b>21</b>	<b>Atlanta, GA</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>67.9%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
22	Boston, MA	43	19.8%	69.8%	10.4%
23	Seattle, WA	38	15.6%	72.4%	12.0%
	<b>All Living Cities</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>63.9%</b>	<b>10.9%</b>
	<b>Nation</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>

\*The dependency ratio represents the number of children and seniors for every 100 adults age 18 to 64.

# The elderly represent a significant share of population in several neighborhoods in Fulton and DeKalb counties

Share of population 65 and older, 2000: Atlanta metro area



## In contrast to national trends, Atlanta gained younger adults (age 25 to 34) during the 1990s, but lost young children (age 0 to 4) and seniors (age 65 and over)

Percent population change by age group, 1990–2000: Atlanta and U.S.

