

The People and Communities in Hampton Roads

A report by the University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center

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This report was developed by the University of Virginia,
Weldon Cooper Center Demographics Research Group for the
Hampton Roads Community Foundation.



Hampton Roads
Community Foundation



UNIVERSITY
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Weldon Cooper Center
for Public Service
Demographics Research Group

ABOUT THE DEMOGRAPHICS RESEARCH GROUP

The demographers at the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service conduct practical and policy-oriented analysis of census and demographic data and are the source for the state's official annual population estimates, population projections, and school-age population estimates. Learn more: <https://demographics.coopercenter.org/>

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INTRODUCTION

A thriving community with opportunity for all is the vision fueling and focusing the work of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation. In pursuit of that vision; in recognition of historic and contemporary inequities in housing, healthcare, education, and the economy; and through a renewed commitment to the value of *justice*, the Foundation has undertaken a systematic and ambitious series of conversations, studies, and special initiatives.

This report is part of a library of resources President Deborah DiCroce described as “a necessary...step toward realizing the Foundation’s vision.” Reports like [Giving Black® Hampton Roads](#), and community conversations such as those held through Understanding Hampton Roads, provided an essential historical context, documentation of the power of Black philanthropy, and personal stories relevant to understanding the human experiences of life in Hampton Roads. This report uses foundational data to address questions, such as: Who lives in our region? How is our population changing? What do we know about well-being among area residents? Does it vary by race, ethnicity, age, educational attainment, employment, or location? How does the opportunity for thriving present itself across our region?

To establish a context for regional data, the report compares Hampton Roads with peer regions, including Northern Virginia and Richmond, and with the Commonwealth overall.

While we began with the goal of documenting racial and ethnic differences across the variables specified, the study revealed regional or locality differences to be more prominent than racial differences in some cases. As a result, this study goes beyond the initial scope with a focus on people of color; it also examines the context for population dynamics in the region’s history, economy, and industries, and how they have shaped local demographics (including racial differences).

We are grateful for the opportunity to support the pioneering work of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation, and we welcome continuing dialogue about this report or other data of interest.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent decades, the Commonwealth lost a large share of its manufacturing jobs while gaining new jobs in fast-growing sectors, such as information technology and finance. This change varied across Virginia's regions, with those regions that effectively made the transition to contemporary economic growth sectors gaining in economic vitality. Economic and employment opportunities are significant drivers of both population migration and retention not only for the people of Virginia overall, but also for residents of Hampton Roads. While reliance on defense spending has provided Hampton Roads with a steady economic base and employment opportunities to residents with a broad range of educational attainment, it has also slowed the region's transition to faster-growing economic sectors.

Several significant findings emerge from comparing Hampton Roads to Virginia overall in recent decades:

- The income gap between Hampton Roads and the rest of Virginia has increased.
- Fewer immigrants are settling in Hampton Roads than in the state as a whole.
- There has been a rise in young adults leaving the region.
- With few exceptions, individuals in Hampton Roads households (regardless of race or ethnicity) are more likely to experience poverty, be unemployed, rent their home, and lack a bachelor's degree than Virginians overall.
- On the other hand, disparities in household income between racial/ethnic groups in Hampton Roads are smaller than in the rest of Virginia.
- Life expectancy in the region's communities is typically higher than in comparable communities in other parts of the Commonwealth.
- Educational attainment has improved over the last decade. In 2019, the region's high school graduation rate surpassed the graduation rate in the rest of Virginia. However, Hampton Roads graduates remain less likely to attend college and earn a bachelor's degree than Virginians overall, and racial/ethnic differences persist in high school graduation rates and preparation for college.

The region's economy has played a significant role in shaping population demographics and the types of opportunities available to all residents. Fortunately, core employment sectors are reliably steady. Partnerships with the area's port, defense, health care, and higher education sectors can amplify opportunities for area residents across many levels of educational attainment. Continuing to work with other entities to attract employers from sectors generally paying higher salaries will, over time, build a stronger and more diversified array of opportunities.

In some areas, the region has done a better job of equalizing opportunities across racial/ethnic groups than other places in Virginia. At the same time, programs to bolster college preparatory study and to increase home and/or small business ownership among those who identify as Black would be worthy investments. The region's rich racial and ethnic diversity positions Hampton Roads well for addressing

needs that arise amidst an evolving sense of race and ethnicity among the population, especially younger residents.

The region shows signs of progress in areas such as life expectancy, lower socioeconomic disparities among racial/ethnic groups, and substantial improvement in educational attainment. Continued progress will be dependent on developing a strategy that recognizes the unique characteristics of the region and individual localities, and targets programs to meet local needs.

DATA AND REPORT STRUCTURE

Throughout the study, we attempted to address three overriding questions:

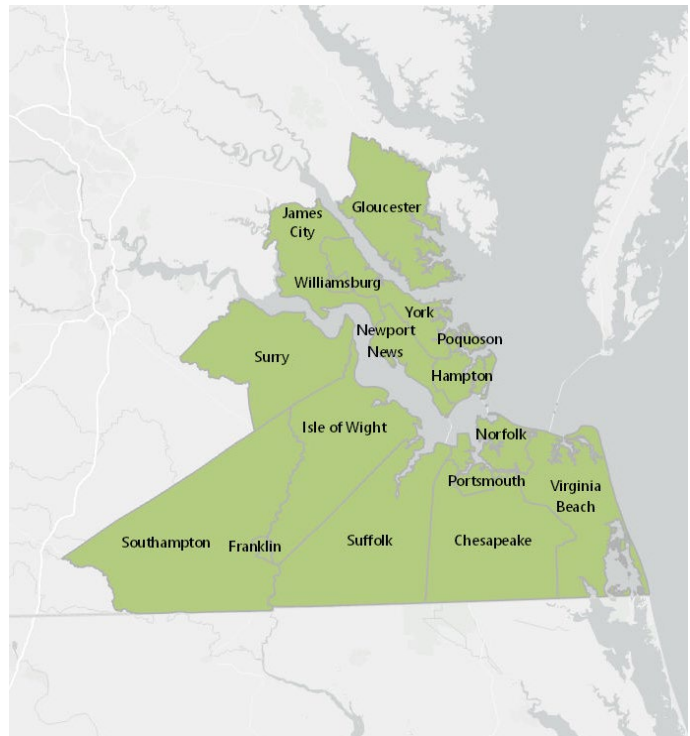
1. What are the most notable differences between Hampton Roads as a region and its peers of Northern Virginia and Richmond, and between Hampton Roads as a region and the state as a whole?
2. What are the differences among member localities in the region?
3. What are the most notable racial/ethnic differences in each of the socioeconomic characteristics?

We examined answers to the questions above with the goal of identifying key findings to assist the Hampton Roads Community Foundation in setting priorities for future action.

DATA SOURCES

This study covers key demographic and socioeconomic data characterizing the Hampton Roads region (the boundaries of which are the same as the Hampton Roads Planning District).

The 2015-2019 American Community Survey and the 2020 Decennial Census, both conducted by the United States Census Bureau, provide most of the data analyzed for this study. Additional data includes population estimates by the Census Bureau, annual population projections from the Weldon Cooper Center, as well as relevant education and health data from Virginia state agencies.



RACE/ETHNICITY DATA

Race groups presented in the study include American Indian, Asian, Black, White, and Two or more races. Ethnicity refers to Hispanic origin. Hispanic can be of any race. Census race categories of Pacific Islander and Some other race are not included because the number of people who selected these categories is very small and comprises a tiny share of the overall population. In all cases, race/ethnicity data are presented with full appreciation for its limitations in portraying or

forecasting individual experience and historic patterns of discrimination. The data are analyzed and displayed with care to eliminate bias.

| The Census Bureau’s definition of race/ethnic categories used in this study are: | |
|---|--|
| American Indian | A person with ancestral origins among any of the original peoples of the Western Hemisphere. |
| Asian | A person with ancestral origins in Eastern Asia, Southeast Asia as well as the Indian Subcontinent. |
| Black | A person with ancestral origins in sub-Saharan Africa. |
| Two or more races | A person with more than one race. |
| White | A person with ancestral origins in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. |
| Hispanic | A person with an ancestral origin in a Spanish-based culture, such as Argentina, Mexico, or Spain, <u>regardless of race</u> . |

It is worth noting that race data in some cases is not readily available or directly comparable. Comparisons are only made when the data are consistent and reliable. Race data from the 2020 census, for example, is not comparable with previous censuses or the American Community Survey due to changes in the process of racial coding and “noise-injection” to protect individual identification. As a result, 2020 population estimates by race (developed by the Census Bureau in advance of the 2020 Census data) were used instead for comparison between 2010 and 2020. See *Appendix B* for a chart of historic Census race/ethnicity categories and a discussion of the challenges involved in understanding and interpreting this data.

Because other agencies that collect race data often use different racial definitions than the Census Bureau, caution needs to be used when comparing census race data with non-census race data. For example, the Census Bureau counted 346,000 Virginia public school students who identified as Black in 2019, while the Virginia Department of Education, who uses a more strict definition for each racial group (only including students who identify as a single race and not Hispanic), reported 275,000 Black students.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF POPULATION CHANGE

TWO TALES OF THE SAME CENTURY: REGIONAL ECONOMY IMPACTS POPULATION

IN SUMMARY

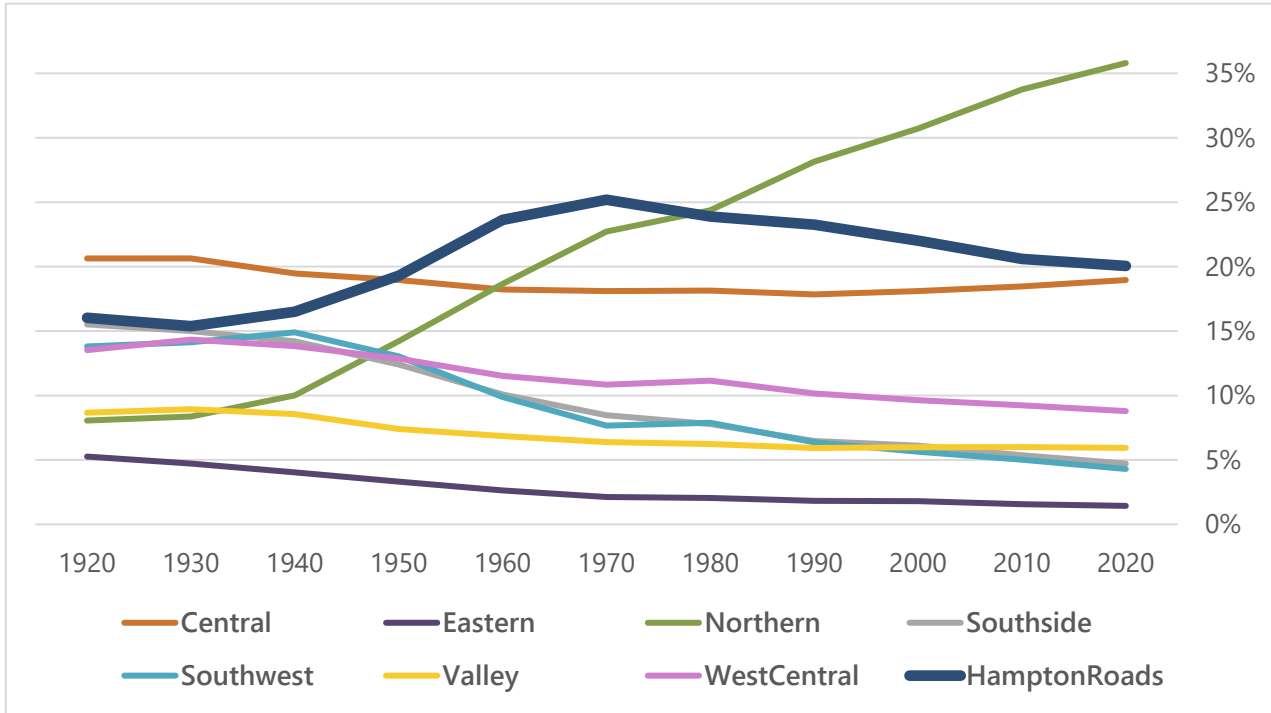
Over the past one hundred years, Hampton Roads has changed from an area booming with population growth to one that is experiencing slowing rates of growth. The economic heart of the region may, in part, contribute to this change. Suburban growth in the region is the strongest.

The population of Hampton Roads expanded by 70 percent during the first two decades of the twentieth century, growing three times faster than the rest of Virginia. At a time when the economy of the South remained centered around agriculture, Hampton Roads ports, shipyards, and rail connections to the Appalachian coalfields fueled the region's economy. By 1920, only 4 percent of Hampton Roads workers were employed in agriculture, while 40 percent of Virginians still worked on farms.

By 1950, Hampton Roads became Virginia's most populous region and also one of the largest urban areas in the South, comparable in size to Atlanta or Miami. Black and White migrants left agricultural jobs in Virginia and neighboring states for opportunities in expanding military facilities in Hampton Roads.

The chart on page 7, depicting eight regions in Virginia (based on geographic proximity and shared socioeconomic characteristics), illustrates regional population growth trends over the past 100 years. (See *Appendix C* for a *map* of the regions.)

Percent of Virginia's Population, 1920-2020

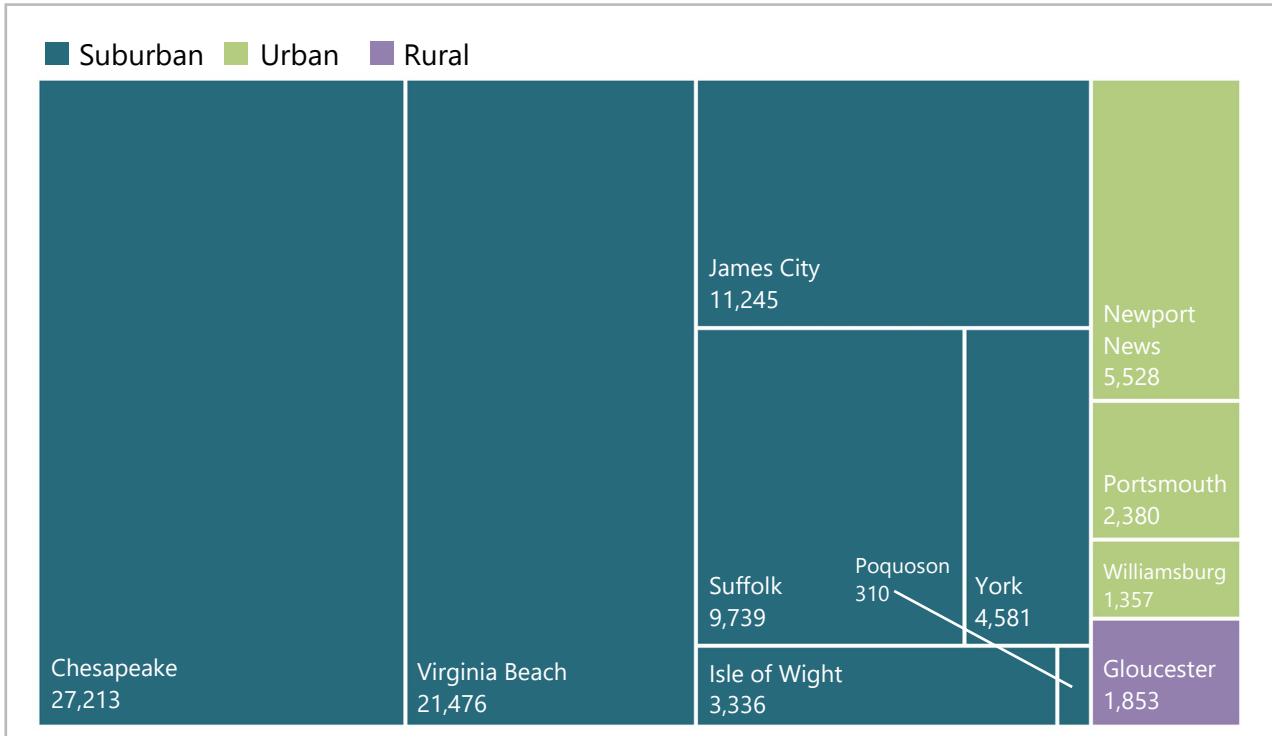


Source: Census Bureau Decennial Counts 1920 to 2020

In the 1950s, white-collar service industries contributed to a growing share of the U.S. economy and to the economies of Virginia's other two major urban areas: Northern Virginia and Richmond. In Hampton Roads, a disproportionate share of residents in the 1950s worked in heavy industry, shipping, or were in the military, while the share of residents working in white-collar service occupations, such as education, medicine, and finance was notably smaller than in Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia as a whole. This established a trend of the region's economy growing more slowly and population growth slowing along with it.

