


MetroCommon 2050 × Research

The Diversity Deficit: Municipal Employees in Metro Boston

We will begin shortly



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Today's Agenda

01. Opening Remarks

Marc Draisen, *MAPC Executive Director*

Emily Torres-Cullinane, *Assistant Director of Strategic Initiatives*

02. The Diversity Deficit: Research Report

Dr. Seleeke Flingai, *Lead Researcher and Report Author*

<https://metrocommon.mapc.org/reports/14>

03. Panel Q&A

Moderator – Dr. Yvonne Spicer, *City of Framingham, Mayor*

- Gordon Goodwin, *Director, Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)*
- Brandy H. M. Brooks, *Director of Strategy & Development, One Square World*
- Dr. Seleeke Flingai, *Lead Researcher & Author*
- Adam Chapdelaine, *Town Manager, Arlington*

04. Closing remarks

Emily Torres-Cullinane, *Assistant Director of Strategic Initiatives*

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The Diversity Deficit: Municipal Employees in Metro Boston

► Seleeke Flingai, Lead Researcher and Report Author
Timothy Reardon
Mark Fine
Jessie Partridge Guerrero



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Agenda

- 01 Guiding motivations and approach
- 02 Key Findings
- 03 Considerations for recruitment policy and best practices



Guiding Motivations

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Municipal government should be inclusive and responsive to all residents. This isn't always the case.

City and town governments implement policies, develop practices and ways of being with their communities, and provide stable economic opportunities. Who works in these jobs? How reflective are they of the communities they serve? Of the region?

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Angela Davis



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Angela Davis

“**Diversity is a corporate strategy**...It’s a difference that doesn’t make a *difference*.”

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Angela Davis

“**Diversity is a corporate strategy**...It’s a difference that doesn’t make a *difference*.”

“I am not suggesting that diversity cannot do good work, but **it has to be combined with justice**...Diversity without **structural transformation** simply brings those who were previously excluded into a system as racist, as misogynist, as it was before.”

Guiding Motivations



How do we make our municipal workforces
explicitly anti-racist and anti-sexist?

Guiding Motivations

- ▶ How do we make our municipal workforces **explicitly anti-racist and anti-sexist?**
- ▶ How do we begin to structurally transform these institutions – **their organizational structure, practices, internal and external policies, systems of professional growth and accountability, etc.** – in order to truly make them more just and equitable?

Why does it matter?

The character, practices, and policies of municipal governments are intertwined with the people they employ.

Range of perspectives, experience, and skills

Diversity can lead to greater innovation, sharing of institutional knowledge, and transformative change

Stronger policy and program outcomes

Diversity can foster greater community trust and support if accompanied with equitable policies

Better representation and opportunity

Representative government should reflect the changing demographics of its constituents



Approach

This research used...

- ▶ **Self-reported demographic and occupational information** provided to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) between 2012-2016.
- ▶ **Law enforcement personnel demographic information** from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics
- ▶ **Publicly available municipal workforce demographic data** from individual cities and towns, where available

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We assessed the demographics of...

- ▶ **Full-time workers living in Metro Boston**, a region encompassing 164 cities and towns
 - Age, Sex, Race/Ethnicity, Occupation

Caveats

Where workers work vs. where they live

- ▶ Cannot provide worker information for specific municipal governments: Information is reported based on the worker's home location, not their place of work,
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Incomplete view of many marginalized communities

- ▶ Female/male gender binary in census demographic data
- ▶ Class, disability, nationality and immigration status...

