

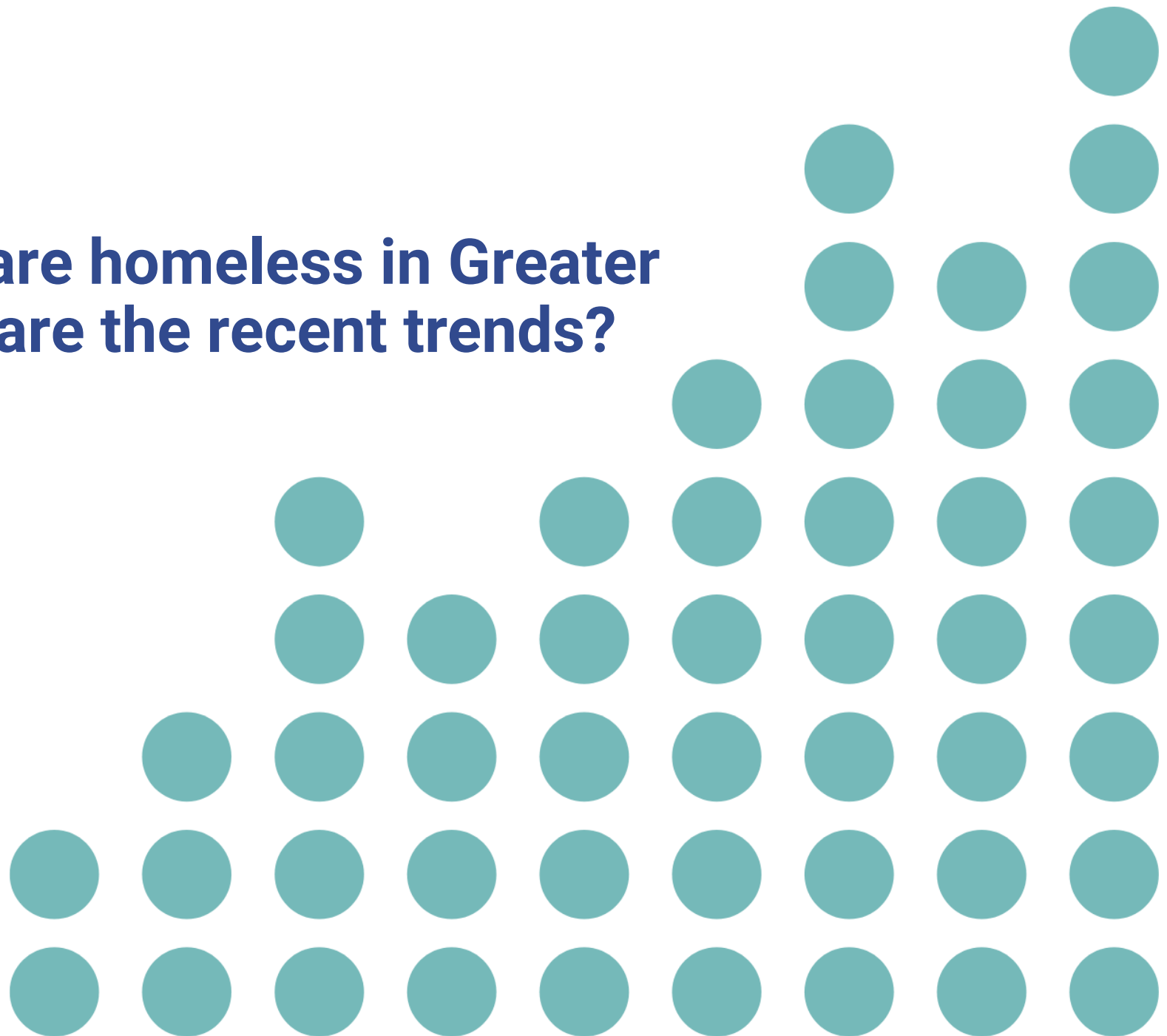
Homelessness in Greater Boston

Trends in the Context of Our Broader Housing Crisis

Luc Schuster, Kelly Harrington, and Peter Ciurczak
Boston Indicators

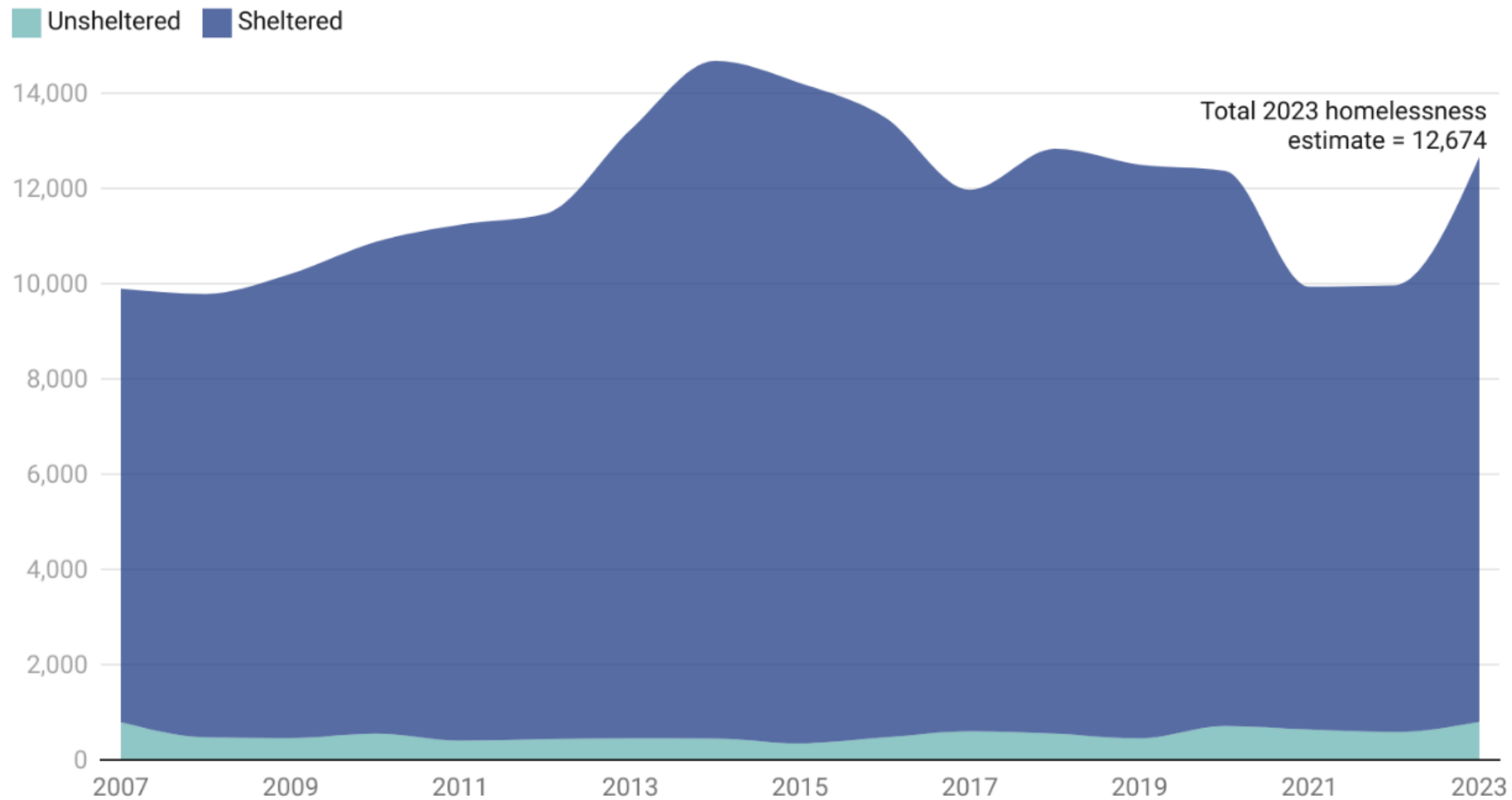


How many people are homeless in Greater Boston and what are the recent trends?