Today, Northern Virginia is Virginia's most populous region. Over the past 30 years, the Hampton Roads population has continued to grow (by 20 percent) but pales in contrast to growth in the Richmond Metro Area and Northern Virginia (46 and 77 percent, respectively).

Localities with Population Growth, 2010 to 2020



Source: Census Bureau Decennial 2010 and 2020 Counts

Between 2010 and 2020, population growth within Hampton Roads has been overwhelmingly concentrated in its suburban areas, with over 70 percent of the growth in Chesapeake, Suffolk, James City, and Virginia Beach. In the region’s rural localities, aging populations have caused the number of deaths to increasingly outnumber births, slowing their population growth, or resulting in population decline.

RECENT POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE, RACE, ETHNICITY, AND IMMIGRATION

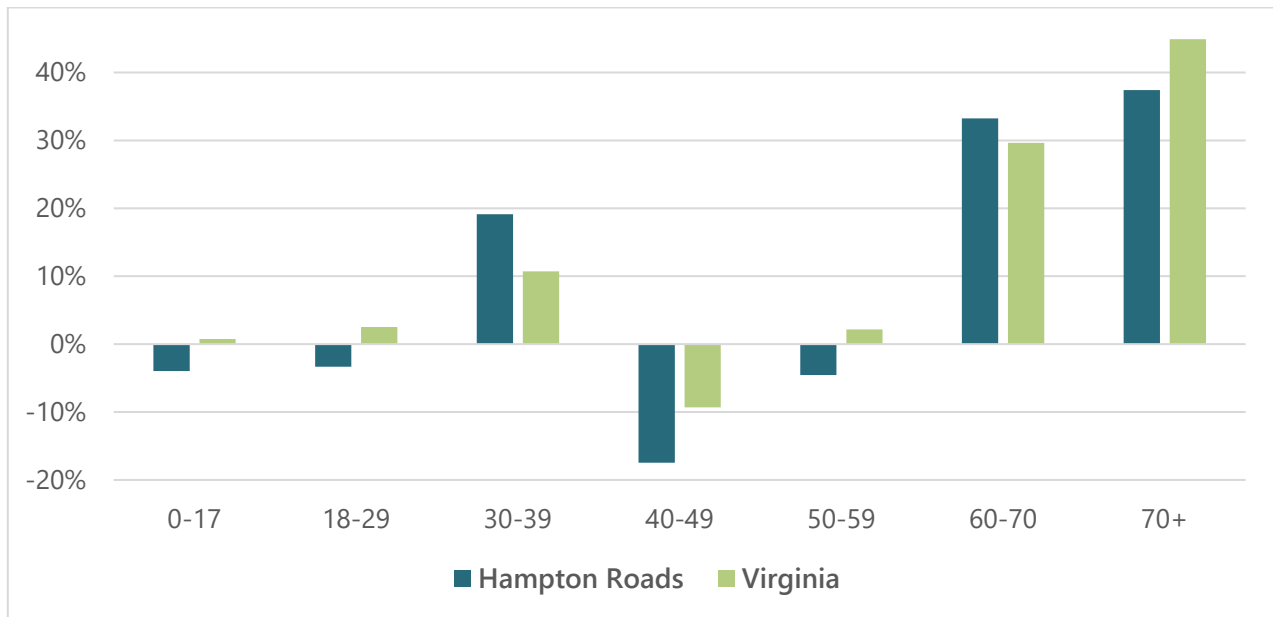
AGE ANALYSIS

IN SUMMARY

While the Hampton Roads population is younger than Virginia as a whole, its share of the population over 65 is growing rapidly. As the younger generations delay or decline having children, the overall age of the population increases.

The population structure of nearly every community in Virginia and the U.S. has grown older in recent decades. This is mainly due to two factors: most of those from the Baby Boom generation are now 60 or older, and the birth rate for the younger generations has been steadily declining. Though the Hampton Roads population remains younger than Virginia as a whole (in large part due to the significant presence of young armed forces members), the share of Hampton Roads residents 65 and older has risen from 9 percent in 1990 to 22 percent in 2020, a larger increase than in Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia as a whole. The region’s rural localities and those north of the James have the largest share of their populations 65 and older. In 2020, 27 percent of James City County residents were age 65 or older, the largest percentage in Hampton Roads.

Population Change by Age, 2010 to 2020

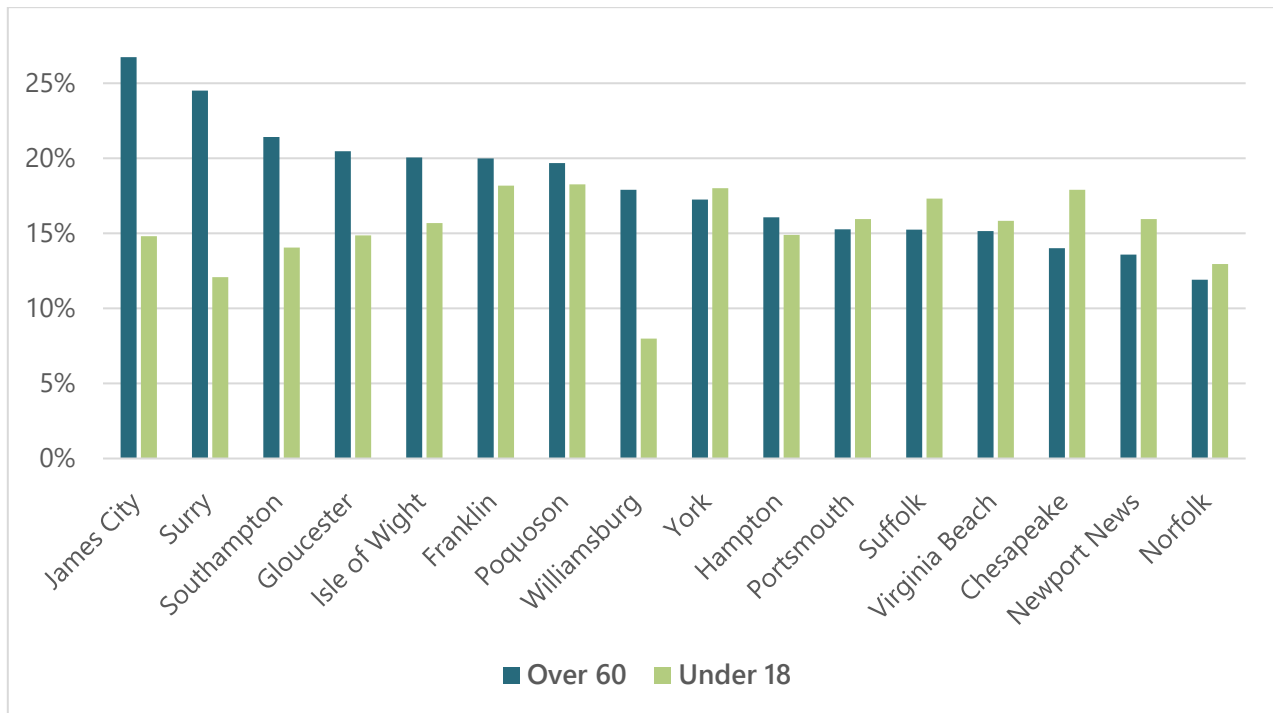


Source: Census Bureau 2010 Decennial Count and 2020 Population Estimates

Hampton Roads experienced 16 percent fewer births in 2020 than in 2008, a larger decline than in Virginia as a whole (13 percent) and in Northern Virginia and Richmond (11 and 7 percent, respectively).

Since 2010, with fewer births and more young adults moving out than into Hampton Roads, the population under age 60 has shrunk. Residents between ages 30 and 39 were the only age group in the region under age 60 to increase in size during the last decade as many Millennials aged into their 30s. At the same time, the Hampton Roads population age 60 and older grew by 35 percent.

2020 Population Over 60 and Under 18



Source: Census Bureau 2020 Population Estimates

The chart above shows that the gap between the old and young is most prominent in the region’s fast-aging localities. These trends may continue in these localities as the smaller cohort of young people is likely to produce an even smaller cohort of children. (The small share of people under 18 in Williamsburg is an exception and likely due to the college-age population being mostly over 18 and also unlikely to have children).

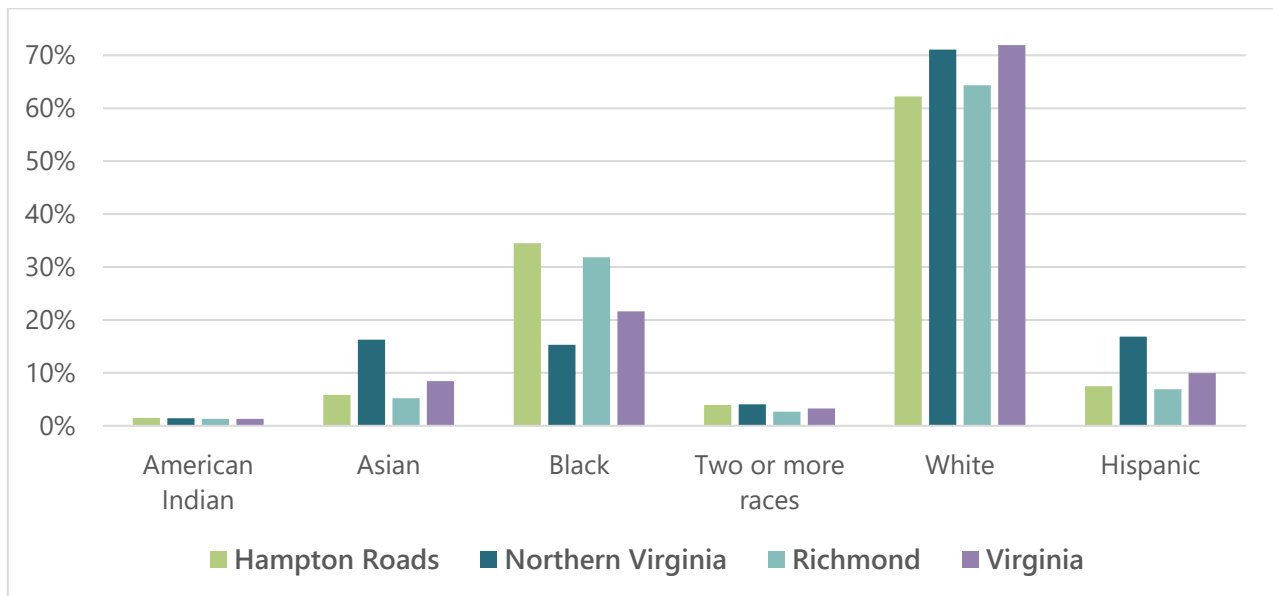
RACE/HISPANIC ORIGIN

IN SUMMARY

A number of factors, including immigration, less exclusionary concepts of race and ethnicity, rising intermarriage rates, and changes in how people view themselves, have caused the number of Hampton Roads residents who identify as a race or ethnicity besides Black or White, alone (not Hispanic) to grow substantially in recent decades, particularly among younger residents.

In recent decades, residents who identify as Asian, Hispanic, or Two or more races have contributed to most of the population growth in Hampton Roads and in Virginia as a whole. In Hampton Roads, the number of Black and White residents is estimated to have increased by less than 5 percent since 2010, while the Asian population grew by 28 percent, the multiracial¹ population by 33 percent, and the Hispanic population by 45 percent. The racial/ethnic composition in Hampton Roads today is quite similar to the Richmond Metro area, both of which have a larger share of the population that identifies as Black and a smaller share of its population that identifies as either Asian, Hispanic, or White than in the rest of Virginia.

2020 Race and Ethnic Distribution

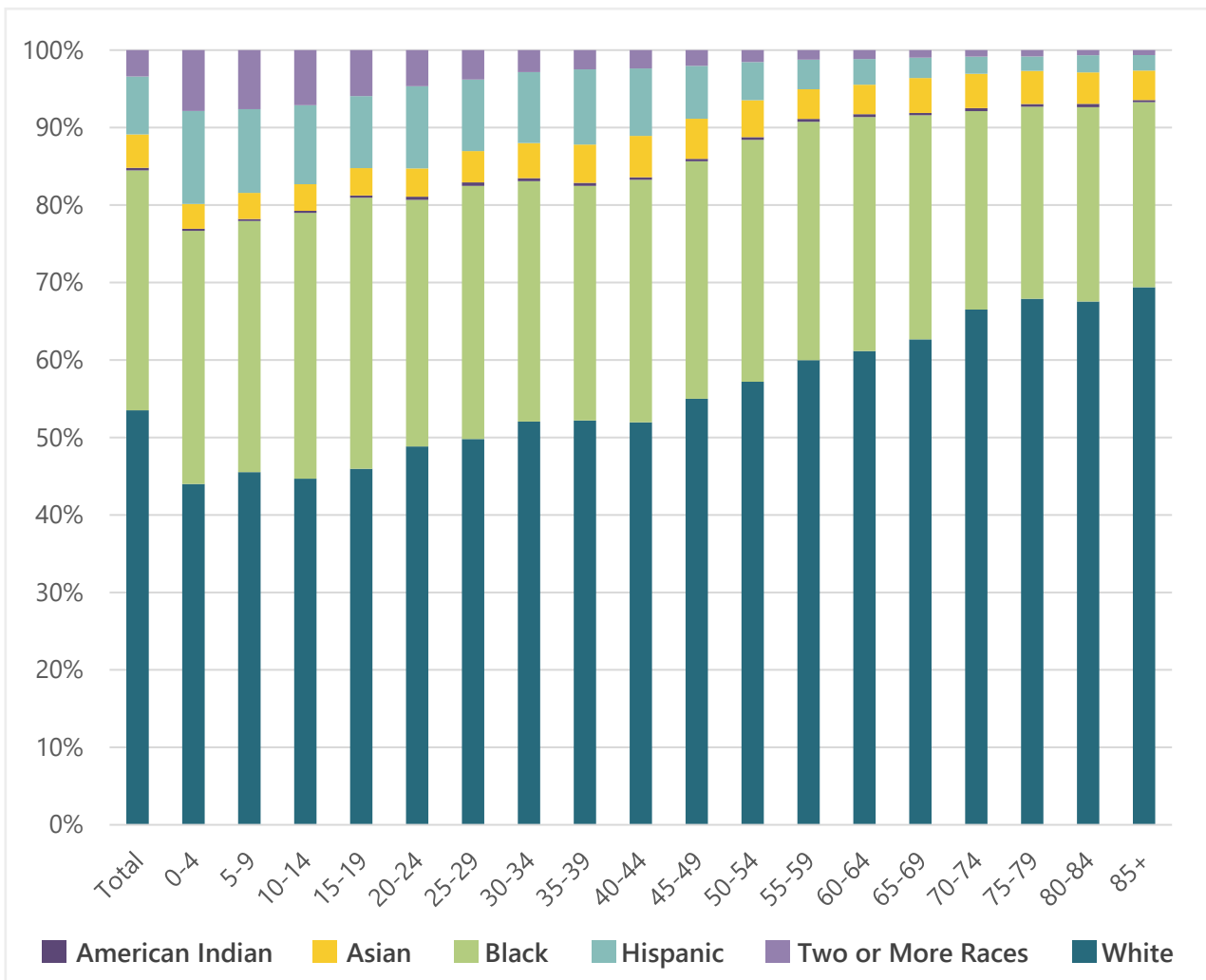


Source: Census Bureau 2020 Population Estimates

¹ Multiracial means Two or more races. The terms are used interchangeably in this report.