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124,000

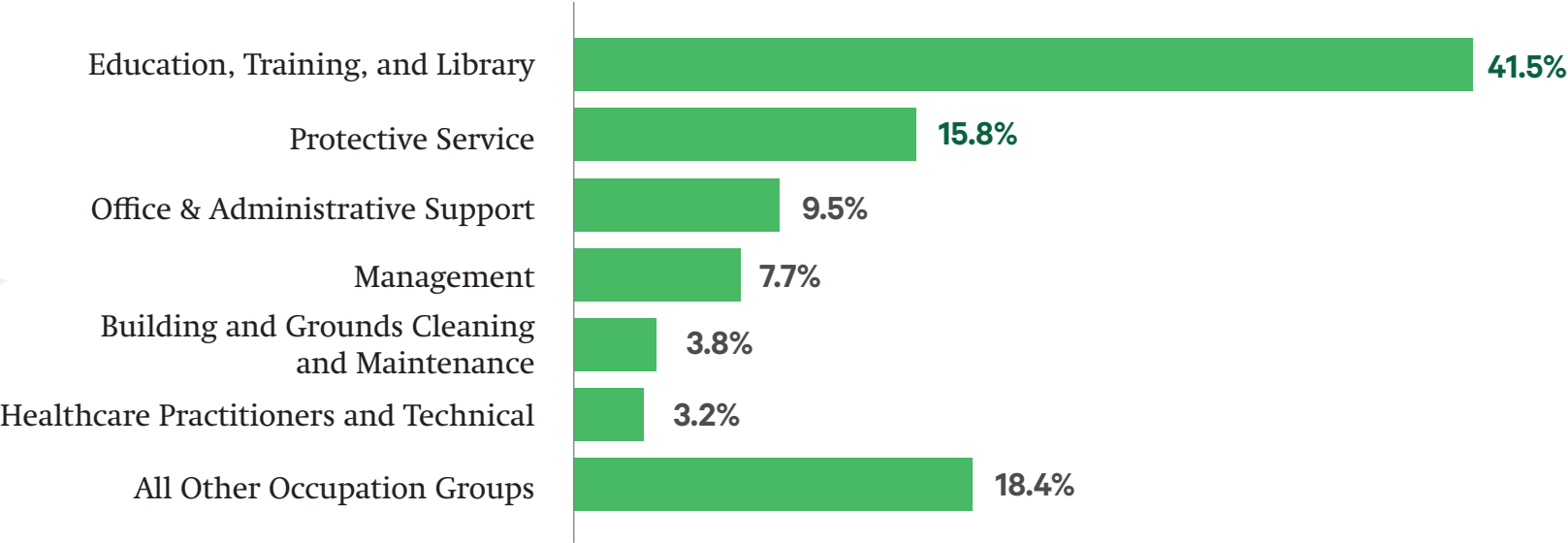
people living in the Metro
Boston region work full-time
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**~7% of the region's civilian
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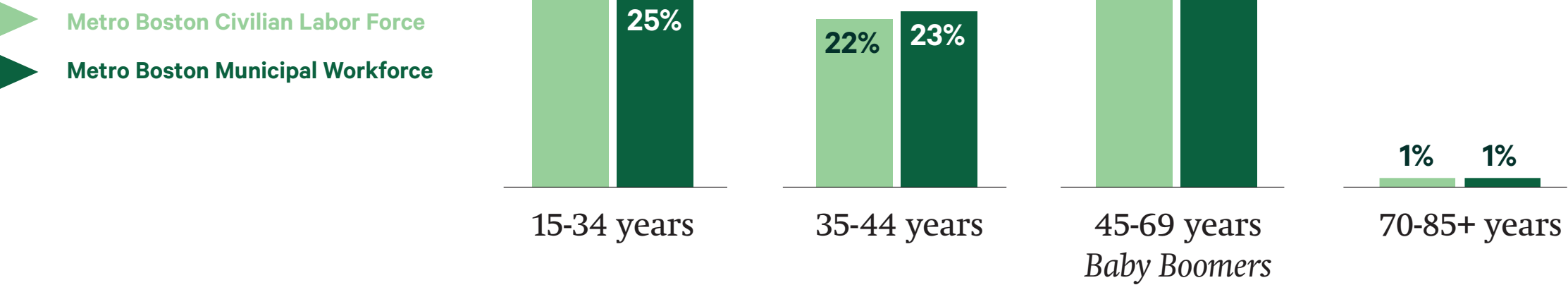
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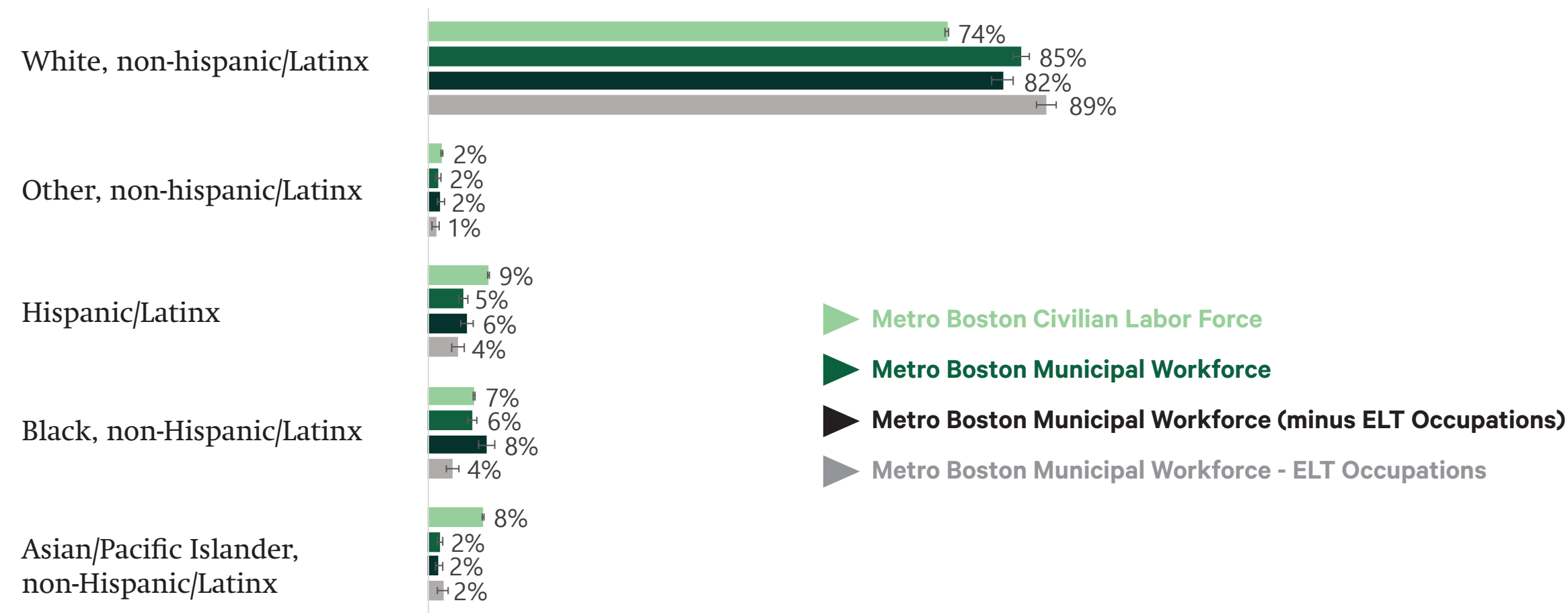
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- ▶ Specialized occupations face particular age challenges