Homelessness remains elevated in Greater Boston, but the vast majority are living in shelters.

Point-in-time counts of people experiencing homelessness.

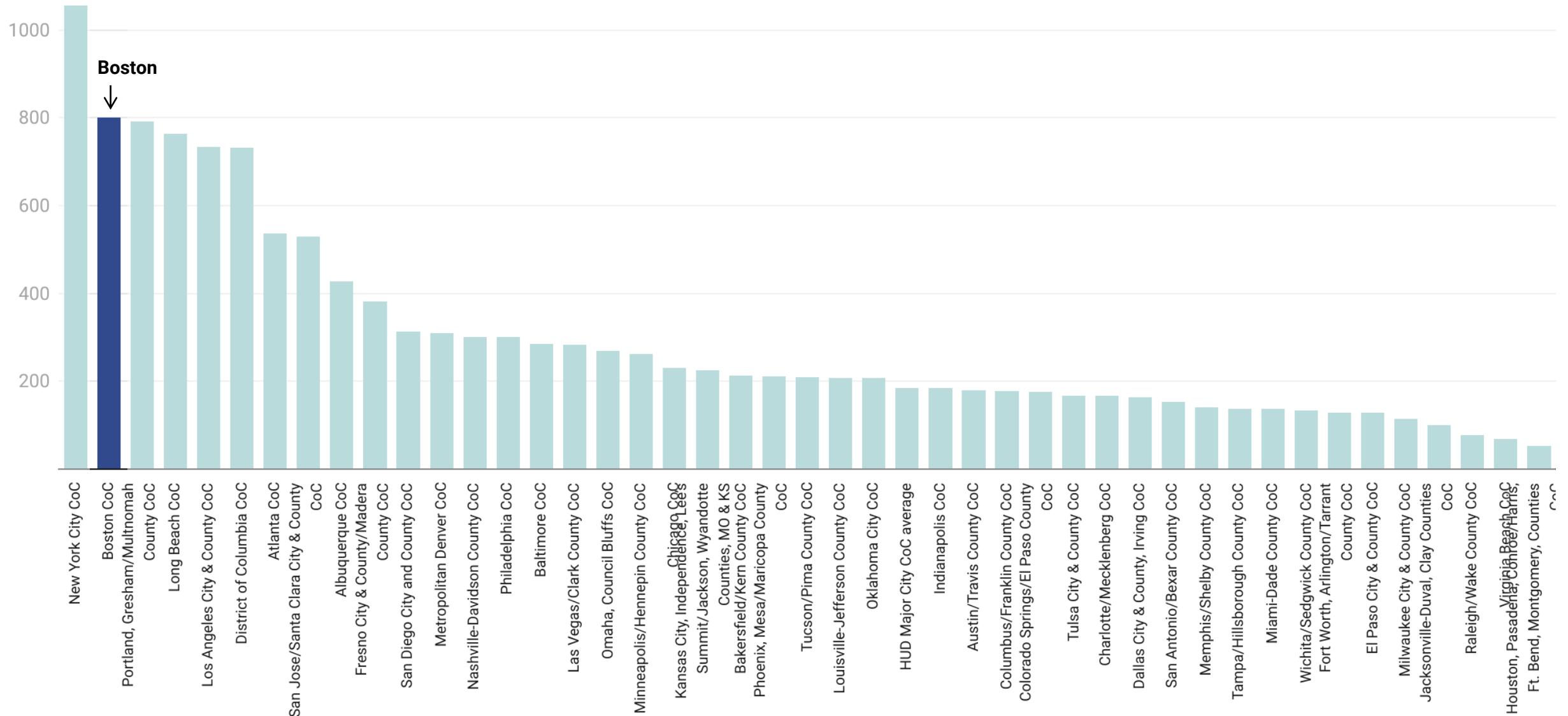


Note: Two of Greater Boston's Continuums of Care performed only partial counts in 2021, potentially leading to lower counts overall.