The best way to understand the changes Hampton Roads (and, to an extent, Virginia) is undergoing is to view the region’s racial composition by age. In 2020, 92 percent of Hampton Roads residents age 65 and older identified as either Black or White, alone (not Hispanic), reflecting the Black and White dichotomy that has defined the region’s and much of the nation’s racial composition and conceptualization of race since the colonial era. As recently as 1950, only 0.1 percent of Hampton Roads residents identified as a race other than Black or White. Today, 23 percent of Hampton Roads residents under age 15 identify as a race or ethnicity other than Black or White, alone (not Hispanic), reflecting the growth in other races and ethnicities and in the multiracial population in the region.

Hampton Roads Racial/Ethnic Composition by Age, 2020



Source: Census Bureau 2020 Population Estimates

IMMIGRATION

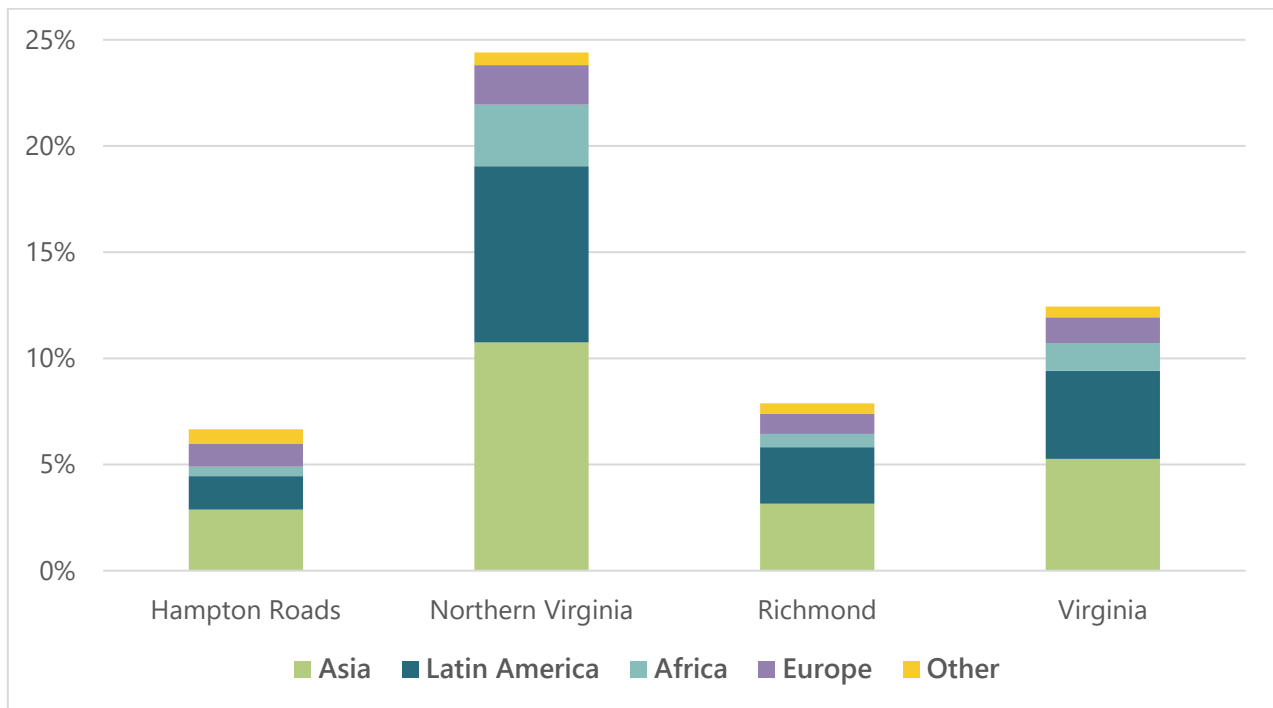
IN SUMMARY

Immigration has changed the face of Virginia in every community, including Hampton Roads, which has an immigration rate lower than Virginia as a whole. Suburban localities are more likely to be home to immigrants.

Immigrant population growth has helped change the racial/ethnic composition of Hampton Roads and Virginia as a whole. In 1950, fewer than 1 percent of Hampton Roads and Virginia residents were immigrants, but by 2019, 7 percent of Hampton Roads residents and 12 percent of Virginians were immigrants. While in 1950 nearly all immigrants in Hampton Roads were European, over two-thirds of immigrants today are from either Asia or Latin America.

The presence of armed forces installations in the region has attracted a relatively large number of immigrants from countries with major overseas military bases, such as Germany, Korea, and the United Kingdom. Because the Philippines is the only foreign country in which the U.S. Navy recruits, nearly one in five immigrants in Hampton Roads is from the Philippines.

Foreign Born Percent of Population by Place of Birth, 2020



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

Immigrants live in every Hampton Roads community, but tend to concentrate in suburban localities, such as Virginia Beach and York County, where immigrants make up a larger share of the population (9 and 8 percent, respectively). Urban localities in the region have a smaller share of foreign-born residents, while rural localities, such as Surry or Gloucester, have even smaller immigrant populations, with only 1 or 2 percent of their populations born in other countries.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

INCOME, POVERTY, EMPLOYMENT, AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

INCOME

IN SUMMARY

The regional economic base has depressed incomes and slowed income growth over the past twenty years. The range of household income varies by race in a way that mirrors the same trend throughout Virginia, although disparities in household income among races is lower than in Virginia as a whole. Household incomes are highest in the region's suburban localities.

The median household income in Hampton Roads was 1 percent lower than in Virginia overall in 1980, but by 2019, it was 10 percent lower, in part reflecting the relatively limited economic diversification and slow growth of the region's manufacturing and military economy. In turn, the region attracted fewer immigrants and failed to retain younger workers.

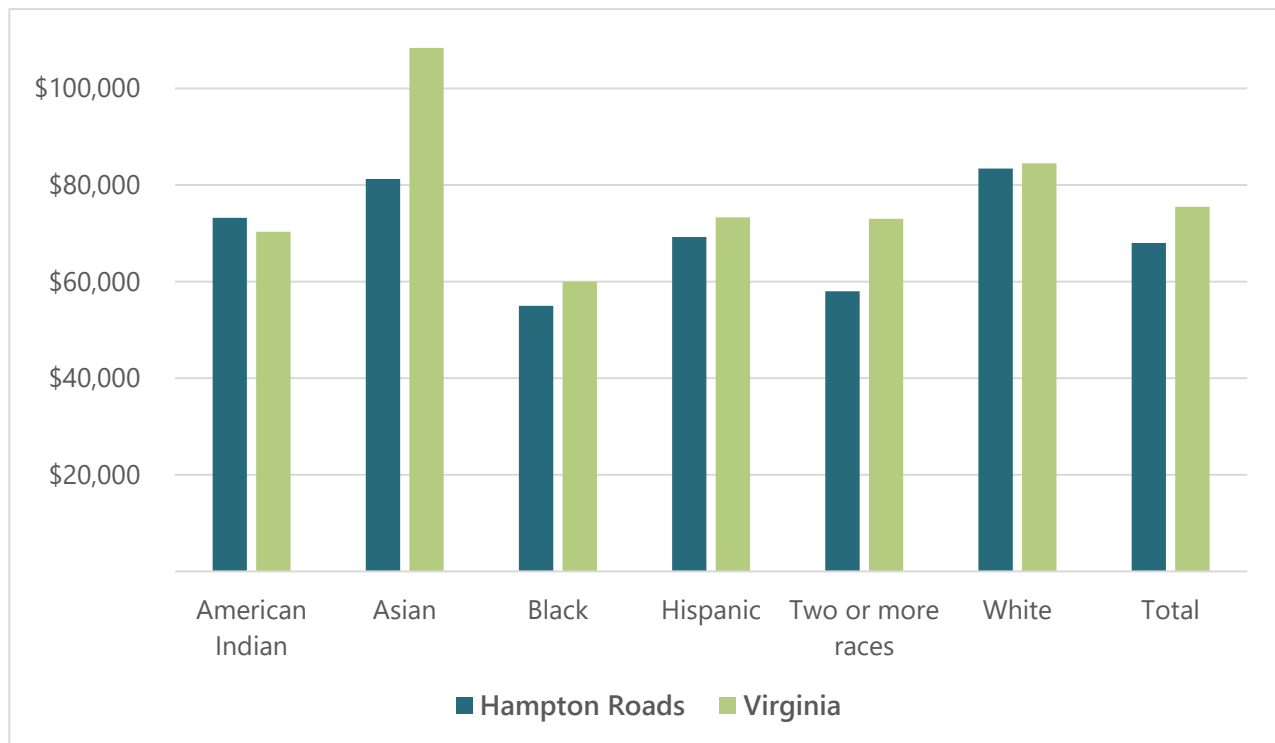
The region's relatively weak economy has had a noticeable impact on the incomes of its residents regardless of their race. To put Hampton Roads income data into context, Northern Virginia residents who identify as Black had a median household income above \$90,000 in 2019, higher than any racial/ethnic group in Hampton Roads and a third higher than the region's median household income.

While dependence on declining defense spending has contributed to slow income growth in the region, it has also helped diminish disparities in income between racial/ethnic groups. A number of analyses, for example, have shown that the wage gap across racial groups is considerably smaller for service members and veterans than other workers. In Virginia, the income gap between both Black and American Indian households and Virginians as a whole has remained largely unchanged in recent decades, but in Hampton Roads the gap has grown smaller:

- The income gap between Black households and households in the region overall was smaller than in the rest of Virginia (based on median household income).
- American Indian and Hispanic households had nearly the same median household incomes as the median household income for the region.

Comparative household income levels for the region’s racial/ethnic groups mirror those in the rest of Virginia. Residents who identify as Asian or White reported the highest household incomes (although Asian households outside the region have considerably higher incomes), and those who identified as Black or Two or more races reported the lowest.

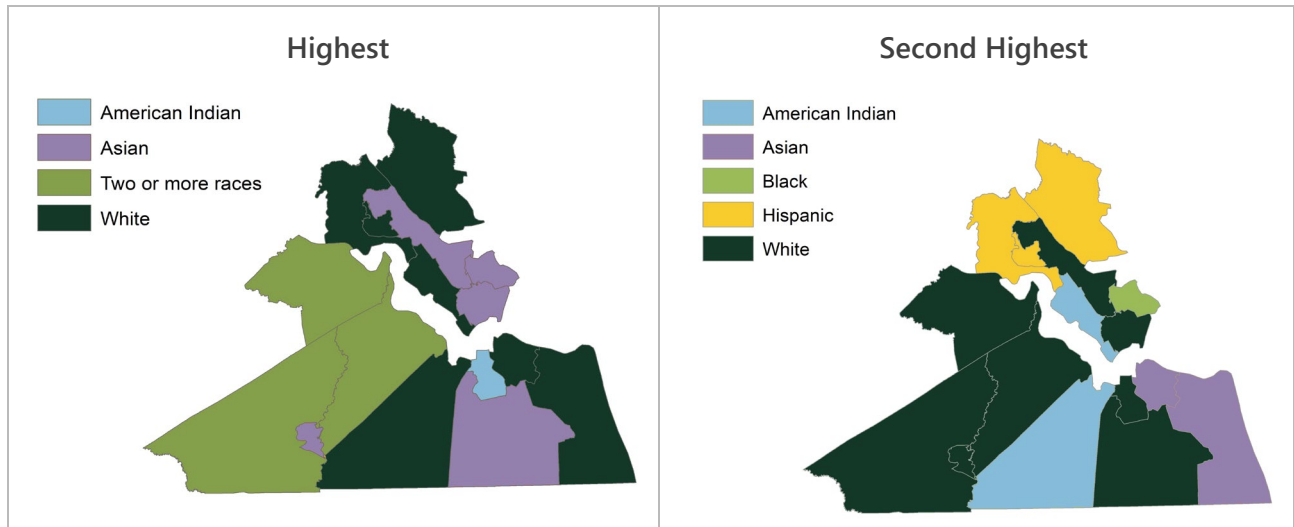
Median Household Income by Race and Ethnicity, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

Incomes levels vary by geography within the region, with the highest reported household incomes concentrated in the peninsula’s suburban localities: Poquoson, York, and James City. The racial/ethnic group with the highest median household income in each locality varies considerably across the region. Households that identified as White had the highest median income in 7 of the region’s 16 counties or cities.

Top Median Household Income by Race and Ethnicity, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

While White and Asian households have the highest median household income in the region (as well as in the state), it is not the case in every locality. People identifying as American Indian have the highest household income in Portsmouth, and those identifying as Two or more races have the highest in Surry, Isle of Wight, and Southampton. It is worth noting that Black and Hispanic households do not rank highest in household income in any of the localities in the region, although Black households are second highest in Poquoson, and Hispanic households are second highest in Gloucester, James City, and Williamsburg.

POVERTY

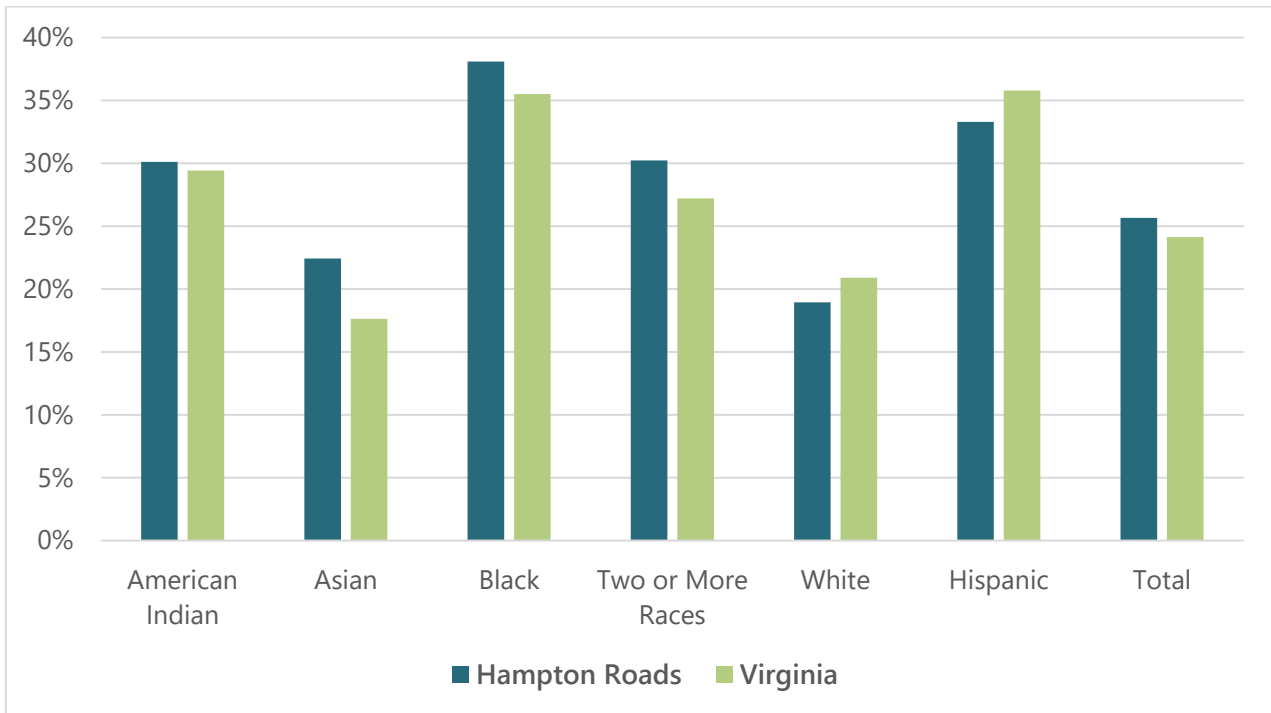
IN SUMMARY

Suburban localities have lower poverty rates than the rest of the Hampton Roads region.