More older employees and a greater need for younger workers

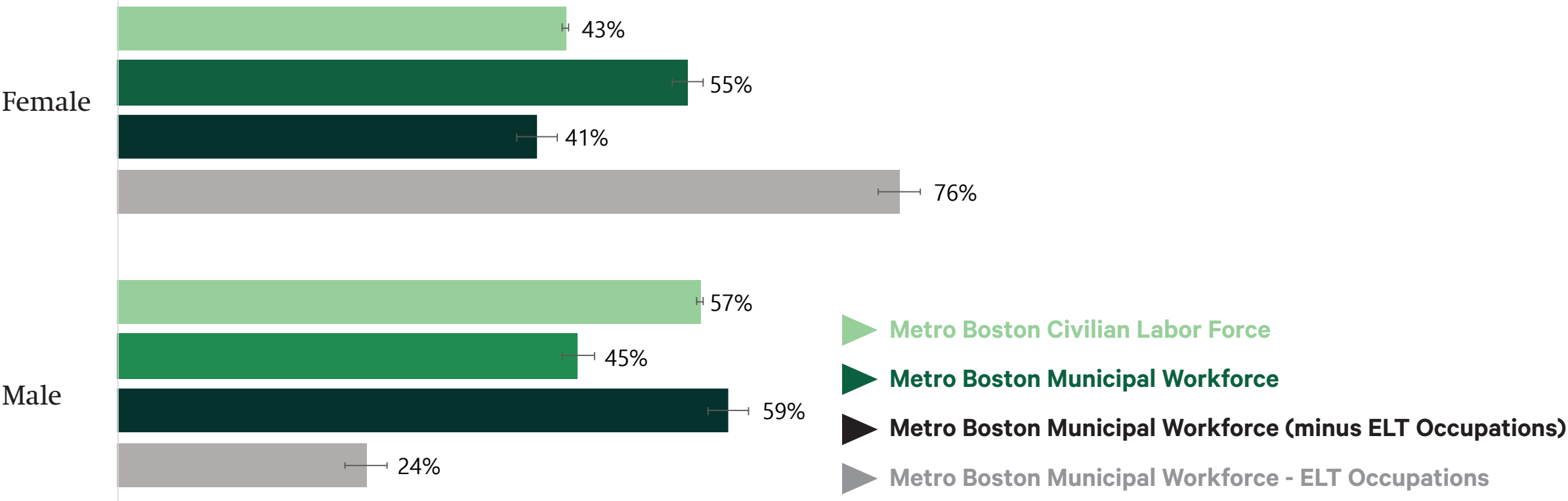
Nearly half of current city and town employees will be past traditional retirement age (65 years old) by the year 2030