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: HUD Point-in-Time Counts • Created with Datawrapper

Homelessness rates among large U.S. cities.

Rates of homelessness per 100,000 residents among the 45 largest U.S. cities or Continuums of Care. 2023.

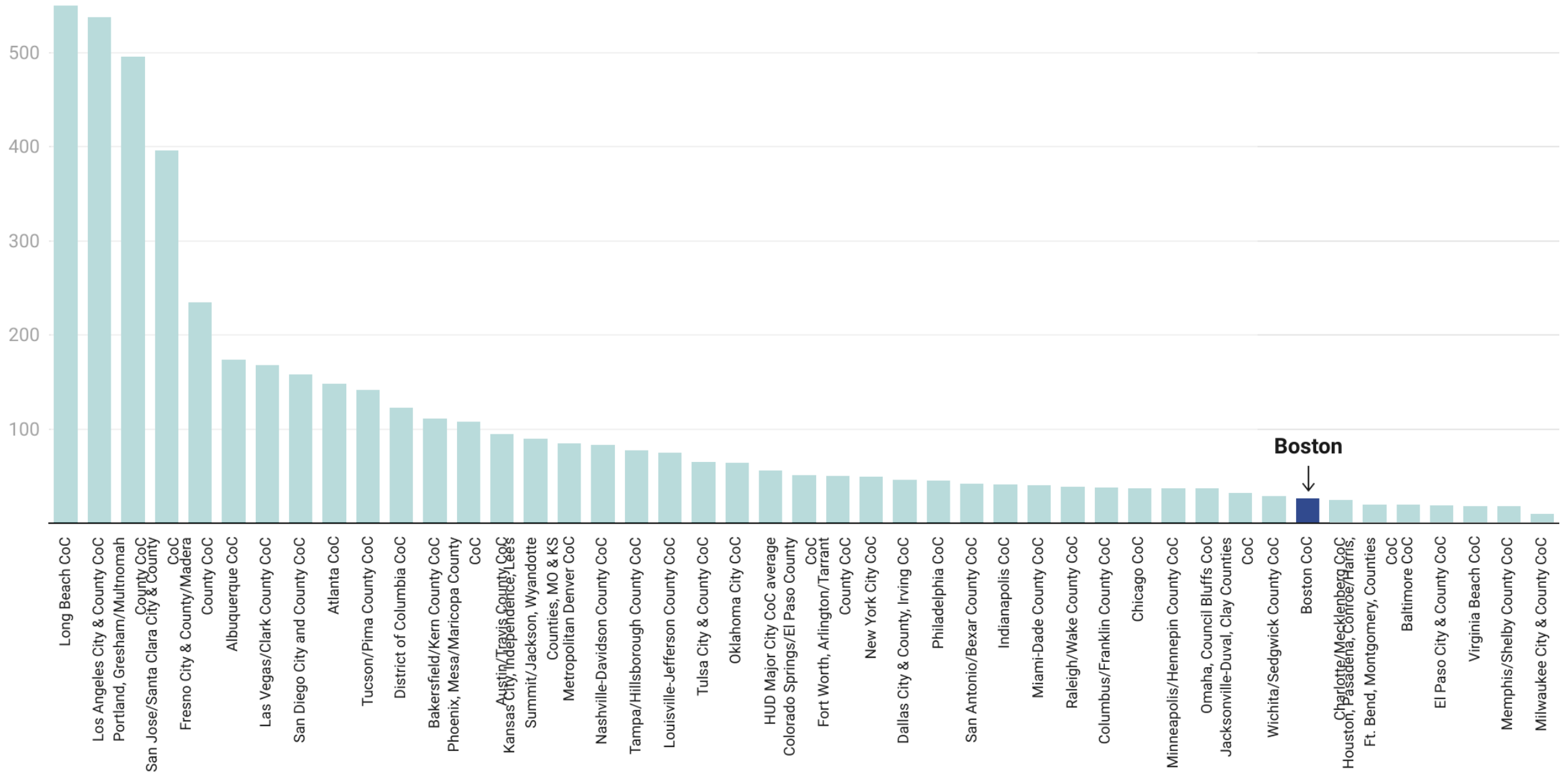


Note: Based directly off of Brookings Institute homelessness rate estimates, which align CoCs PIT counts with ACS population estimates for those geographies.

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: Brookings Institute • Created with Datawrapper

Unsheltered homeless rates of large U.S. cities.

Unsheltered homeless rates per 100,000 residents among the 45 largest U.S. cities or Continuums of Care. 2023.



Based off of Brookings Institute estimates of unsheltered homelessness, which align CoC's PIT counts with ACS population estimates for those geographies.

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: Brookings Institute • Created with Datawrapper

Chronic homelessness is less common in Massachusetts and Greater Boston than nationally.

Chronically homeless share of total homeless population. 2023.