Throughout Virginia and in Hampton Roads, widespread poverty has been gradually declining, especially in the second half of the 2010s. However, due to a slow recovery since the last recession, the poverty rate in 2019 remained higher than in 2009. Within the Hampton Roads region, poverty rates are typically highest in urban and rural localities and lower in suburban localities.

Williamsburg has the highest poverty rate in the region with nearly 21 percent of residents living below the poverty line, followed by Norfolk at 18 percent. Communities with college students often report high poverty rates, even though full-time college students typically have access to more resources than most other residents experiencing poverty. If college students are not included, the percent of the population living below the poverty line was highest in Portsmouth (16.5 percent), Norfolk (16.2 percent), and Surry County (16 percent). In Williamsburg, removing college students from the calculation dropped the poverty rate by more than half to 10 percent.

Share Living Under 200 Percent of Poverty Line, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

The chart above shows the percentage of residents living under 200 percent of the poverty line (in 2021, a family of four earning less than \$53,000 is under 200 percent of the poverty line), which include many near poverty. The poverty rate is highest for Black and Hispanic Virginians, both within Hampton Roads and across the Commonwealth. The poverty rate in Hampton Roads across most racial groups is higher than the state, especially among residents who are Asian, Black, and Two or more races. The result has been a higher poverty rate than in Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia as a whole.

WORKFORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

IN SUMMARY

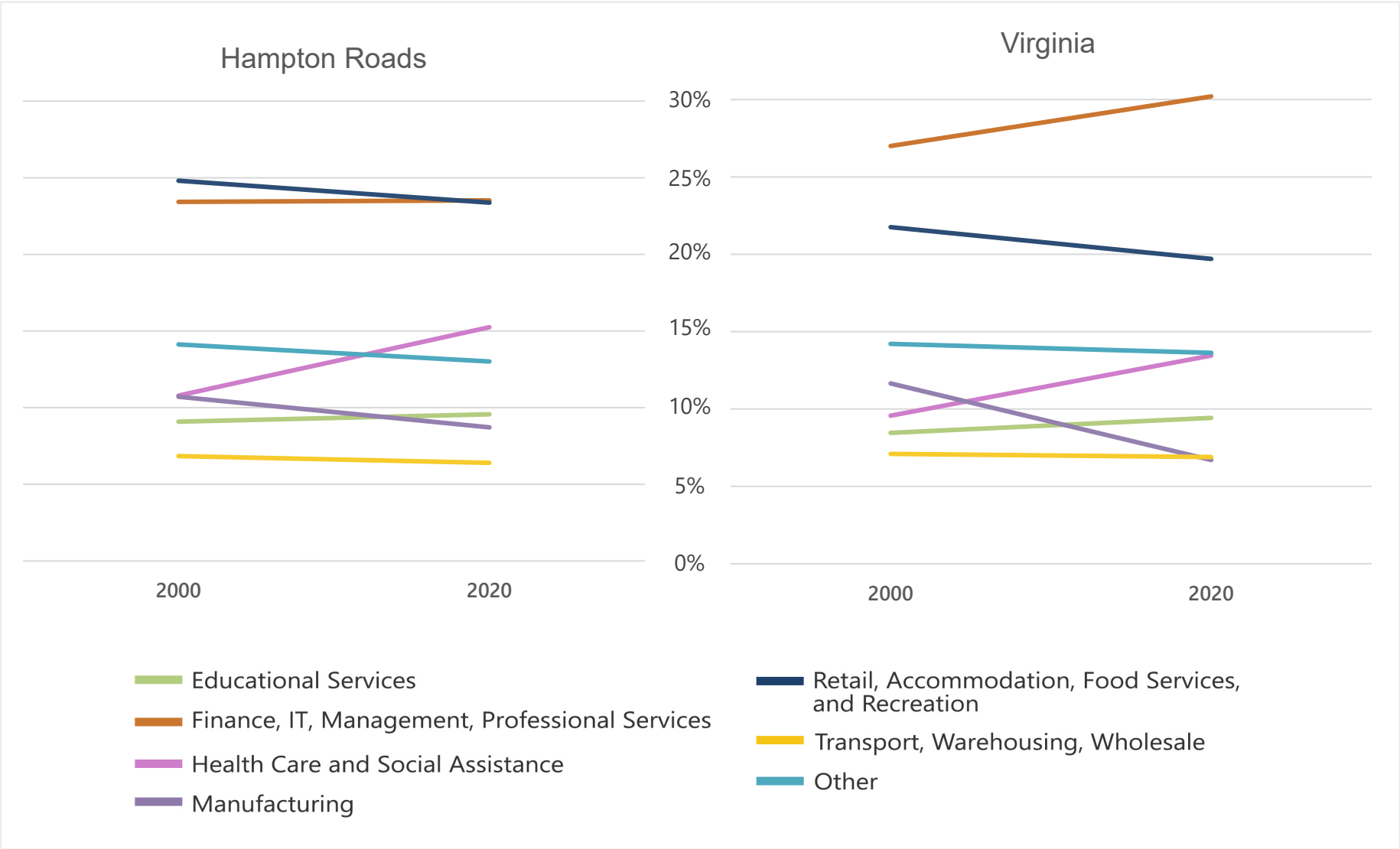
The share of Hampton Roads workers employed in higher paying economic sectors did not increase between 2000 and 2020, and fewer area residents are self-employed, with Black residents being the least likely to own their own businesses.

The presence of the armed forces and the high level of defense spending in Hampton Roads have buffered the region from dramatic changes in the manufacturing sector in Virginia and the nation. Since 2000, manufacturing jobs in Hampton Roads declined by 20 percent while dropping 40 percent in Virginia overall and close to 50 percent in the Richmond metro area. Though the region's decline in manufacturing jobs over the last two decades was more than compensated for by the growth in the healthcare sector, the median pay for manufacturing jobs in the region is 25 to 30 percent higher than in healthcare.

The loss of manufacturing jobs in Hampton Roads and their replacement with lower paying healthcare jobs has caused the income gap between Hampton Roads and the rest of Virginia to grow wider in recent decades. While Virginia lost a larger share of its manufacturing jobs than Hampton Roads, it made up for the loss with growth in jobs related to information technology, finance, management, and professional services. These jobs typically pay considerably more than manufacturing: In 2020, the median wage for manufacturing jobs in Virginia was close to half that of jobs in information technology, finance, management, and professional services. The share of Hampton Roads workers employed in these sectors did not grow between 2000 and 2020.

The Hampton Roads industrial profile has also likely reduced the share of its workers who own their own business. Self-employment is more likely in information technology, finance, management, and professional services (sectors that are larger in other major metro areas in Virginia) than in manufacturing and healthcare (those sectors characterizing Hampton Roads). In 2019, 6.7 percent of Hampton Roads workers were self-employed or worked in a family business, compared to 7.8 percent in the Richmond Metro Area, 8.8 percent in Northern Virginia, and 8.3 percent statewide. Self-employment rates have remained stable in Virginia and the region over the past two decades.

Employment by Select Industry, 2010 to 2020

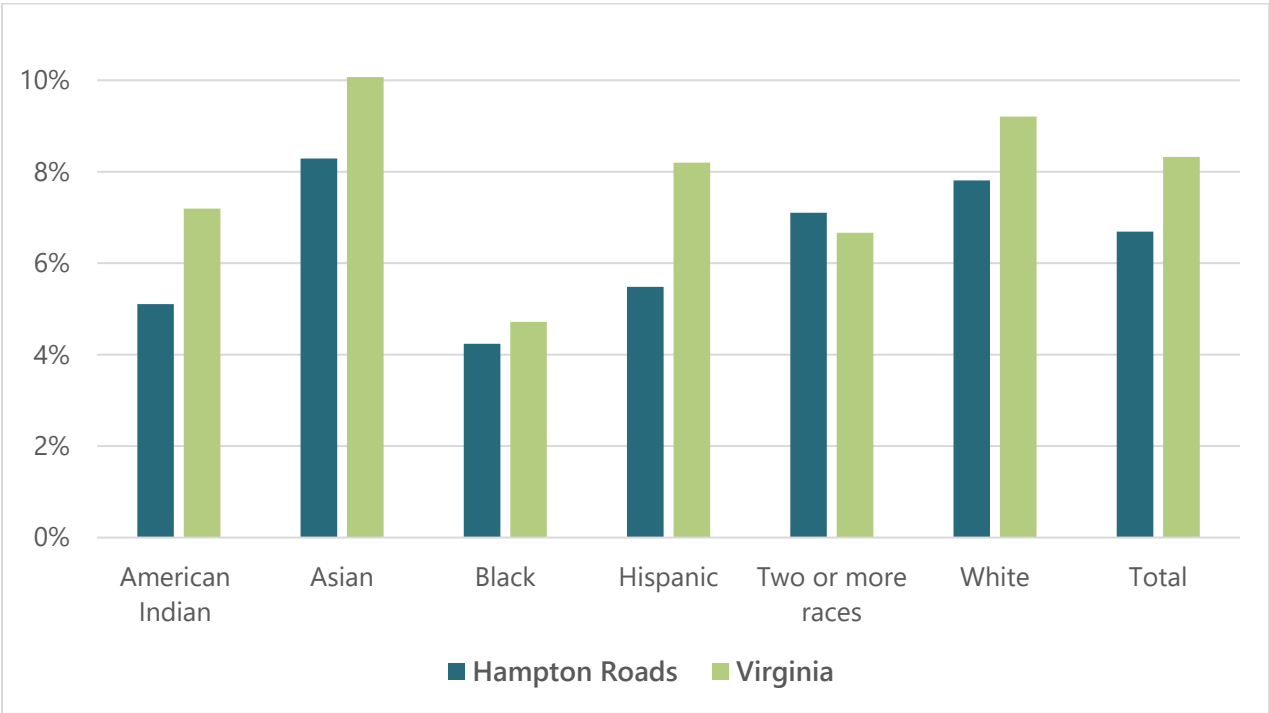


Source: Census Quarterly Workforce Indicators Report

In Hampton Roads, the highest rates of self-employment were in rural counties and wealthier suburban localities, such as in Isle of Wight and Poquoson, where more than 1 in 10 workers were self-employed. The lowest rates of self-employment were in the region’s urban localities, such as Hampton and Newport News, where closer to 1 in 20 workers were self-employed.

Among the region’s racial/ethnic groups, the lowest rates of business ownership were among residents who identified as Black, while the highest rates of business ownership were among residents who identified as Asian. Asian residents had nearly twice the rate of self-employment at 8.3 percent than Black residents at 4.2 percent. Every racial/ethnic group in Hampton Roads had a lower rate of self-employment than comparable groups statewide with the exception of residents who identified as Two or more races.

Percent Self Employed, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

IN SUMMARY

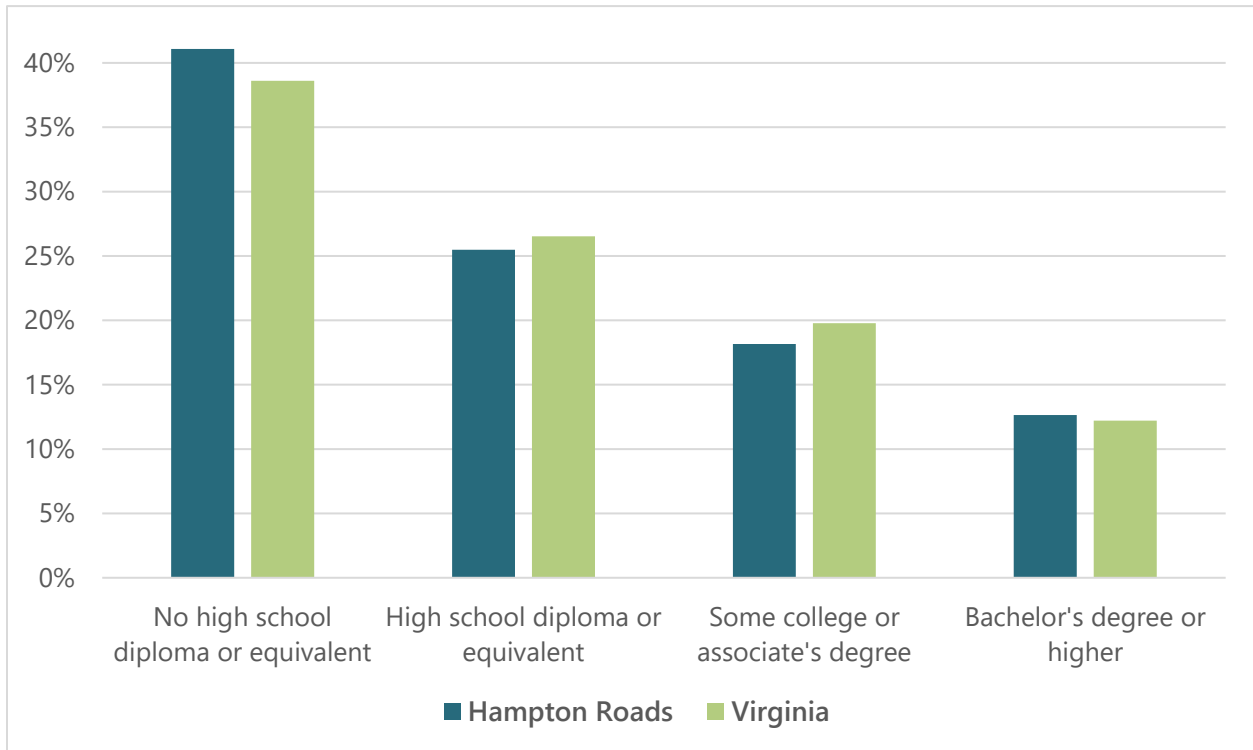
The unemployment rate is highest for Black residents in the region. Aside from Southampton which has a state prison, the region's highest rates of adults not in the labor force are found in Portsmouth and Surry. While there is little difference in labor force participation rates between racial/ethnic groups, labor force participation varies for those with different educational attainment levels.