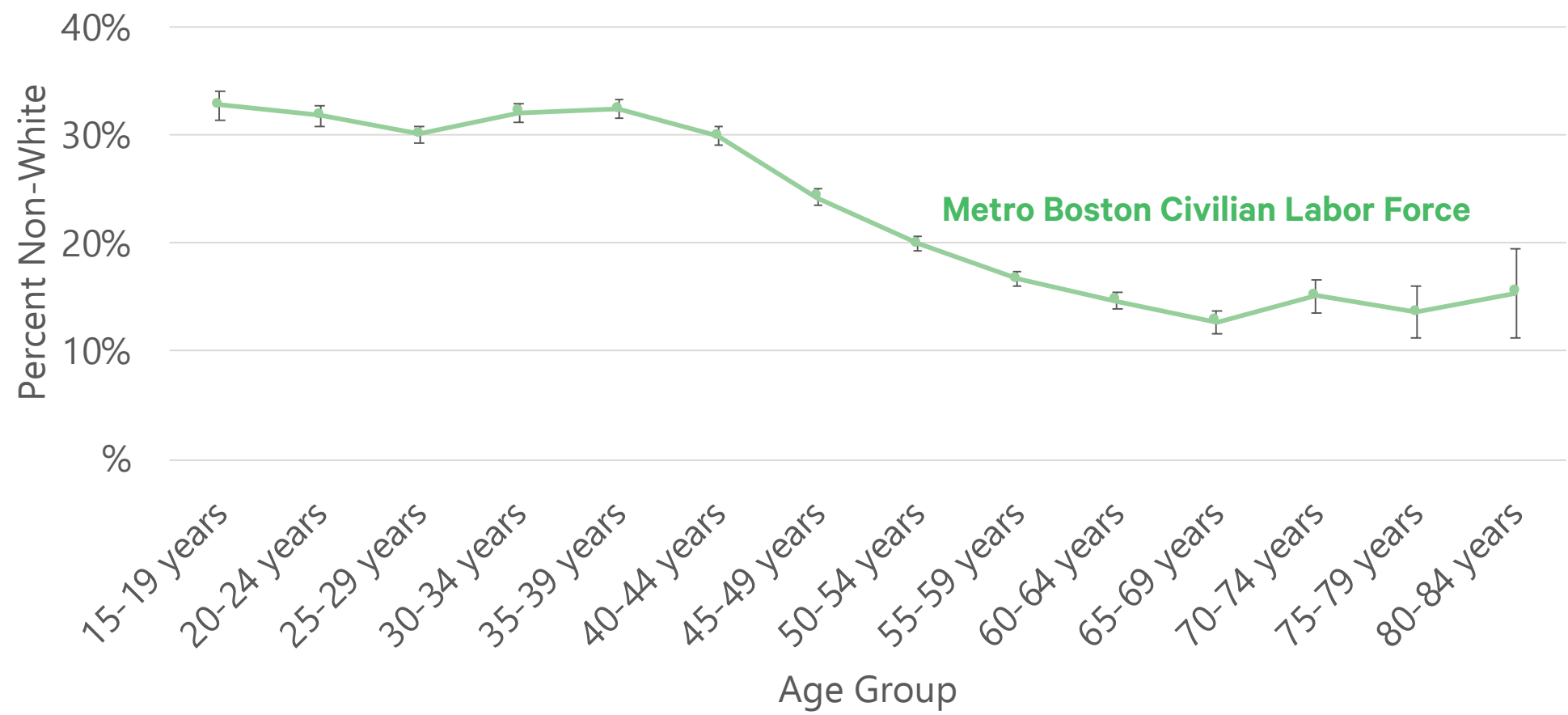
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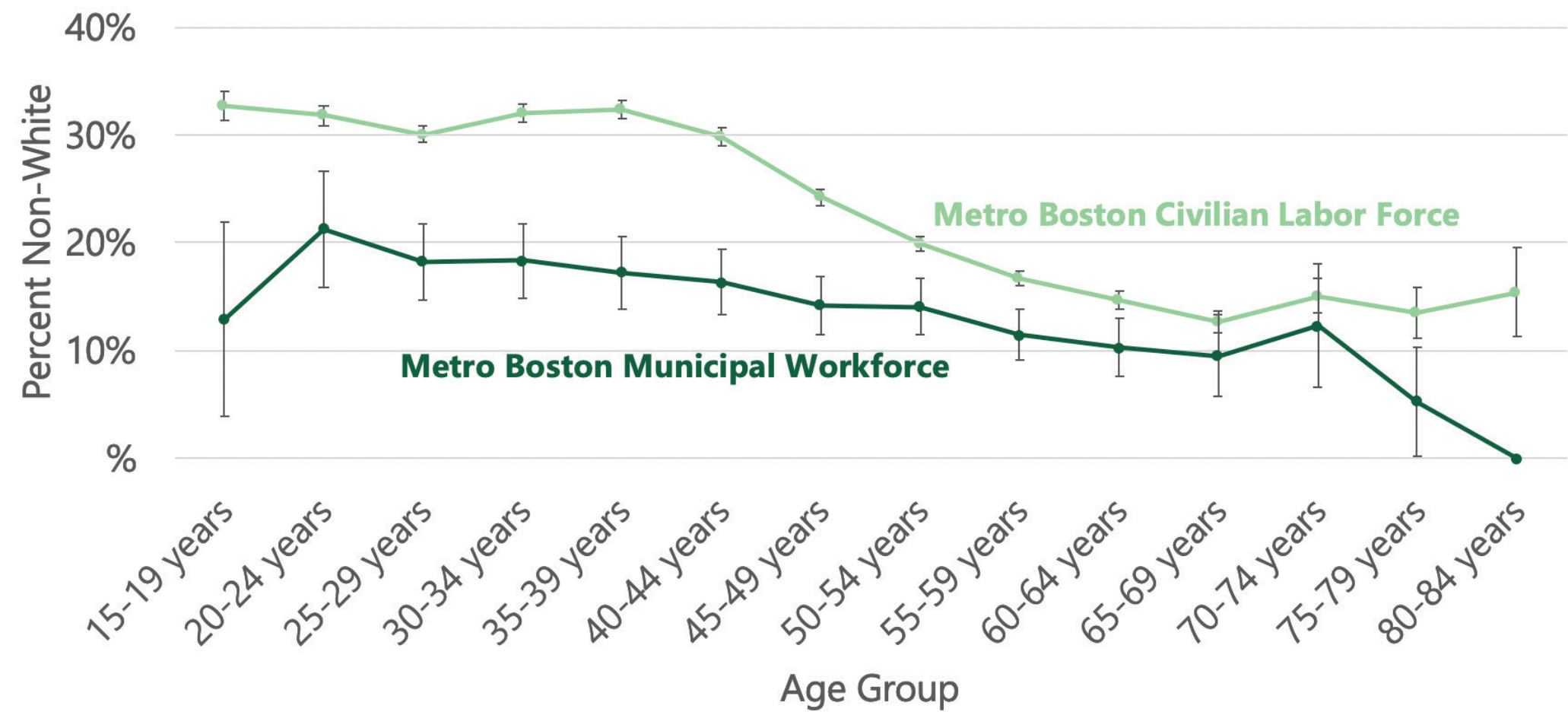
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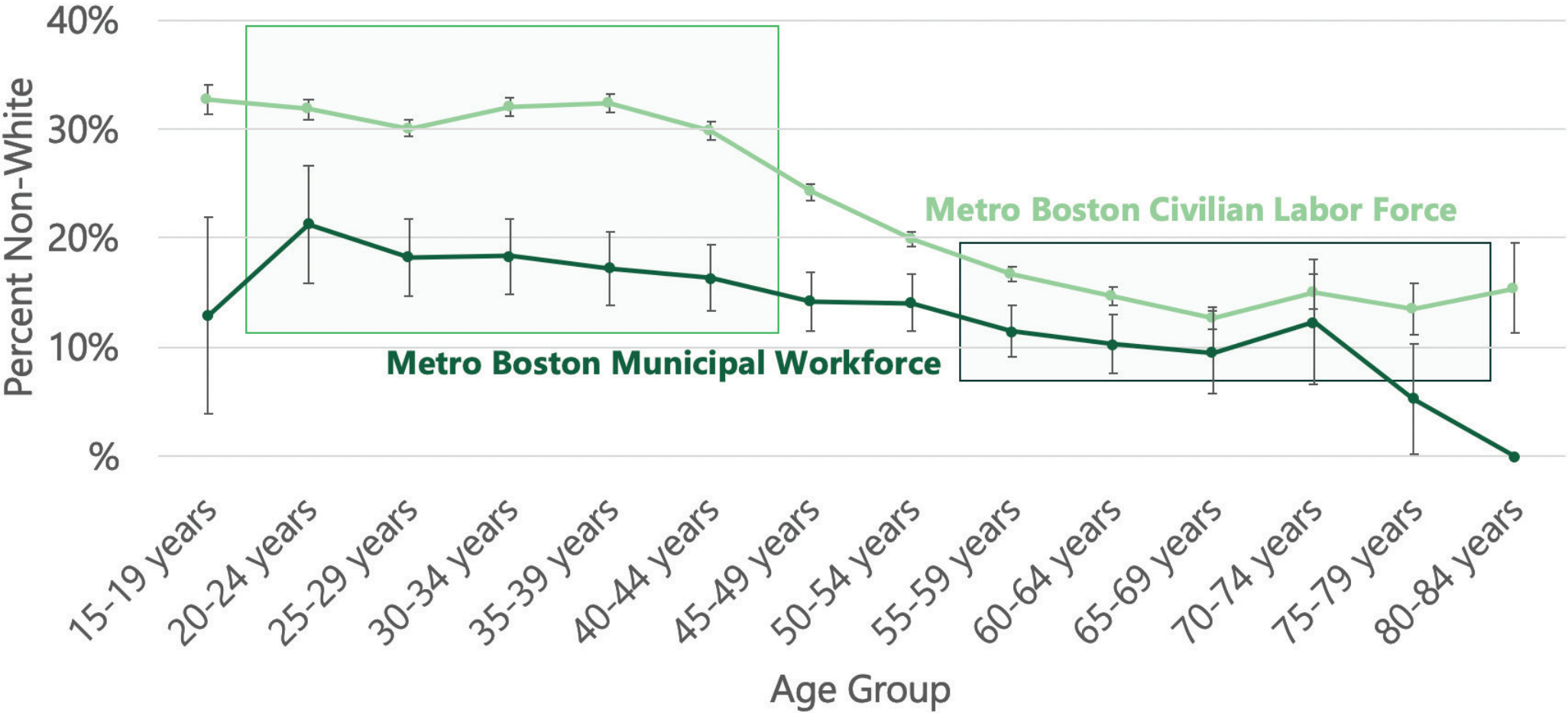
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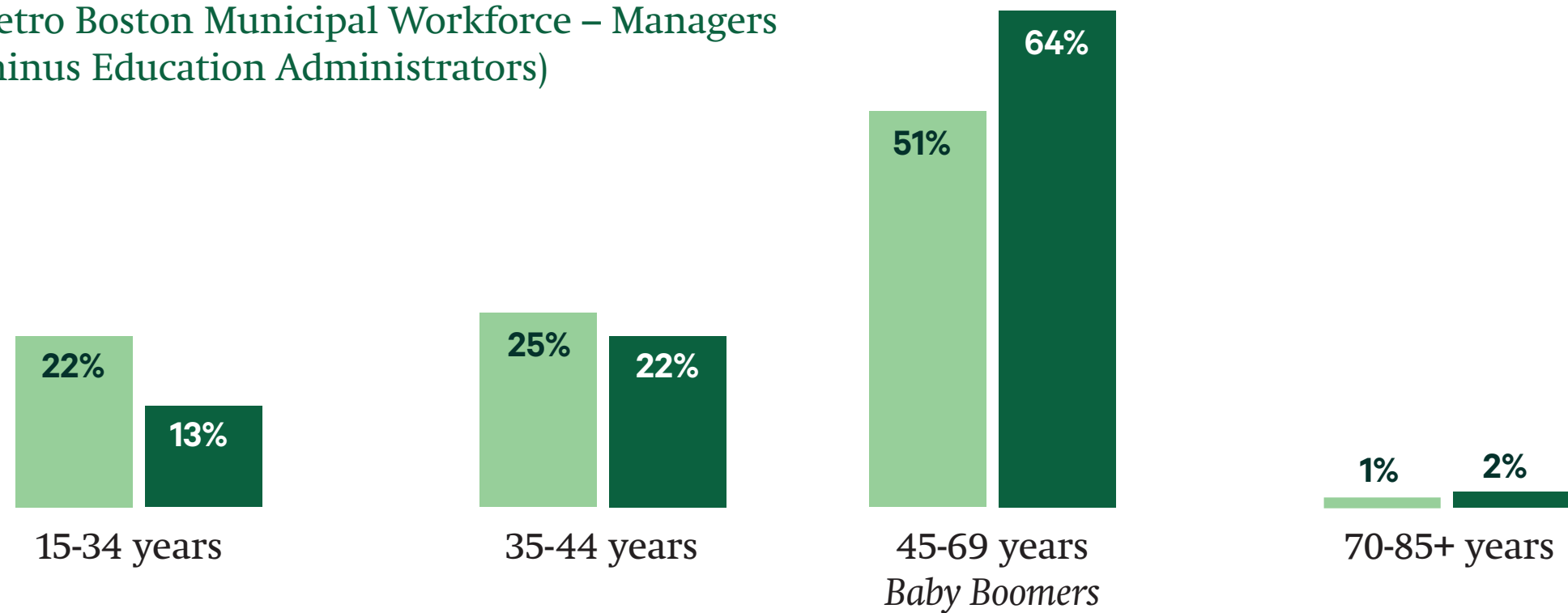