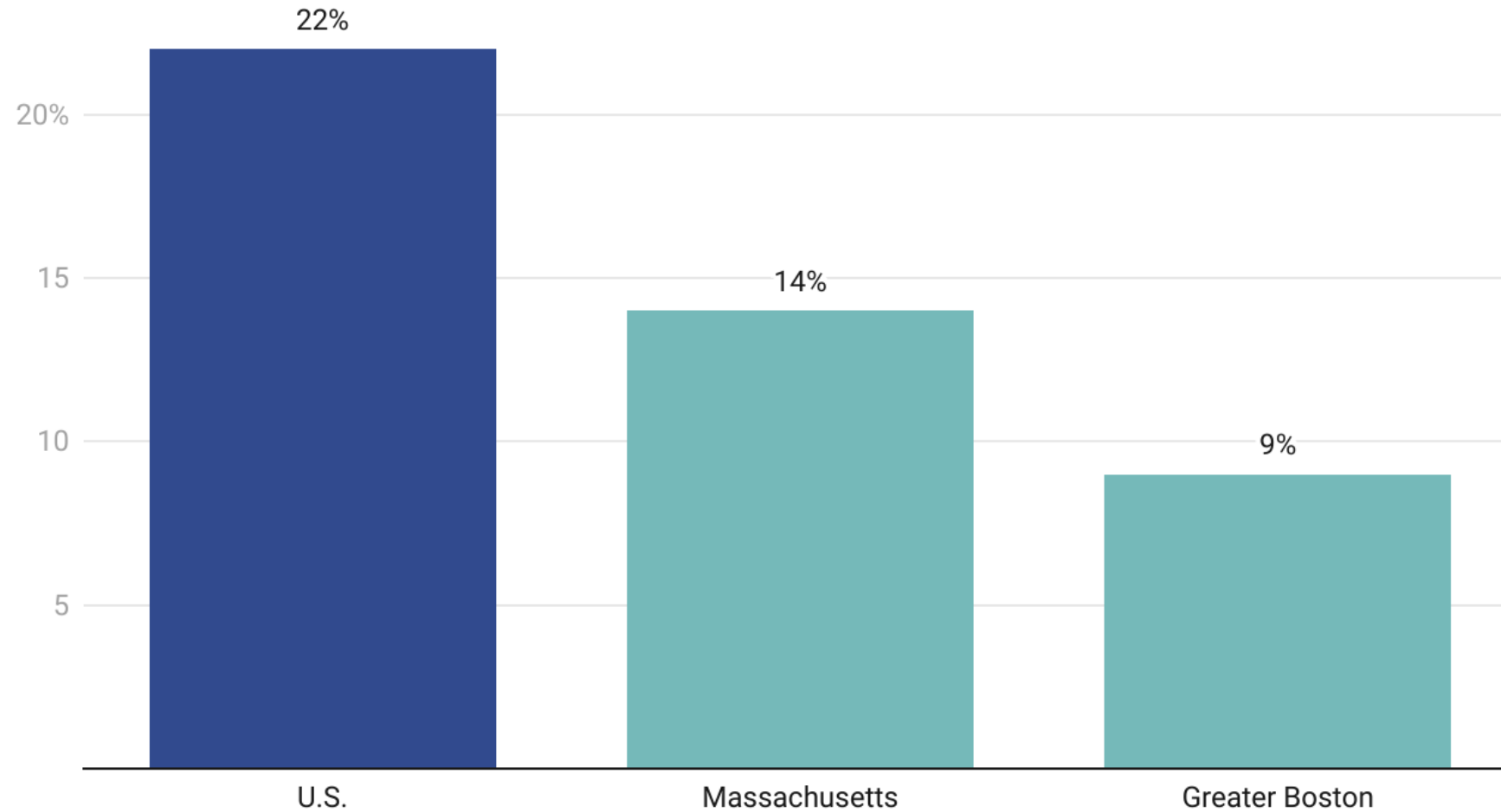


Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: HUD Point-in-Time Counts 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Overcrowding has risen over time in Greater Boston.

Count of overcrowded rental units (i.e. units with more than one person per room) with low to high estimate range.