Even though the Hampton Roads economy is distinct from most of Virginia, its unemployment and labor force participation rates are both within a percentage point of Virginia as a whole. Unemployment rates are slightly higher in the region's urban and rural localities (Portsmouth and Isle of Wight had the highest unemployment rates in 2019), but the unemployment rates in suburban localities are typically only one or two percentage points lower. Among different racial/ethnic groups, the unemployment rate was highest in 2019 for the region's residents who identified as Black (5.4 percent) – nearly twice as high as the unemployment rate for residents who identified as White (2.8 percent).

Labor force participation rates follow a similar pattern as unemployment rates with the lowest participation rates in the region's urban and rural localities and the highest participation rates in suburban localities. In Southampton County, 30 percent of adults between 25 and 54 were not working or looking for a job (although many of the adults identified as residents of the county may be incarcerated in the county's state prison). Surry and Portsmouth had the second and third lowest rates of labor force participation, both around 23 percent. Lack of access to local employment as well as a mismatch in skills are likely contributing factors to lower labor force participation rates in some of the region's communities.

While there is little difference in labor force participation rates between each racial/ethnic group in Hampton Roads, labor force participation varies considerably in the region and in Virginia for residents with different educational attainment levels. In 2019, the percent of Hampton Roads residents with less than a high school degree who were not working or seeking a job was much greater than those with a bachelor's degree (41 and 13 percent, respectively).

Percent of Population Age 25 to 54 not in the Labor Force, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

HOUSING AND HOMEOWNERSHIP

HOMEOWNERSHIP AND HOUSING COST BURDEN

PERCENT OWNING HOME

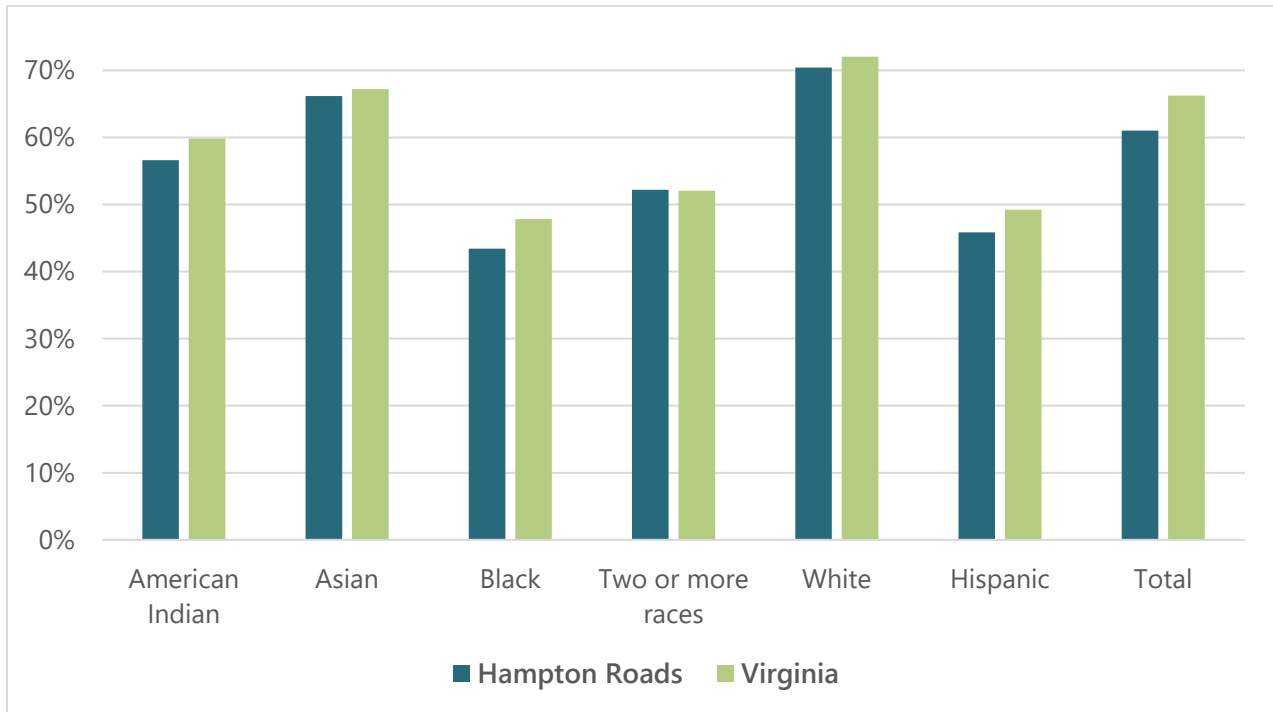
IN SUMMARY

Homeownership rates are lower in Hampton Roads than in Virginia as a whole. Black homeownership rates are lower today in some of the region's localities than in the 1940s.

The equity Americans build in their homes accounts for the majority of wealth of every income group in the nation (aside from the extremely wealthy). In 2019, 61 percent of homes were owner-occupied in Hampton Roads, compared to 66 percent in both the Richmond Metro Area and statewide. Hampton Roads has a lower homeownership rate (and a higher share of residents who rent) in large part because the armed forces population is transient and less likely to own a home. (Localities near major armed forces installations have noticeably lower homeownership rates than comparable localities outside the region). In 2019, Hampton Roads residents were 44 percent more likely than other Virginians to have moved from outside the state in the past year.

The homeownership rate for each racial/ethnic group in Hampton Roads is lower than in Virginia as a whole, except for residents who identify with multiple racial groups. Hampton Roads and Virginia homeownership rates peaked ahead of the late 2000s recession before declining moderately during much of the 2010s. Though the homeownership rates for both Black Hampton Roads residents and Black Virginians are near an all-time high, neither have changed considerably in decades, following a history of redlining practices in the region. Virginia's Black homeownership rate in 2019 was less than a percentage point higher than in 1960. In Virginia Beach and most Hampton Roads localities north of the James, the Black homeownership rate today is lower than it was in 1940.

Homeownership Rate by Race and Ethnicity, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

HOUSING COST BURDEN

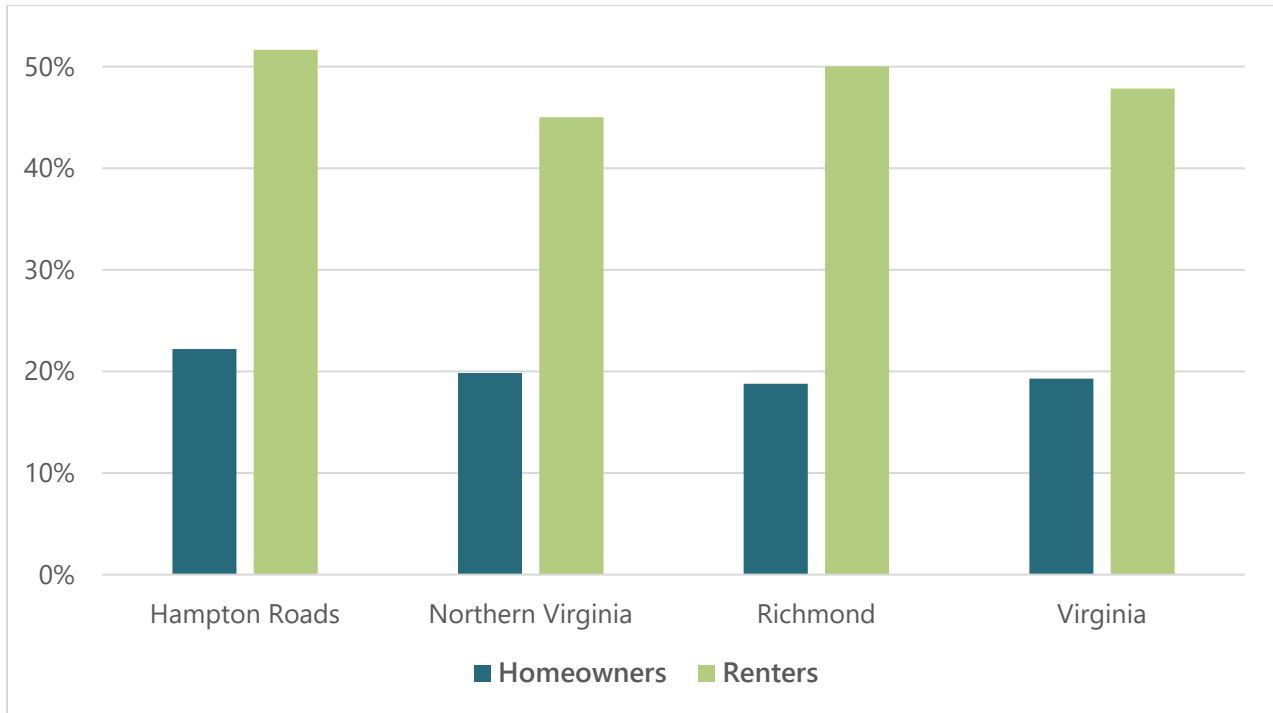
IN SUMMARY

Hampton Roads renters spend, in general, more than the federally recommended share of their income on housing; and even for homeowners, costs are higher in the region due to a greater number of older homes.

Over half of Hampton Roads residents who rented their home in 2019 spent more than 30 percent of their income (the federal recommended limit) on housing costs, a higher share than renters in Northern Virginia, Richmond, or Virginia as a whole. The region’s relatively large young adult population – who typically spend a larger share of their income on rent – undoubtedly increased the share of the region’s renters spending more than the federally recommended limit.

Similarly, homeowners in Hampton Roads spend more of their income on housing than in the rest of Virginia. However, the share of homeowners with housing costs greater than 30 percent of their income has not risen in the region or in Virginia over the past two decades.

Percent of Population Spending over 30 Percent of Income on Housing, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

Home repair or renovation expenses may also be greater for residents of Hampton Roads as homes in the region tend to be older. Over two-thirds of Hampton Roads homes were built before 1990, a larger share than in Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia as a whole. New home construction rates have also been lower in the region since population growth began slowing. These factors may depress homeownership and/or increase the housing cost burden on area residents.

EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

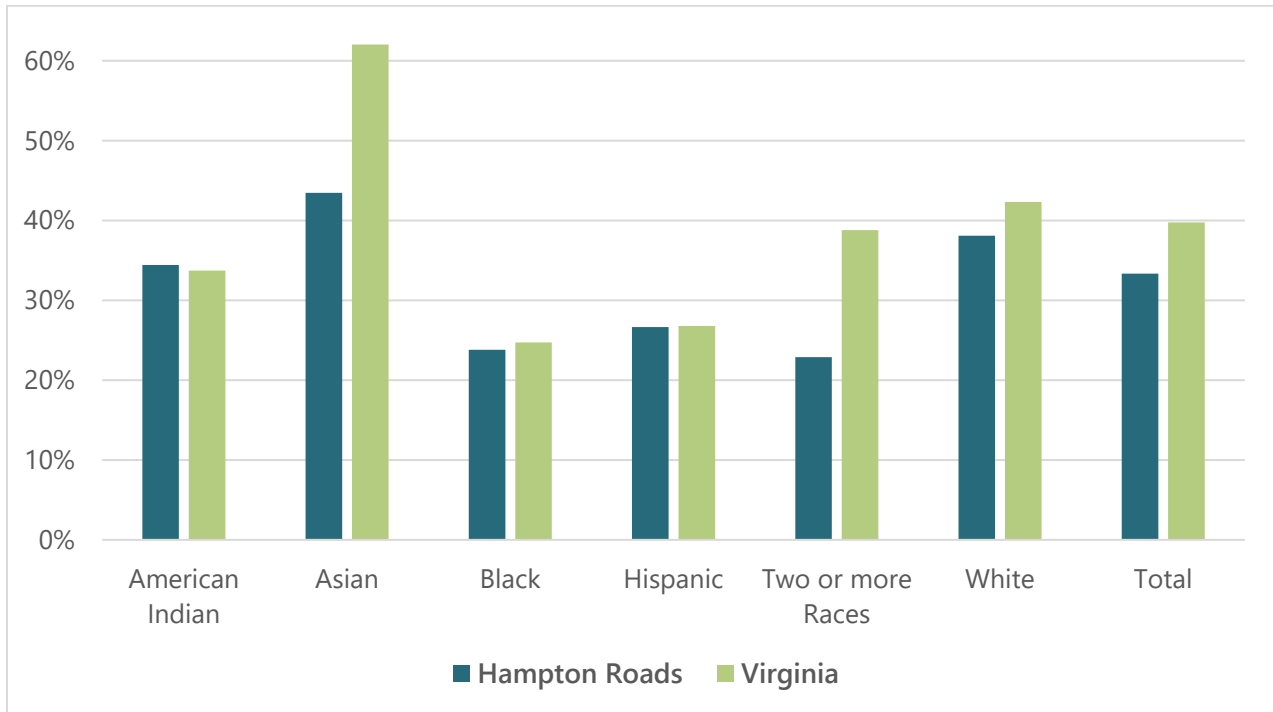
IN SUMMARY

Educational attainment for all racial and ethnic groups in Hampton Roads is lower than it is in Virginia, with the exception of four peninsula localities.

The educational attainment level of any region's workforce is closely connected to the region's economy. As the Hampton Roads economy developed on the foundation of port and armed forces installations, residents of the region have been less likely than other Virginians to have a bachelor's degree. In 2019, 33 percent of Hampton Roads residents ages 25 and older had a bachelor's degree, compared to 40 percent among this age group statewide. Only four Hampton Roads localities, all on the peninsula, had higher educational attainment levels than Virginia as a whole.

The educational attainment gap between Hampton Roads and the state is further observed across racial/ethnic groups. In the past, due to the presence of two major historically Black universities, the region's residents who identify as Black had a higher educational attainment rate than other Black Virginians. By 2019, however, the educational attainment levels for most racial and ethnic groups in Hampton Roads were lower than in the state.

Percent of Population 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

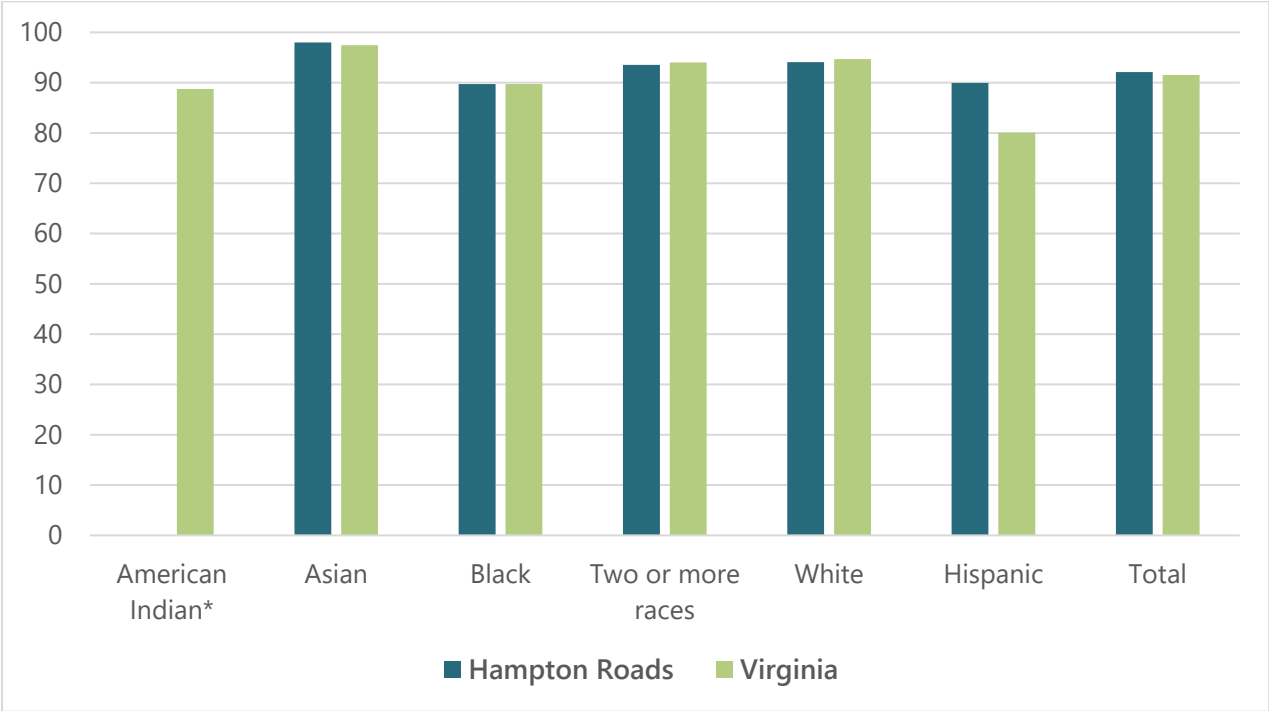
IN SUMMARY

Overall, Hampton Roads is making great strides in improving the high school graduation rate, although differences exist among races in whether students in high school are preparing to continue on to college. College-going rates among area high school graduates vary by locality.