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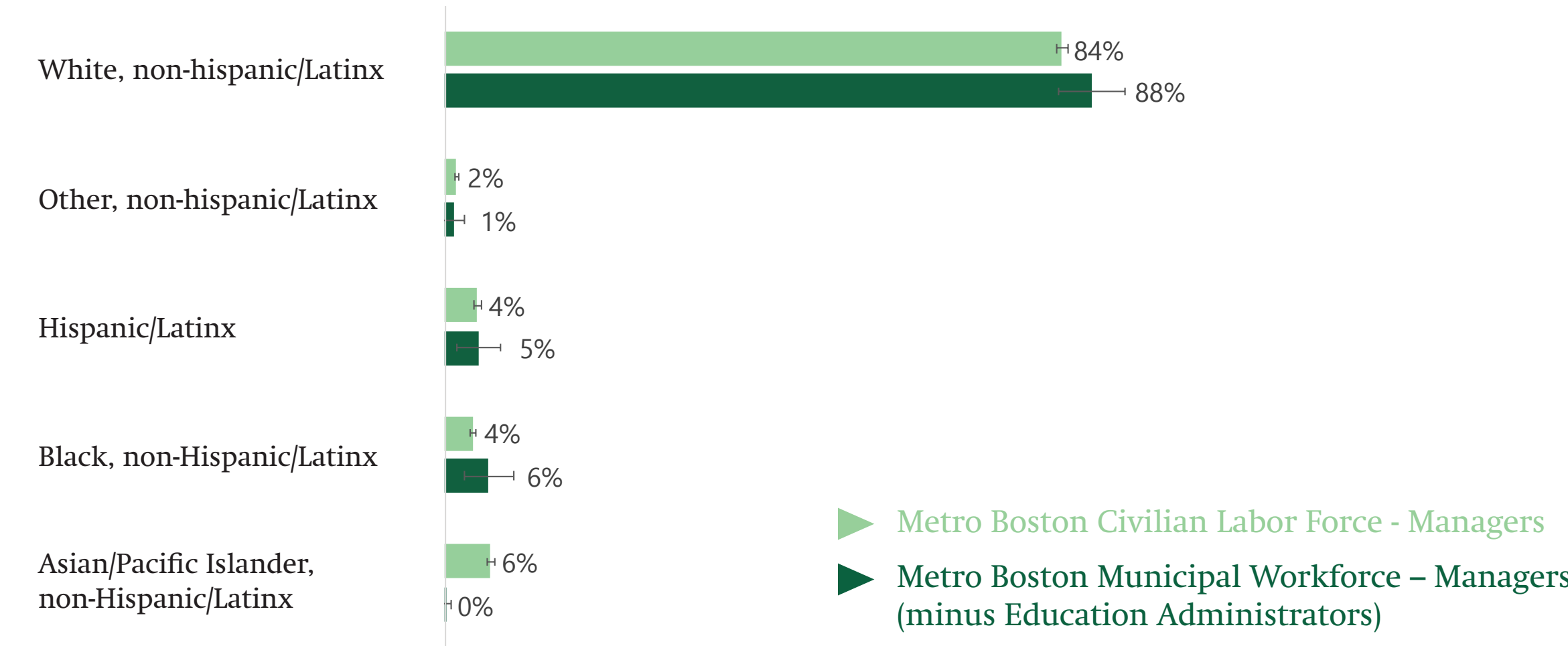