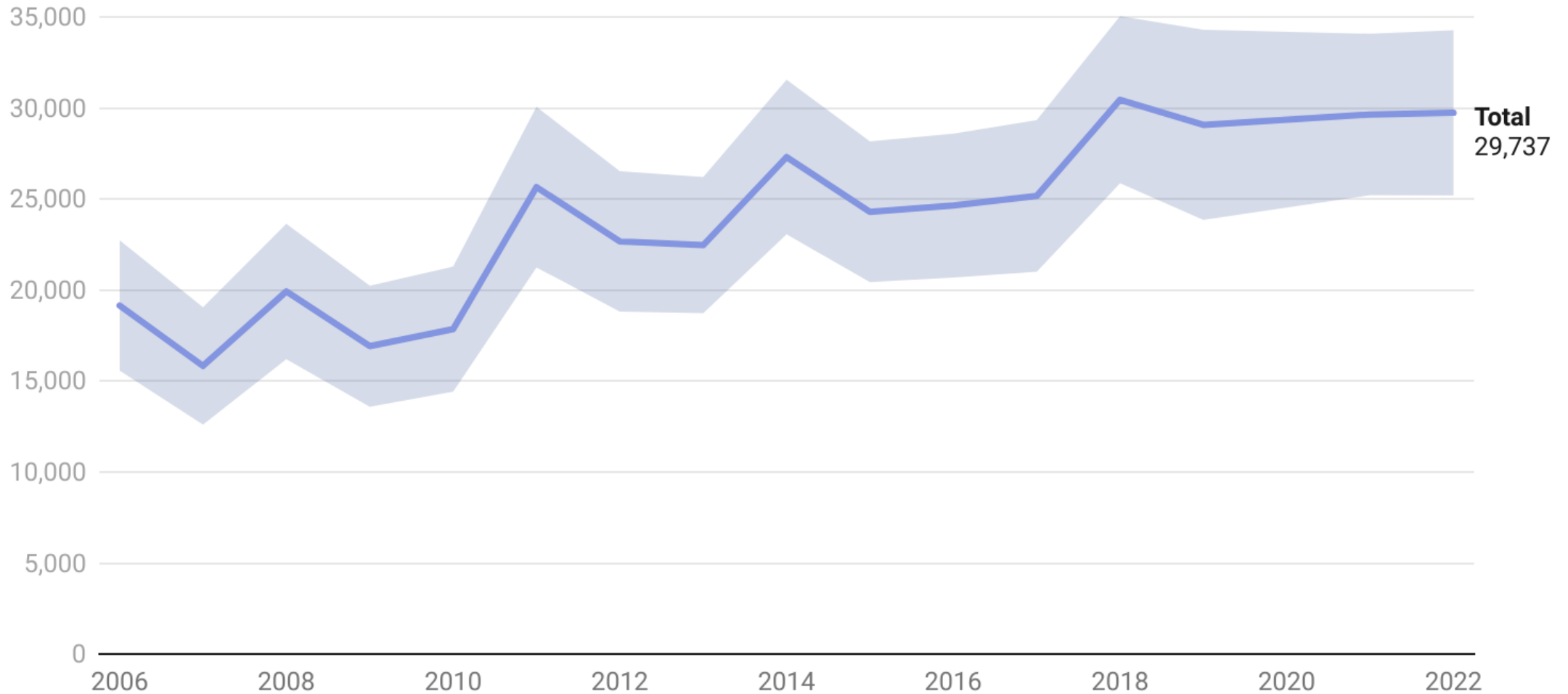


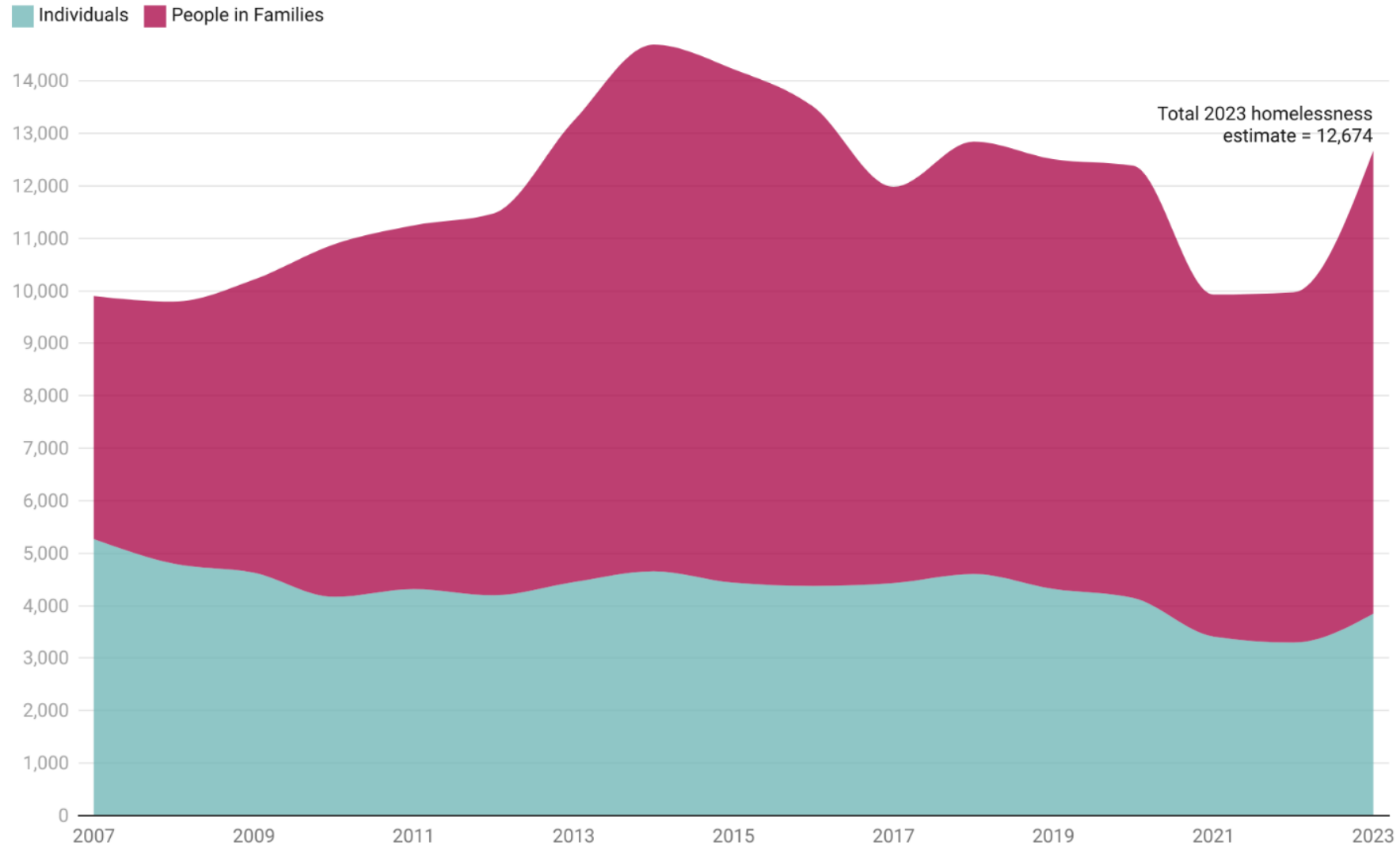
Chart: Boston Indicators. • Source: 2006-2022 American Community Survey. IPUMS University of Minnesota. www.ipums.org. • Created with Datawrapper

Who, specifically, is falling into homelessness?