In the past, a smaller share of Hampton Roads residents earned a bachelor's degree, in part, because the region had a higher drop-out rate and, as a result, a lower high school graduation rate. As recently as 2009, only 80 percent of Hampton Roads public school students graduated from high school on time, compared to 85 percent in the state as a whole. Over the past decade, high school graduation rates have risen considerably across Virginia, particularly in Hampton Roads where in 2019, 92 percent of its public school students graduated on time, compared to 91 percent in the state as a whole. By 2019, high school graduation rates for each of the region's

racial/ethnic groups were similar to those for the state as a whole, with the exception of the region’s Hispanic students who had a considerably higher graduation rate. As the high school graduation rate has risen in Hampton Roads, the correlation between performance on lower grade indicators (such as third grade reading) and high school graduation has become less consistent and predictive.

High School Graduation Rate in 2019

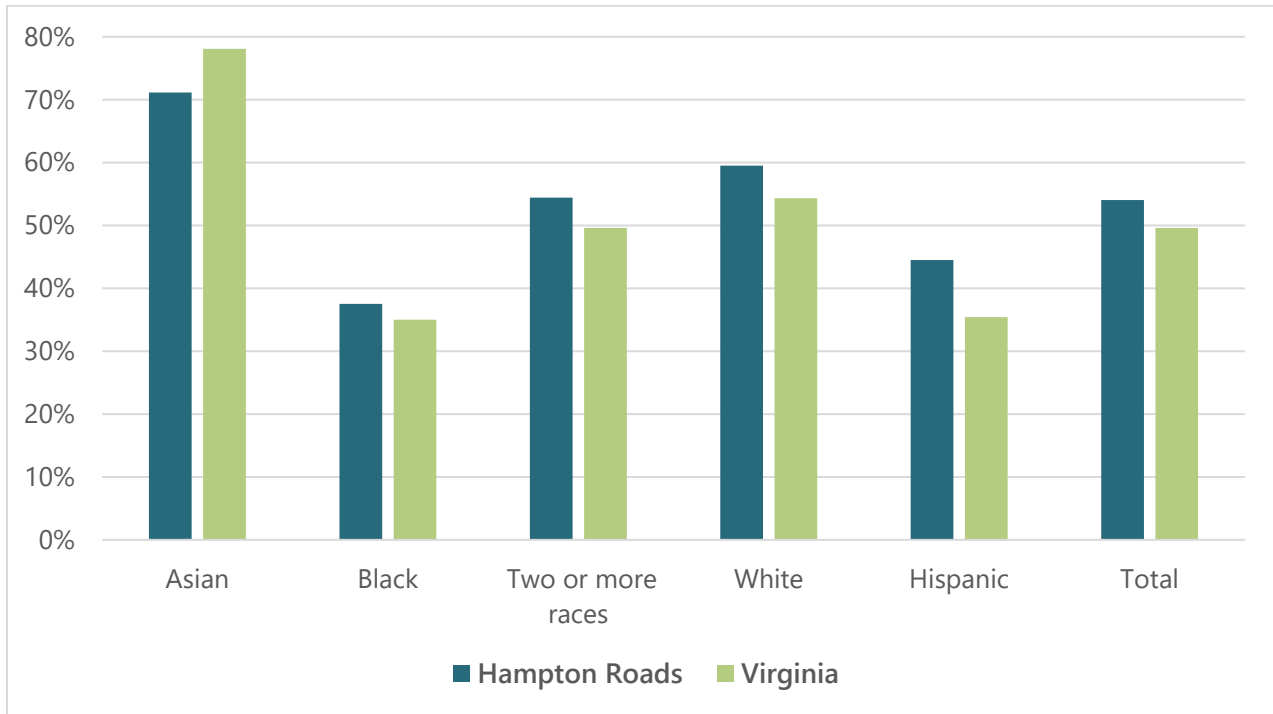


Source: Virginia Department of Education Division High School Completers Report

*The number of American Indian Hampton Roads graduates was too small to include.

While both high school graduation and drop-out rates are similar across racial and ethnic groups, there are significant differences in whether students are prepared for continuing on to college. For example, in 2019, the percentage of Hampton Roads students who passed Algebra II (a common prerequisite for college and a widely used metric for college readiness) was higher than in Virginia as a whole. However, pass rates vary considerably between racial/ethnic groups. Even though 90 percent of the region’s Black students who enrolled in Algebra II passed in 2019, only 40 percent of Black 11th graders were enrolled, making it difficult for Black students to meet the prerequisites to enroll in many colleges.

Percent of 11th Graders Who Enrolled in and Passed Algebra II in 2019



Source: Virginia Department of Education SOL Division Data

*Calculated by dividing students who passed Algebra II by the number of all 11th grade students.

Data that tracks Hampton Roads students from high school until they graduate from college is limited. Available data show that, in 2020, 35 percent of the region’s college students received a bachelor’s degree within four years of graduating high school, compared to 39 percent of all Virginia high school graduates. This gap has been persistent over the years that data are available. Within the region, urban and rural localities had the lowest rate of high school graduates going on to earn a bachelor’s degree. In 2019, 21 percent of Surry students and 24 percent of Portsmouth students received a bachelor’s degree within four years of graduating high school, the lowest rates in the region.

HEALTH

LIFE EXPECTANCY, INFANT MORTALITY, DISABILITY, AND HEALTH INSURANCE

LIFE EXPECTANCY

IN SUMMARY

Life expectancy in the region is comparable to or higher in some areas than in the Richmond Metro Area. Shortest life expectancies in the region are in urban and rural localities, and in areas with higher percentages of residents experiencing poverty or who identify as Black.

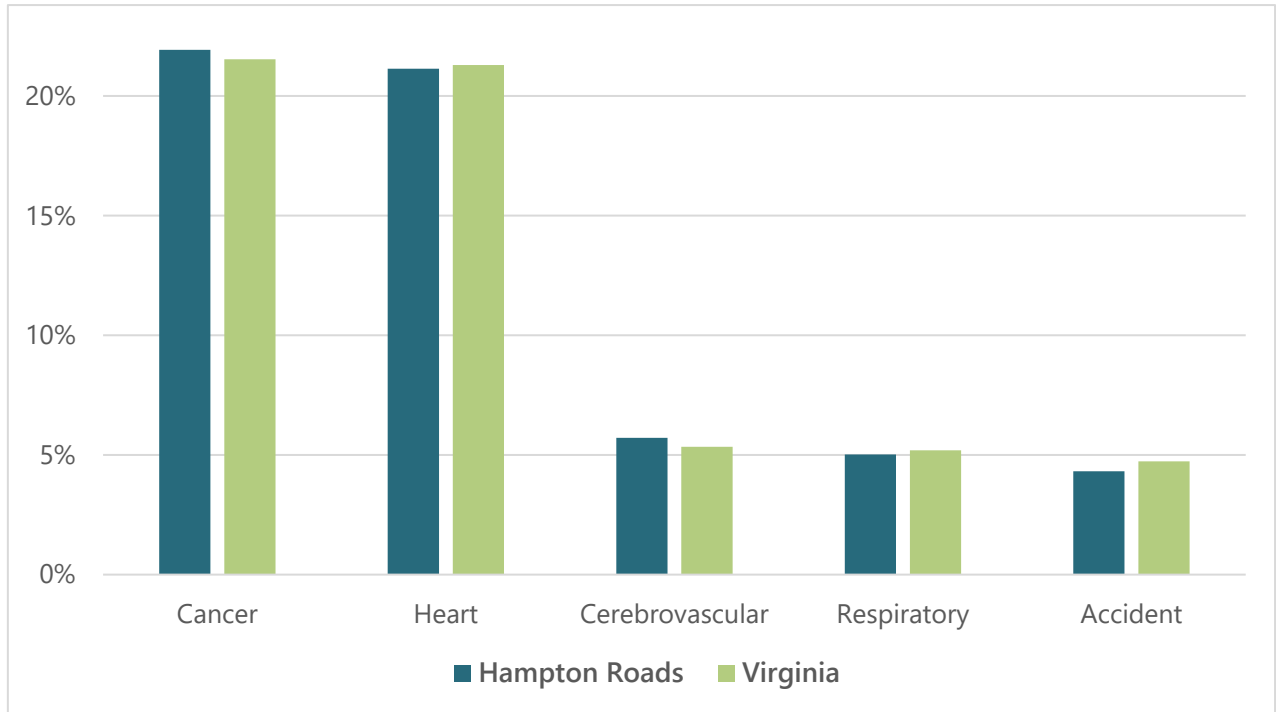
Life expectancy, an important indicator of community health, is calculated based on age-specific death rates. In Hampton Roads, the number of annual deaths rose by 17 percent between 2010 and 2019, slower than in Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia overall. While the number of suicides and accidental deaths rose in Hampton Roads and across the state during the last decade, age-related diseases accounted for most of the overall increase in deaths. As overall population age increases, this is to be expected.

Hampton Roads residents typically have a shorter life expectancy than in Northern Virginia but a slightly longer life expectancy than most comparable localities in the Richmond area. In the Upper Peninsula, residents have longer life expectancies than any locality in the Richmond area. The shorter life expectancies in the region are more likely to be in its urban and rural localities than in its suburban localities.

CALCULATING LIFE EXPECTANCY

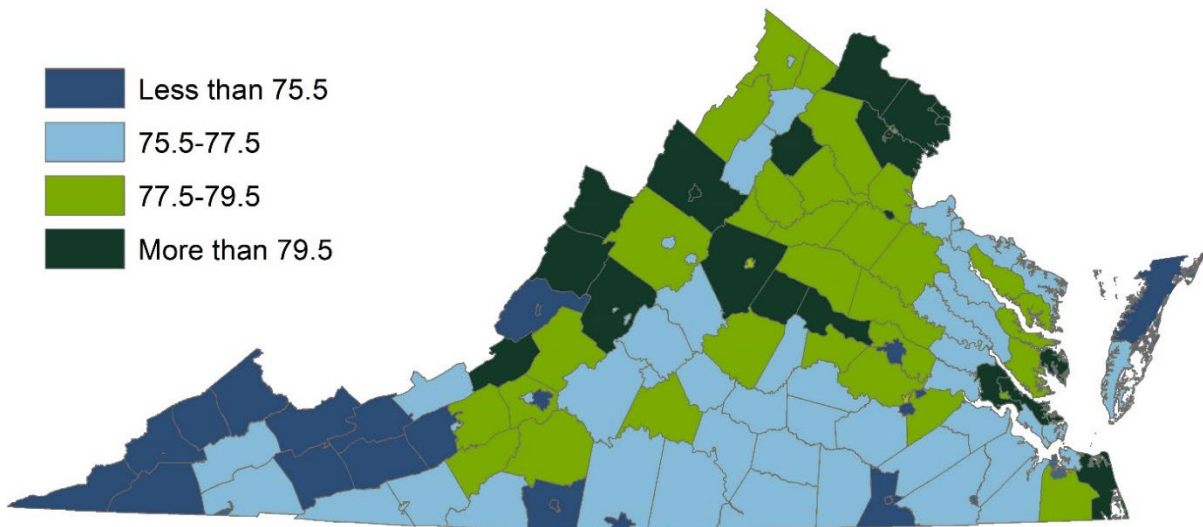
While life expectancy is calculated annually on the national level, calculating it requires a large number of deaths in each age group to accurately estimate the life expectancy at birth for a specific population. Life expectancy is perhaps the best indicator of a community's health, but accurate life expectancy estimates for specific communities are quite rare because of the data they require. Most life expectancy estimates for communities rely on socio-economic data instead of actual death data, which limits their accuracy. Fortunately, the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Minority Health and Health Equity has produced high quality county, city, and Census Tract life expectancy estimates, using deaths from between 2010 and 2014.

Leading Causes of Death in 2019



Source: Virginia Department of Health Annual Report

Life Expectancy at Birth, 2014



Source: Virginia Department of Health Office of Health Equity

Across the (close to) 2,000 Virginia Census tracts for which the Virginia Department of Health estimated life expectancy, tracts with a larger portion of residents with an income under 200 percent of the poverty line, on average, had substantially shorter life expectancies, as did tracts with a majority of residents who identified as Black. For example, in Virginia, for census tracts where 60 percent of residents are below or near the poverty line, the average life expectancy is 70. For census tracts where only 10 percent of residents are below or near the poverty line, the average life expectancy is 81. In 26 of the 37 Hampton Roads Census tracts with a life expectancy under age 70, most residents identified as Black.

INFANT MORTALITY

IN SUMMARY

Hampton Roads experienced a larger decline in infant mortality rates and Black infant mortality rates than Virginia, Northern Virginia, or Richmond, but the infant mortality rates for children who were not Black or White increased in the region and in Virginia.