Disparities are even larger among municipal management

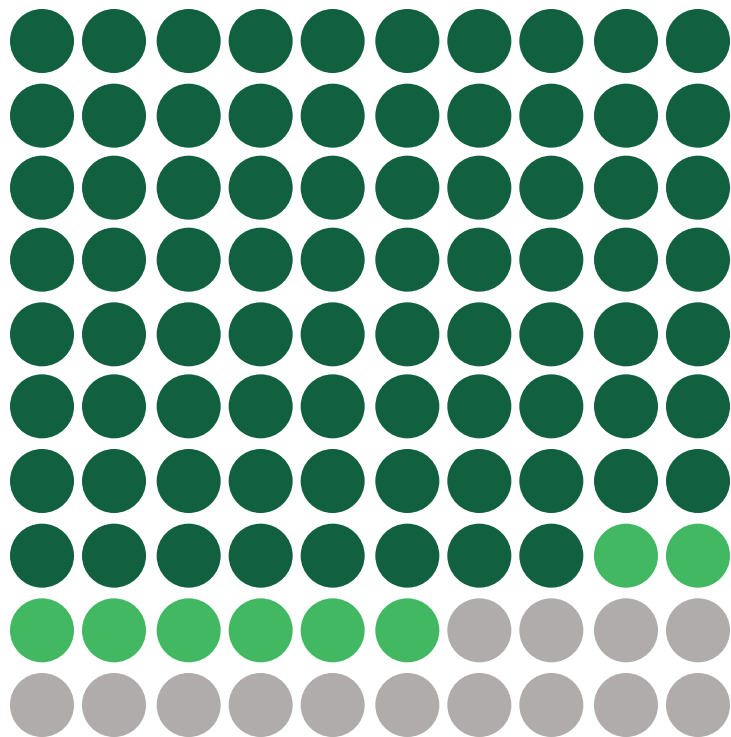
- ▶ Metro Boston Civilian Labor Force - Managers
- ▶ Metro Boston Municipal Workforce – Managers
(minus Education Administrators)



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Law enforcement and firefighters are especially unrepresentative of the region