Families make up almost two-thirds of Greater Boston's homeless population.

Point-in-time counts of people experiencing homelessness.



Note: Two of Greater Boston's Continuums of Care performed only partial counts in 2021, potentially leading to lower counts overall.

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: HUD Point-in-Time Counts • Created with Datawrapper

Families Receiving Emergency Housing by Type.

Number of families receiving state-funded Emergency Assistance, by type of placement.

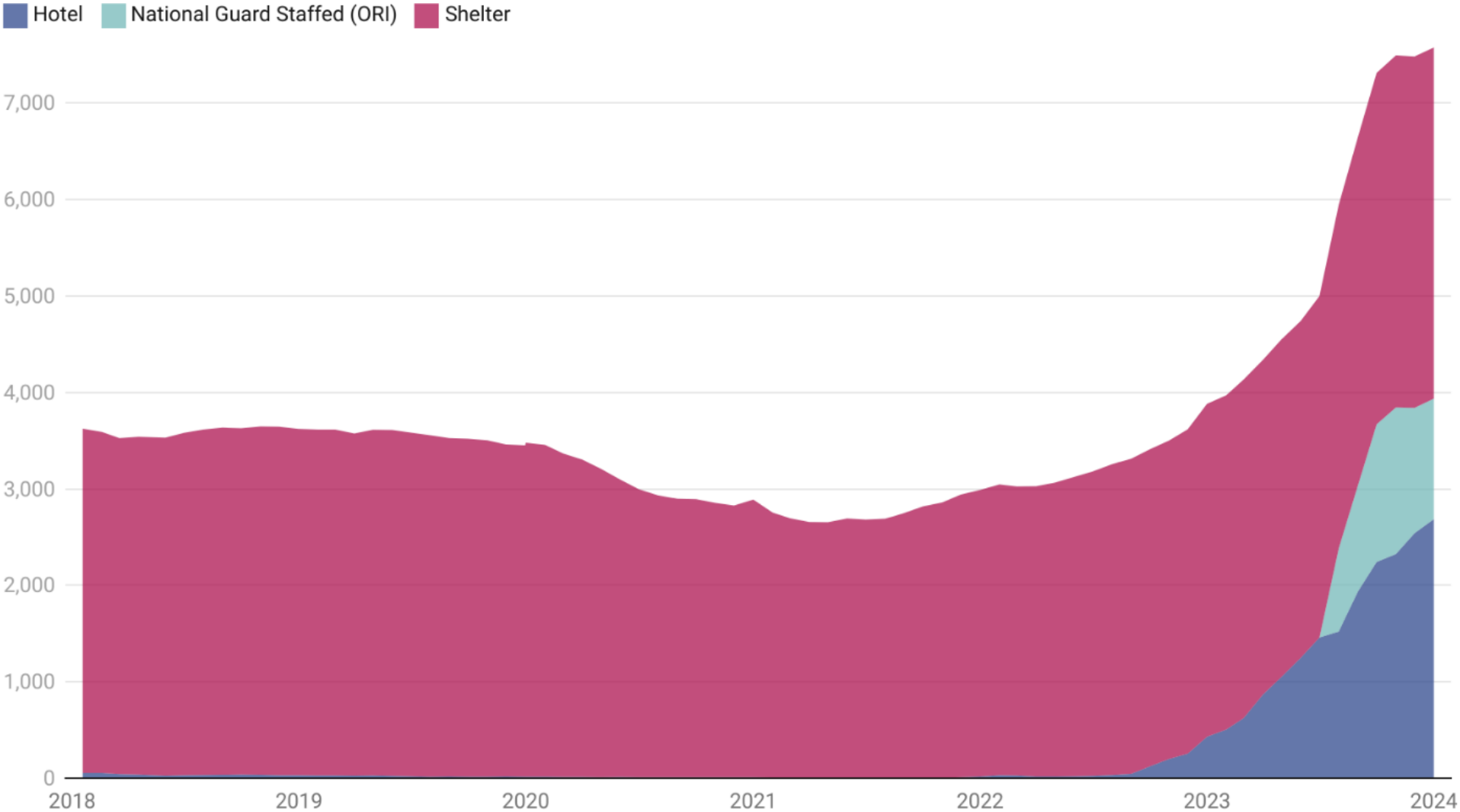


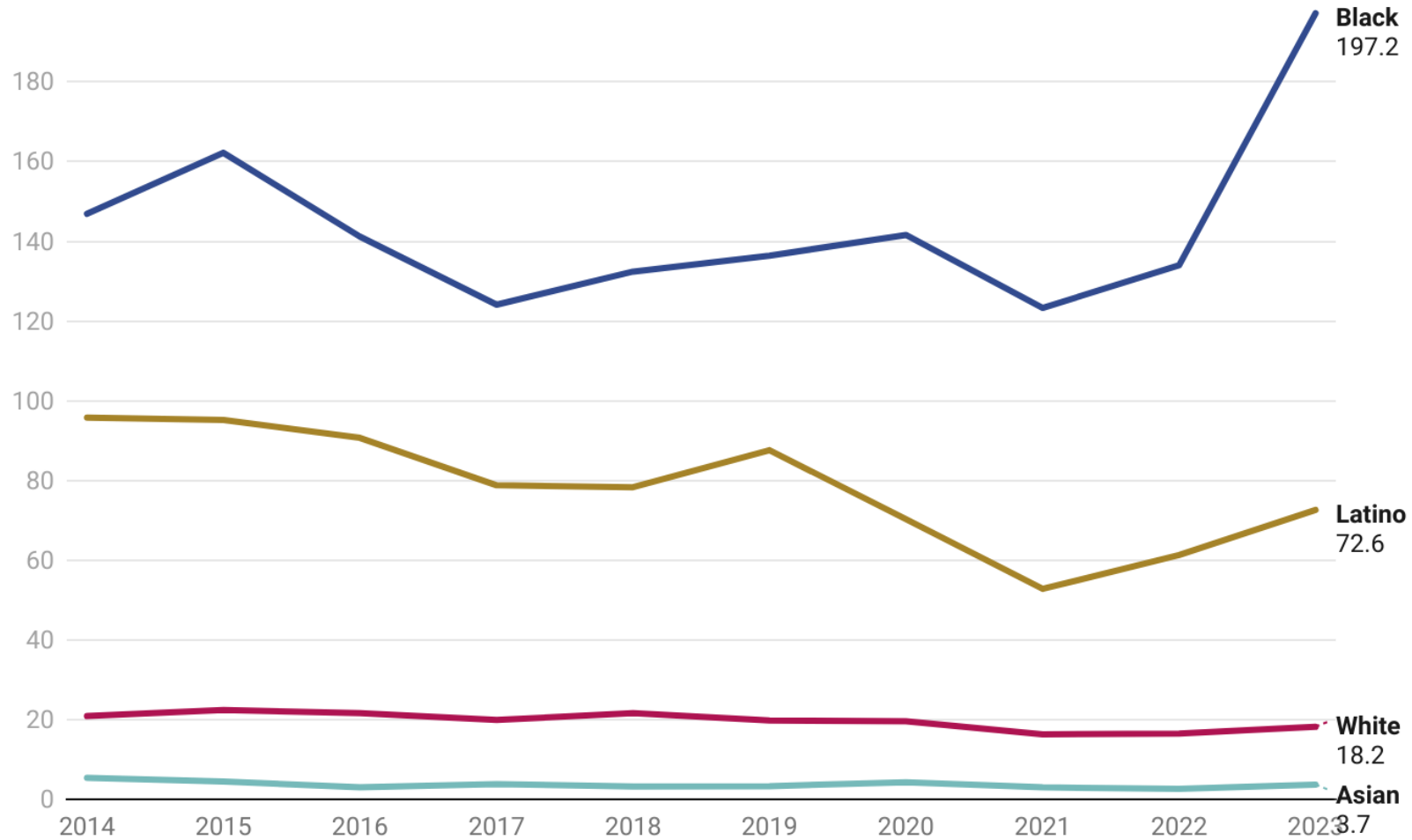
Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. • Created with Datawrapper

Recent changes to “Right to Shelter”

- October 2023: Capped emergency shelter to 7,500 families
- April 2024: Created 9-month time limit for families staying in the emergency shelter system
- July 2024: Limited stays in overflow sites to five days and prioritized for permanent shelter families with veterans, families who become unhoused due to no-fault evictions, and families who become unhoused by natural disasters.

Greater Boston's Black residents consistently experience far higher rates of homelessness.

Rate of homelessness per 10,000 people by race.