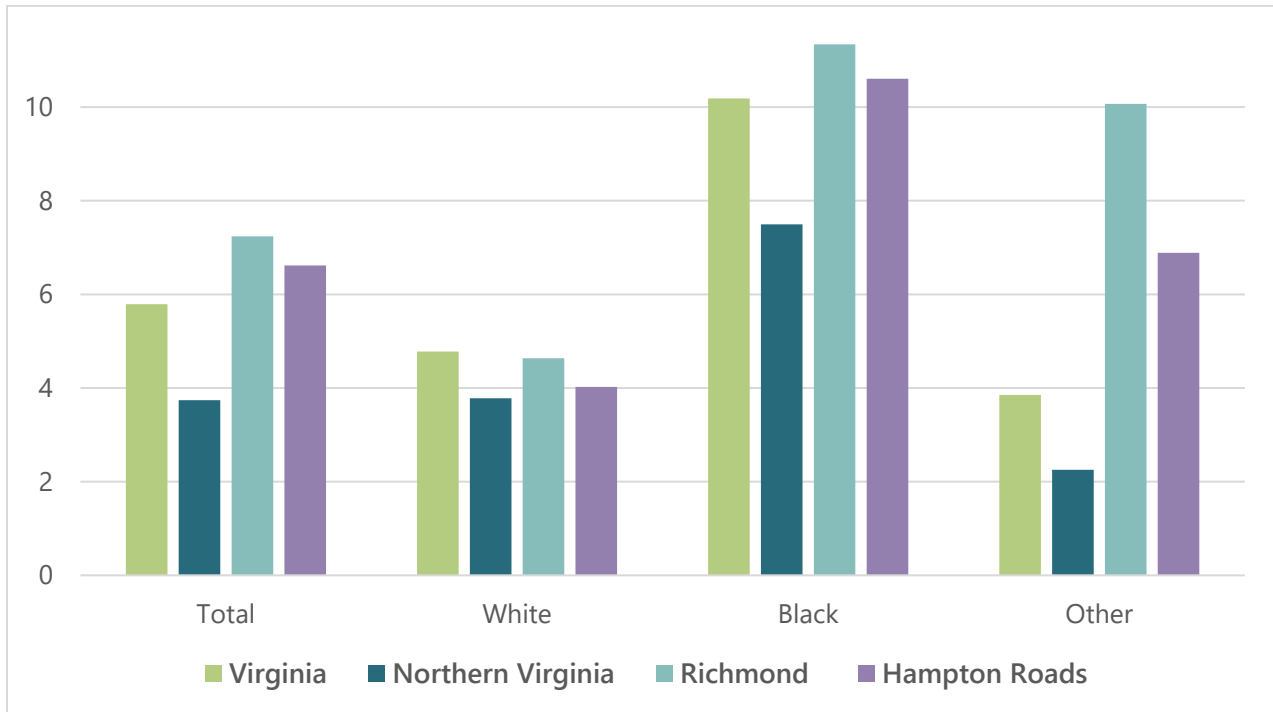
Over a ten-year period (between 2009 and 2019), Hampton Roads experienced

- A larger decline in infant mortality rates than Virginia, Northern Virginia, or Richmond.
- A larger decline in mortality rates for Black infants than in Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia as a whole.
- An increase in the infant mortality rates for children who were not Black or White (which was also true for Virginia).

In the three most recent years of the ten-year period (2017, 2018, 2019), Hampton Roads experienced

- A higher infant mortality rate than for Virginia - 6.6 infant deaths per 1,000 births compared to 5.8 per 1,000 statewide.
- A lower infant mortality rate across racial/ethnic groups than in the Richmond Metro Area.

Infant Deaths per 1,000 Births, 2017-2019



Source: Virginia Department of Health Annual Reports 2017-2019

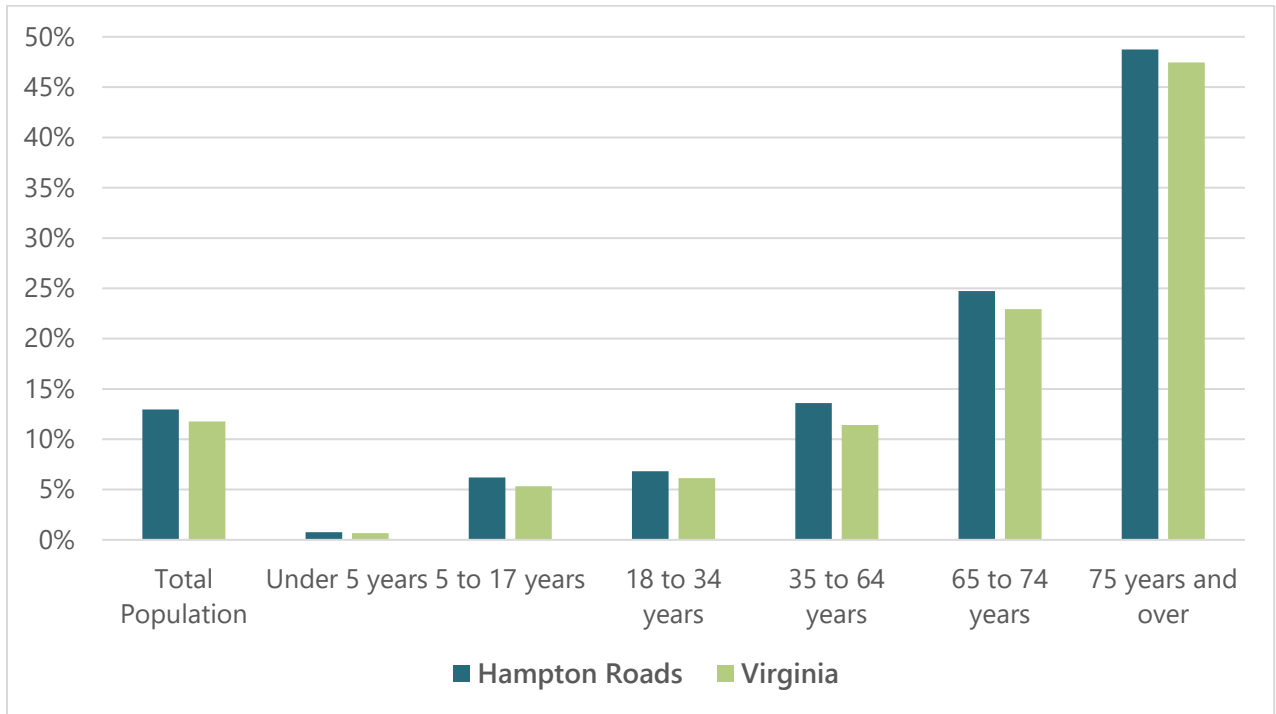
DISABILITY

IN SUMMARY

Hampton Roads has a higher disability rate than Virginia, but this may be due to the large population of military veterans and workers in physically demanding jobs.

Hampton Roads has a slightly higher disability rate than Virginia (13 versus 12 percent, respectively). An increase in the number of residents reporting a physical disability in recent years coincides with an increase in the median age of the population. Little variation is seen in disability rates across racial and ethnic groups; however, the share of residents who report a disability strongly correlates with age groupings. The Hampton Roads disability rate may be slightly elevated across age groups (compared to the state) by the region’s significant number of military veterans as well as workers employed in physically intensive jobs.

Disability Rate by Age, 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

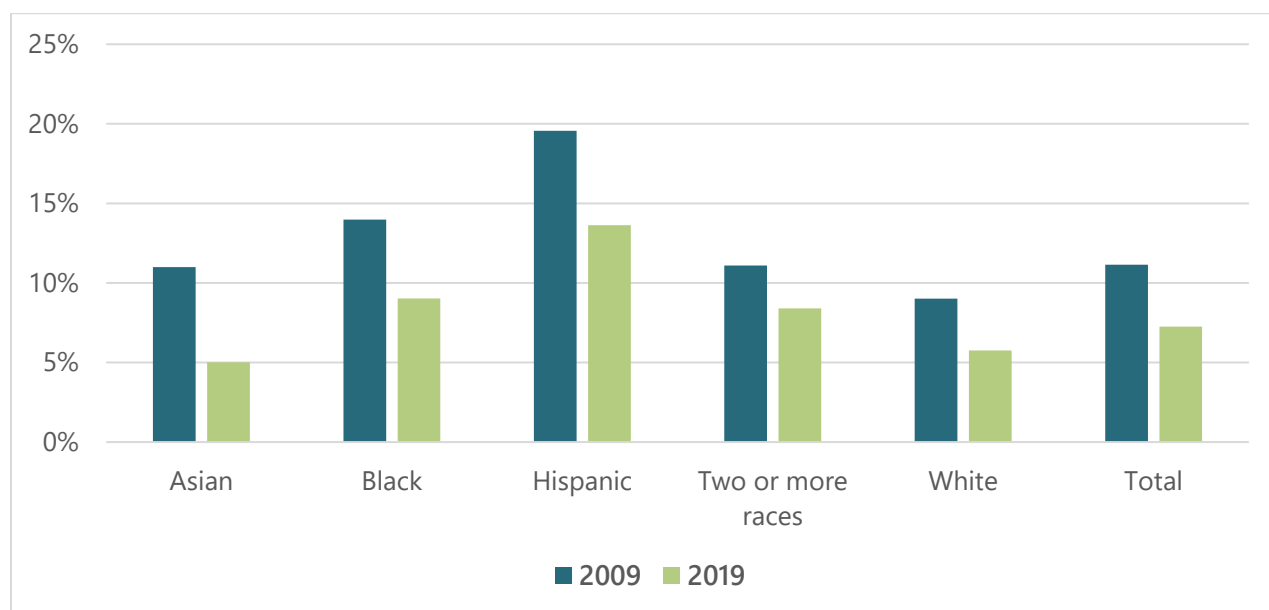
HEALTH INSURANCE

IN SUMMARY

The share of residents without health insurance is lower in the region than in Virginia, and since early 2010, the share of Hampton Roads residents and Virginians without health insurance for every racial/ethnic group has declined.

The significant presence of armed forces members, veterans, and federal employees has helped to keep the share of Hampton Roads residents without health insurance slightly lower than the rest of Virginia. Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Surry are the only localities in the region with a higher share of residents without insurance than the statewide rate.

Hampton Roads Uninsured Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2009 and 2019



Source: 2019 Five Year Census American Community Survey

*The error rate is too high to use data for American Indians.

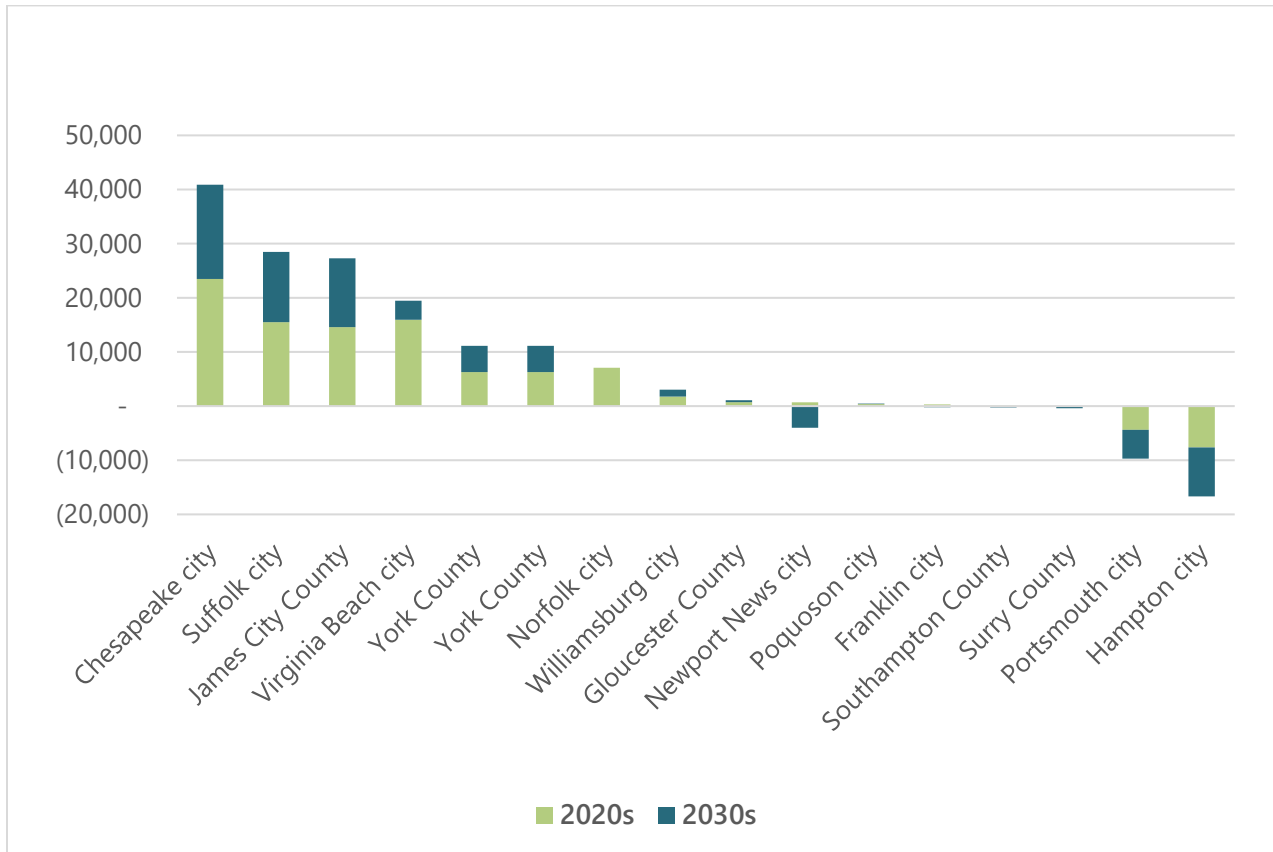
Since the passage of the comprehensive health care reform law in early 2010, and Virginia's expansion of Medicaid later in the 2010s, the share of Virginians and Hampton Roads residents without any health insurance has declined for every racial and ethnic group. In Hampton Roads, the uninsured rate for all groups, except Hispanic residents, was below ten percent in 2019. Hispanic residents across all geographic levels typically have the highest uninsured rate. Given that close to half of Hispanic Virginians are immigrants, some may not be eligible to enroll in public health insurance programs.

THE FUTURE

POPULATION GROWTH

The Hampton Roads population is expected to keep growing over the next twenty years, but at a slower rate than in the past as the population continues to age. If the birth rate does not rebound considerably this decade, population growth could be even slower.

Projected Population Change, 2020-2040



Source: University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Population Projections

Within the region, population growth is expected to be concentrated in its western suburban localities, while some of its urban localities may experience substantial population decline. Chesapeake, James City, and Suffolk are expected to account for over four-fifths of all the region's growth between 2020 and 2040.

Substantial economic changes resulting from the pandemic (notably increases in working from home and in homeschooling) and growing instability in international relations could cause population trends in the region to change significantly. The deterioration in international

relations, for example, could potentially cause an increase in defense spending and, as a result, the region's population.

If a substantial share of the workforce continues to work from home after the pandemic, it could alter population trends in the region and across the country. Coastal areas in Hampton Roads may be particularly attractive for relocating telecommuters, but the region could also lose many of its white-collar workers if they relocate outside the area.

CHANGING RACIAL/ETHNIC COMPOSITION AND IDENTIFICATION

The racial/ethnic composition of Hampton Roads will likely continue to change as a result of immigration, (particularly from Asia and Latin America), increasing intermarriage, and the continuing evolution in how people identify with race. These trends will result in a racial/ethnic composition that is more complex than it is presently. In Hampton Roads, the percent of the population under age 15 who identify with multiple racial/ethnic groups (*Appendix D*) is significantly greater than those age 65 and older – 19 versus 3 percent.

Already among the region's population ages 15 and younger, there is a considerable variation in the size of each racial group, depending on which definition is used. For example, if American Indian is defined as only people who identify as American Indian alone, not Hispanic, then 0.3 percent of Hampton Roads residents under age 15 identify as American Indian. But if a more inclusive definition is used, counting anyone who identifies as American Indian (either alone or in combination with other races), then 1.5 percent (five times as many) Hampton Roads residents under age 15 identify as American Indian. In 1950, for example, only 550 Virginians identified as American Indian compared to the 179,688 Virginians who identified as American Indian in the 2020 Census – an increase of 32,571% over 70 years. Most of this increase, however, was not from births or migration but from more Virginians self-reporting their American Indian ancestry.

In 2018, over 40 percent of births nationally were to parents who individually identified with races/ethnicities different from their partner/spouse. The number of people who identify with multiple racial/ethnic groups will only continue to grow in the nation, the Commonwealth, and the Hampton Roads region, changing not only the region's racial composition but also making comparisons between different racial/ethnic groups even more complex.