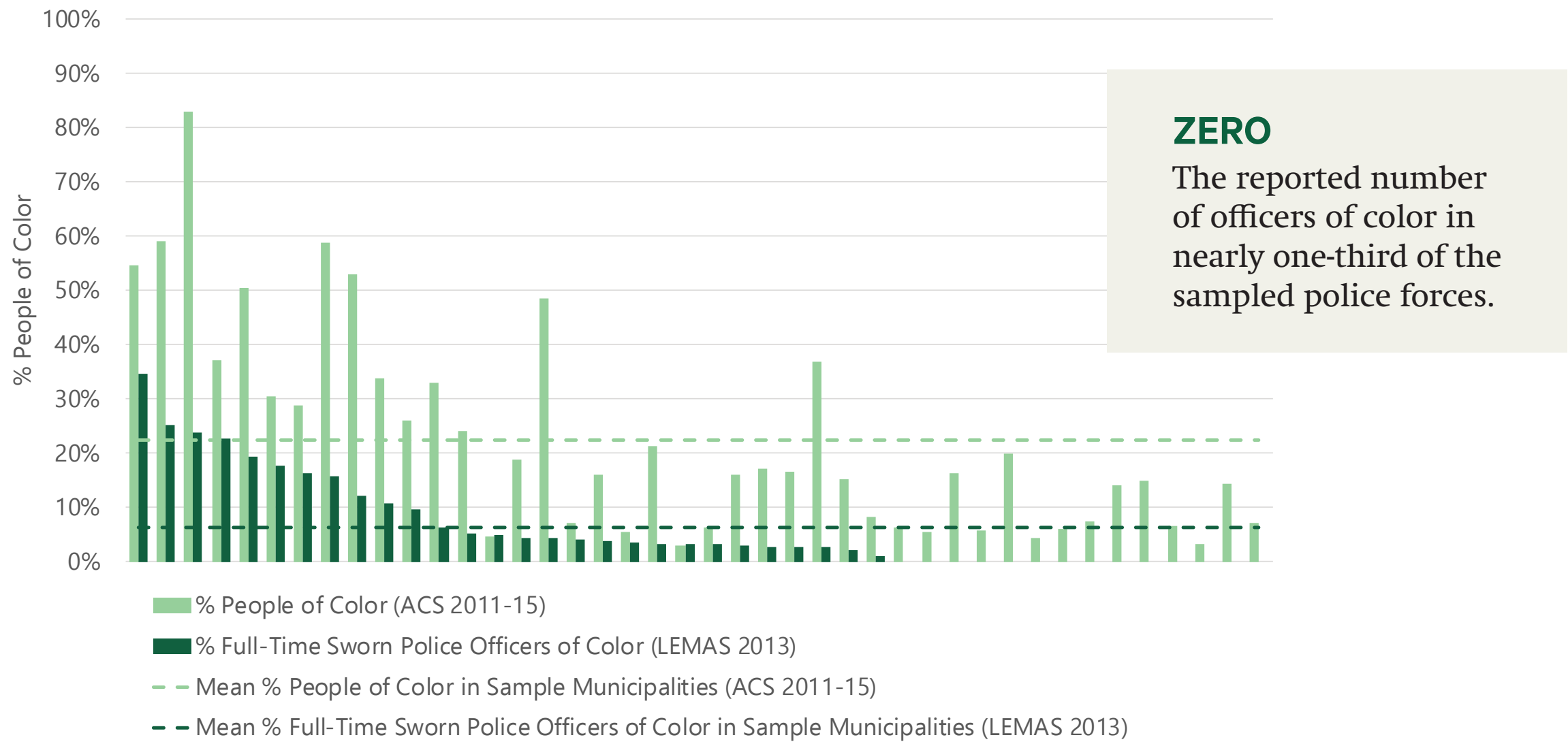


86%
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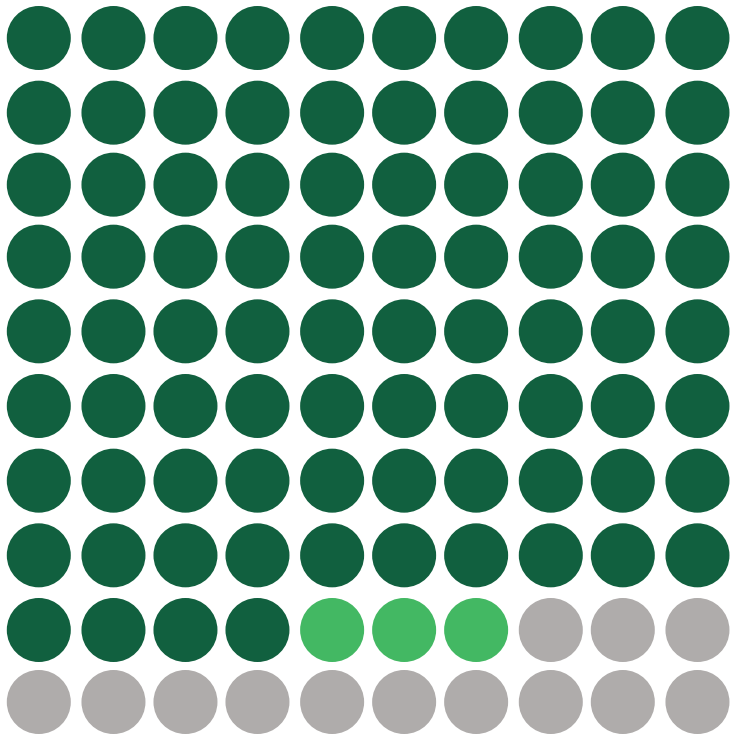
▶ Police Officers
78% white male
8% white female

▶ General Population
35% white male
37% white female

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Law enforcement and firefighters are especially unrepresentative of the region



87%
of firefighters in Metro
Boston are white

▶ **84%** white male
3% white female

Considerations for recruitment policy and best practices

There are a variety of policies and practices that shape recruitment and the makeup of the workforce across municipal governments.

- ▶ Some municipalities **restrict hiring based on residency** for some or all positions
- ▶ Some roles, often managerial, are eligible for **tenure protections** that can protect incumbents or make them difficult to replace
- ▶ Municipalities often have unions that cover a range of professions and staff levels
- ▶ **Collective bargaining agreements** can also set out certain recruitment parameters and include targets for the number of staff that can be employed and the processes through which staff are promoted or discharged

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- ▶ **The Civil Service** is a state system established to promote merit-based hiring and reduce favoritism and nepotism
- ▶ Only used consistently for recruitment and hiring for **police departments, correctional officers, and fire departments**
- ▶ Those who pass **a civil service exam** are ranked on several criteria depending on the municipality. State law establishes **veteran status** as the highest preference category, alongside residency in certain municipalities.
- ▶ Those who pass the examination **must be selected in order of highest-ranking criteria.**

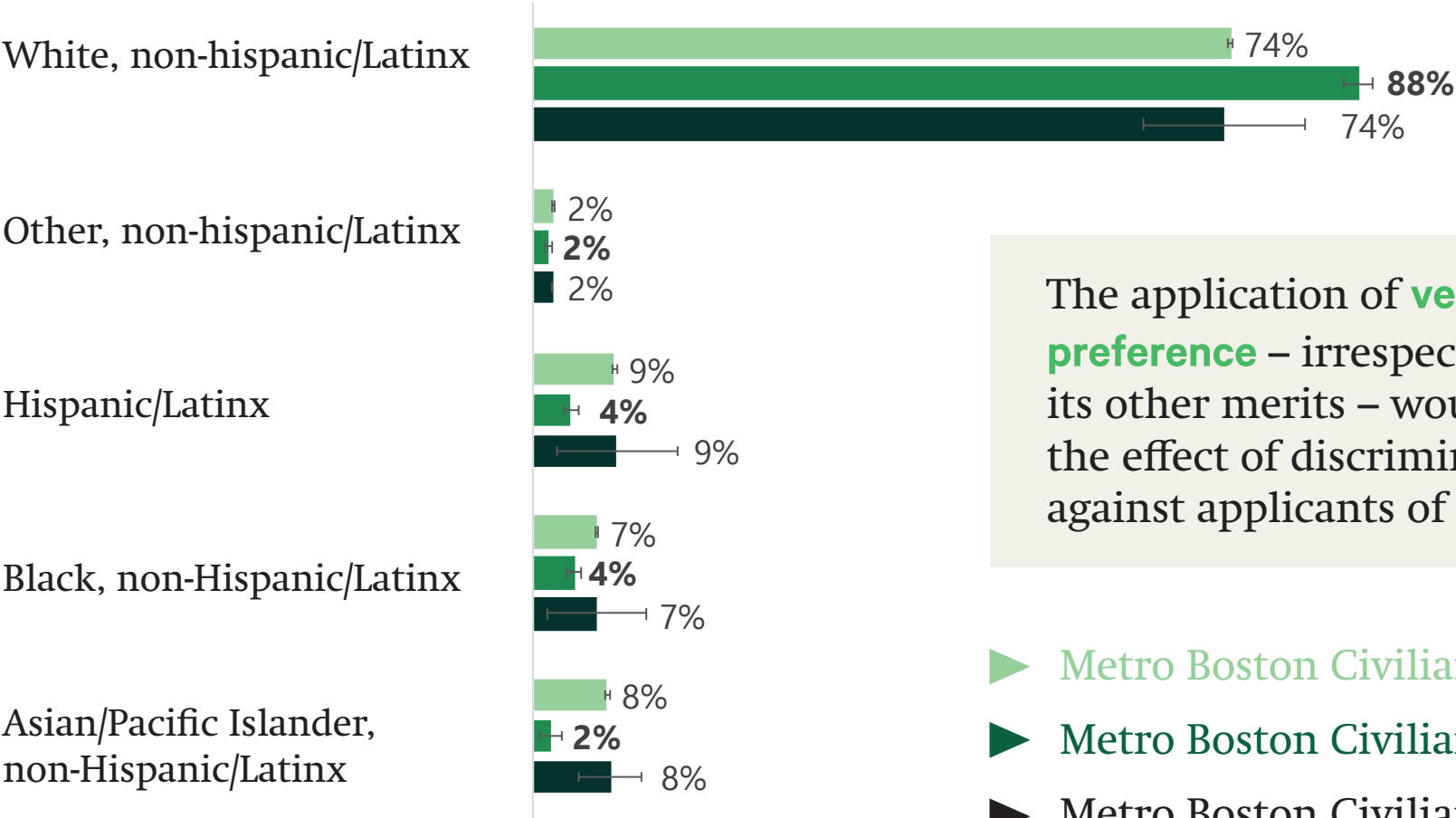
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Several communities have pulled their public safety departments out of the civil service system to gain more flexibility in hiring.

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Veteran preference may hinder diversification efforts



The application of **veteran preference** – irrespective of its other merits – would have the effect of discriminating against applicants of color

- ▶ Metro Boston Civilian Labor Force
- ▶ Metro Boston Civilian Labor Force – Military Veterans
- ▶ Metro Boston Civilian Labor Force – Never in Military

Recommendations and interventions

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MAPC can support these efforts by supporting the municipal procurement of Human Resources software and services that provide greater transparency of the hiring, management, and promotion process.

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Thank you!

► Questions?



Panel Q&A

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