OBSERVATIONS FOR FUTURE DIRECTION

As the Hampton Roads Community Foundation sets its course to continue supporting a thriving community with opportunity for all, five observations from this data analysis highlight actionable areas:

1. The historic and contemporary economic base of the community is a strength, a powerful context, and a dynamic factor in the growth, demographic composition, and array of opportunities available to people in the region. Port and defense industries in Hampton Roads exert a magnetic force on who migrates to—and remains in—the region, the opportunities they have, the education desired, and (among other impacts) patterns of living (such as renting vs. homeownership) reflected in this report’s data. While this past is, in part, prologue, it need not be limiting. Enlivened and sustained partnerships with the primary employers in these industrial sectors is an essential strategic direction for opportunity-creation, and conversations with employers from emerging industries about what is needed can create a menu of potential partnerships with the region’s educational institutions.
2. Residents of the region who identify as Black face considerable challenges due to historic factors that have limited their opportunities. Fortunately, educational attainment for Black students in the region is outpacing that of other Black Virginians, and performance on measures such as passing Algebra II demonstrates commitment and capacity from these students for future educational achievement. There remain, however, discrepancies between Black residents of the region and others, which provide targets for opportunity enhancement activities. Increasing Black homeownership, Black small business ownership, and Black student enrollment in Algebra II are only a few examples of potential priorities for action.
3. On many measures, differences are more prominent among member localities than among racial or ethnic groups (although the connection of race and place is strong). Maintaining a clear understanding of locality-specific opportunity profiles may help the Foundation target resources to areas of greatest need.
4. The changing perception of race, and of racial and ethnic identity nationally, in Virginia, and in this region introduces potential for loosening rigid understandings and structures that segregate people and opportunities based on race. As younger people, in particular, claim more diverse racial/ethnic identities, and as the dynamism of a rich array of racial and ethnic populations comes to be obvious, strategies to address opportunities differentially by race become more complex, while also perhaps more likely to succeed.
5. The growing population of older Virginians calls for attention to the needs of this segment across the region. While some older regional residents may have ample resources and opportunities to thrive, at the intersection of age with place, race/ethnicity, income, and health status, there is a vast territory for Foundation action.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms appear in this report. Non-technical definitions (without significant details essential for precision) are provided below to aid readers. These definitions represent standard public- or professional-use understanding of the terms and have been created or compiled from a variety of sources.

Birth rate: the number of live births per 1,000 people in a population over a specific period of time (typically a year).

Educational attainment: the highest level of education that an individual has completed.

Ethnicity: whether a person self-identifies as being of Hispanic origin or not. Ethnicity is therefore divided into two mutually exclusive categories: Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino. Hispanic origin may be viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person (or the person's parents/ancestors) before arriving in the United States.

Graduating high school on time: the percentage of students in an age group who earned a Board of Education-approved diploma within four years of entering high school for the first time.

Housing cost burden: HUD defines cost burdened households as “families who pay more than 30% of their income for housing... and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.” Households that pay more than 50% of their income for housing are considered severely cost burdened.

Infant mortality: the number of infant deaths for every 1,000 live births.

In the labor force/labor force participation rate: the percentage of the civilian non-institutional population 16 years and older that is working or actively looking for work.

Life expectancy: Life expectancy at birth is the average length of life for a person.

Median household income: the income amount that divides all households into two equal groups, one half having an income above that amount, and the other half having an income below that amount.

Multiracial: people who identify themselves in response to Census questions as being of more than one race category. This term is the same as "Two or more races".

Population growth/decline: change in the size of a population—which can be either positive or negative—over time, depending on the balance of births, deaths, in-migration and out-migration.

Population structure: the distribution of people in a population according to designated demographic traits (e.g., age, sex, country of birth, marital status).

Poverty threshold (line): the Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is experiencing poverty. For example, the income threshold for a family of two adults and two children under age 18 in 2021 was \$27,479.

Poverty rate: the percentage of a given group of people who live below the poverty line.

Race groups: The U.S. Office of Management and Budget standards identify five minimum categories: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; and White.

Unemployment rate: the percentage of the total labor force that is unemployed but actively seeking employment and willing to work.

White-collar service industries: accountants, attorneys, investment professionals, consultants, computer programmers and IT managers, insurance executives and sales, hospitality executives and managers, and many others. Most health care professionals are also considered white-collar employees.

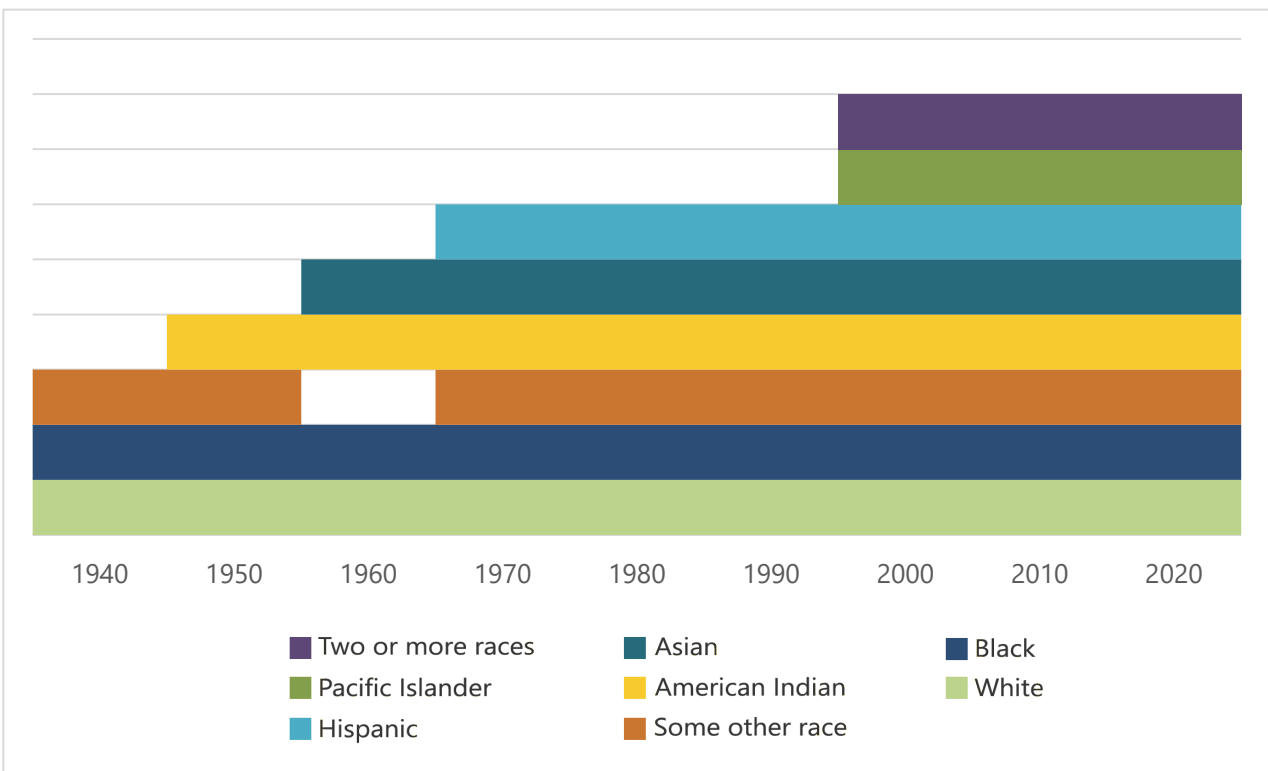
APPENDIX B

CHALLENGES OF UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING DATA ON RACE AND ETHNICITY

United States Census categories for race and ethnicity are used in this study. While the Census categories are imperfect, and while an increasing number of Americans identify as being of Two or more races, race and ethnicity are powerful factors in individuals' lives, in social customs, and in generations of families and their opportunities to thrive. During the twentieth century, American society's view of race shifted away from the understanding of race as a scientific concept towards an understanding of race as primarily a social construct. This shift in perspective on race is reflected in how the Census Bureau has collected and published race data.

After the Second World War, the Census Bureau stopped the practice of census workers determining the race of respondents and began allowing respondents to choose their race. As people began selecting the race with which they identified, the Census Bureau found that its racial categories did not accurately capture the composition of the U.S. population. As a result, the Bureau began adding racial and ethnic categories, notably including an ethnic category for Hispanic Americans in 1970. In 2000, for the first time, the Bureau began allowing Americans to identify as being more than one racial category.

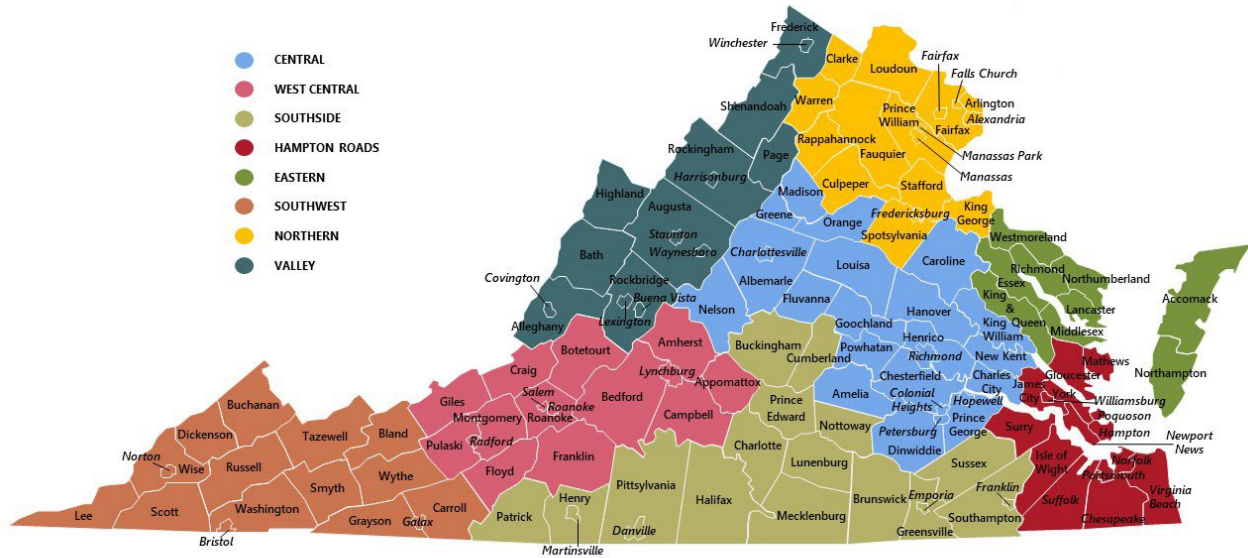
Historic Census Race/Ethnicity Categories



The Census Bureau's attempts in recent decades to improve how it captures the racial composition of Americans have also made interpreting Census race data more complicated than ever. The addition of racial categories (and Hispanic as an ethnicity), as well as the ability to select multiple racial categories, means that respondents to the Census now have well over one hundred possible racial/ethnic combinations from which to choose. As a result, the Census Bureau and data users often struggle to group Americans into a few meaningful racial categories.

APPENDIX C

COOPER CENTER REGIONS OF VIRGINIA

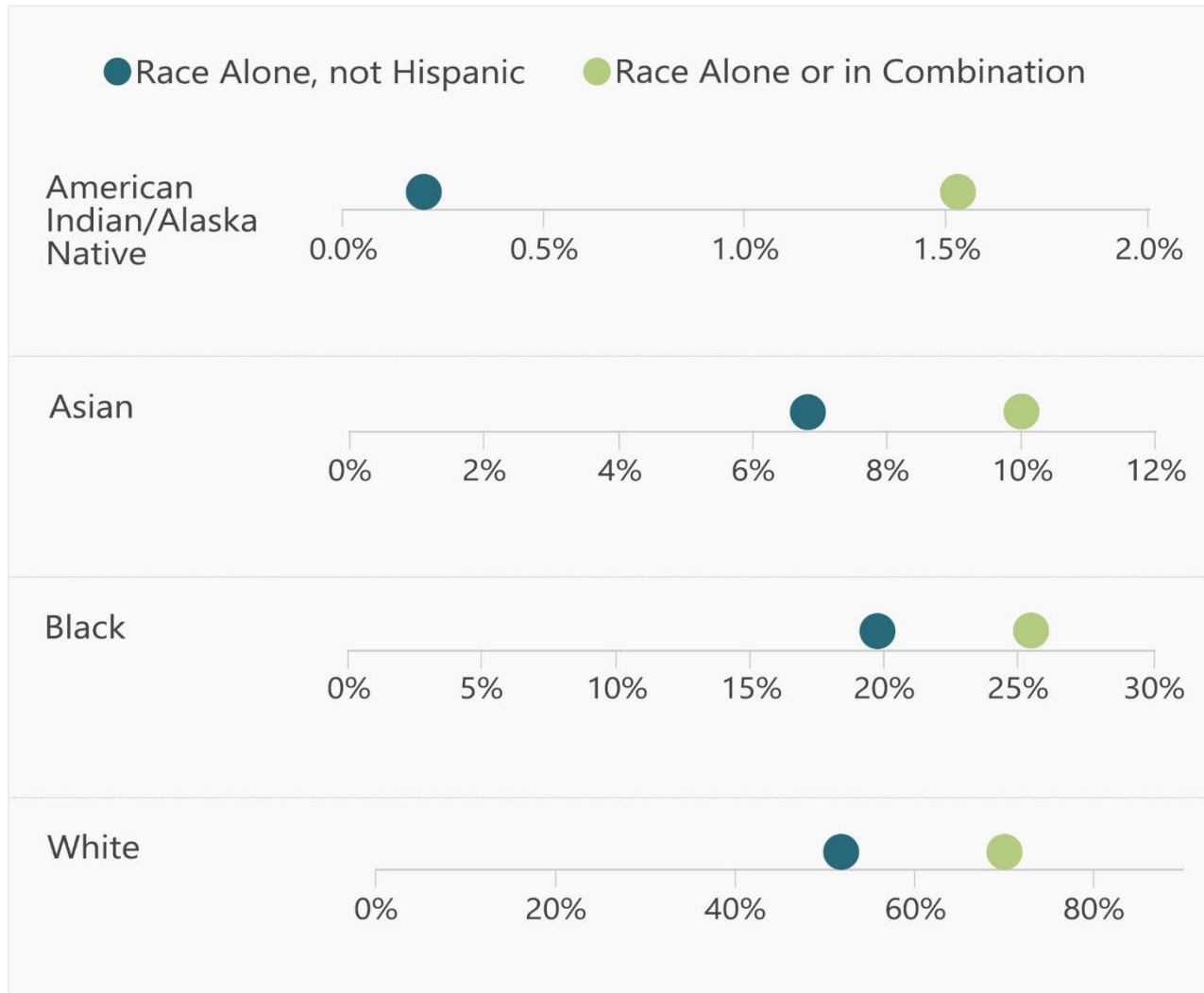


Cooper Center demographers defined eight regions for the Commonwealth of Virginia based on shared demographic, social, economic, and geographic characteristics. Historically, the population and economy of Virginia’s regions were shaped by the local topography and climate. Virginia’s transition over the past century, however, from a rural, agriculture-based economy to an urban, service-based economy has eroded many of the differences between Virginia’s historic regions while also creating new, distinctive regions within the Commonwealth.

Today, access to a metropolitan area’s labor market is the most significant factor in shaping a community’s population. Consideration of metropolitan-area commuting characteristics was therefore a key element in the determination of Virginia's regions. While some of Virginia’s regions are essentially a single metro area, such as Northern Virginia or Hampton Roads, others, like the West Central Region, are a combination of multiple metro areas.

APPENDIX D

HAMPTON ROADS POPULATION UNDER 15 BY RACE IN 2020



Source: 2020 Census Population Estimates