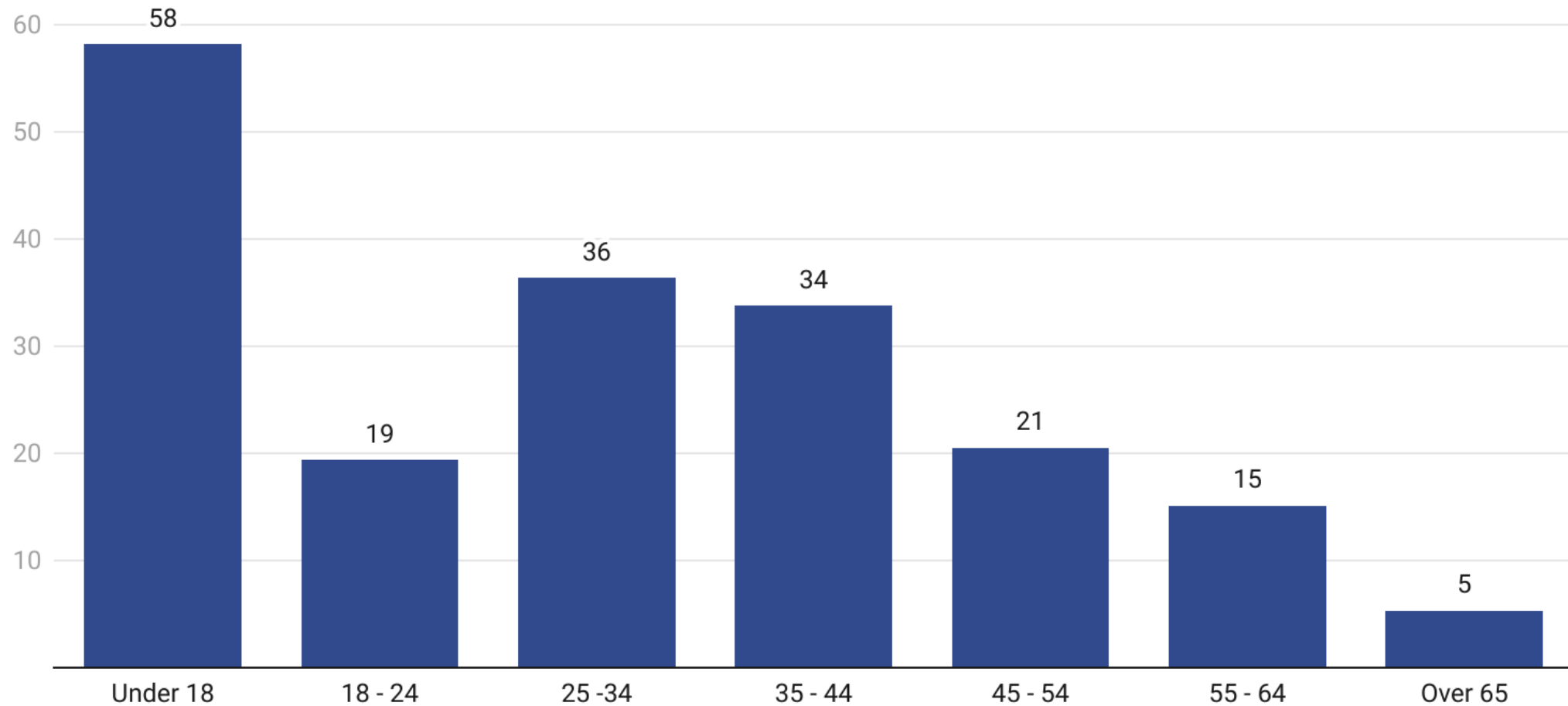


Note: 2020 and 2023 per-capita rates are calculated using the previous year's population totals (2019 and 2022).

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: HUD Point-in-Time Count, 1-Yr ACS. • Created with Datawrapper

Youth under 18 experience homelessness at far higher rates.

Rate of homelessness per 10,000 people. Greater Boston. 2023.



Note: No differentiation between unaccompanied youth and youth under 18. Per capita calculated based on 2022 American Community Survey population data due to availability.

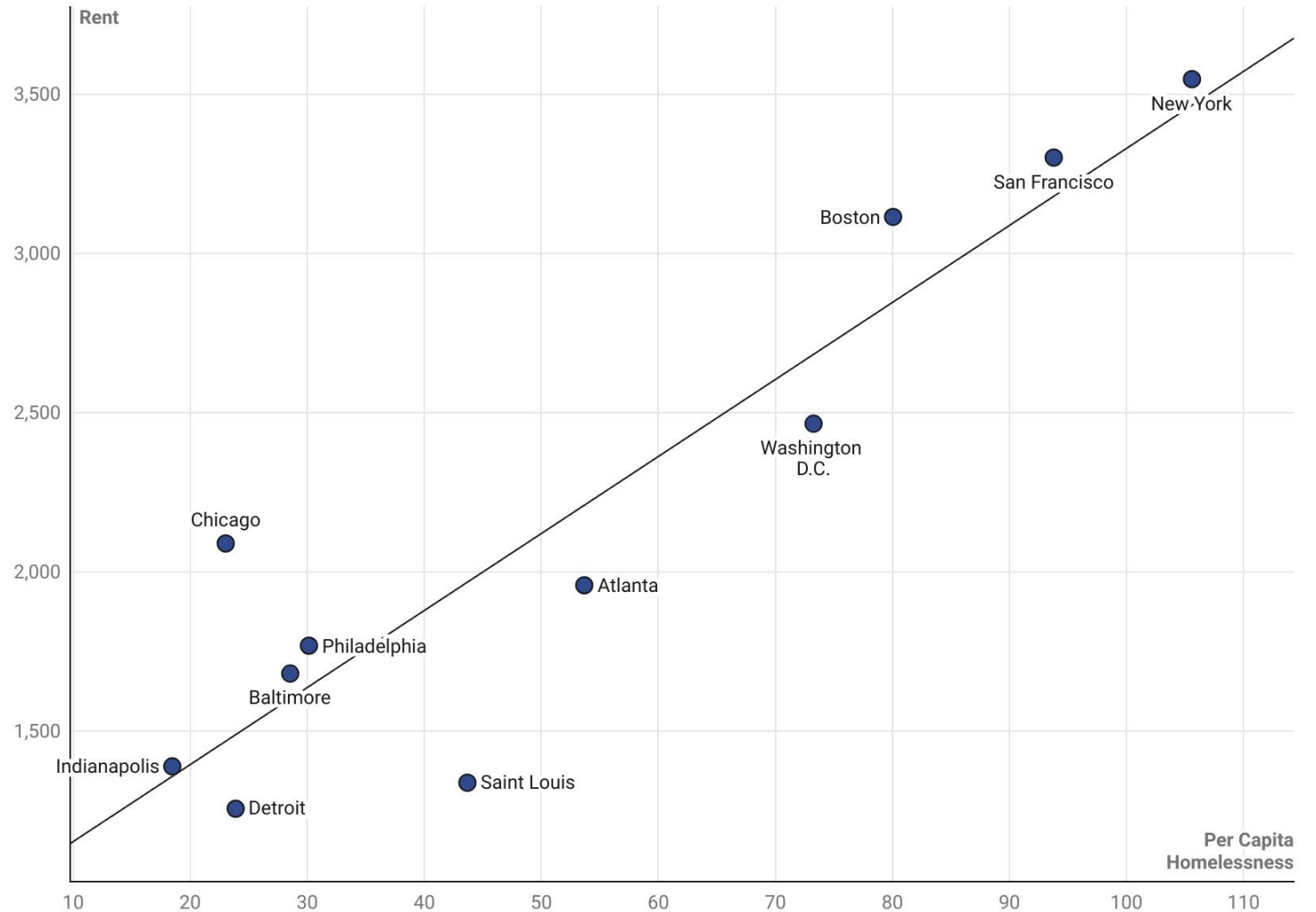
Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: 2023 HUD Point-in-Time Count, 2022 1-yr ACS • Created with Datawrapper

How does Greater Boston's housing shortage contribute to higher rates of homelessness?



Rent and Per Capita Homelessness

Central cities of largest metros with Continuums of Care. 2023.

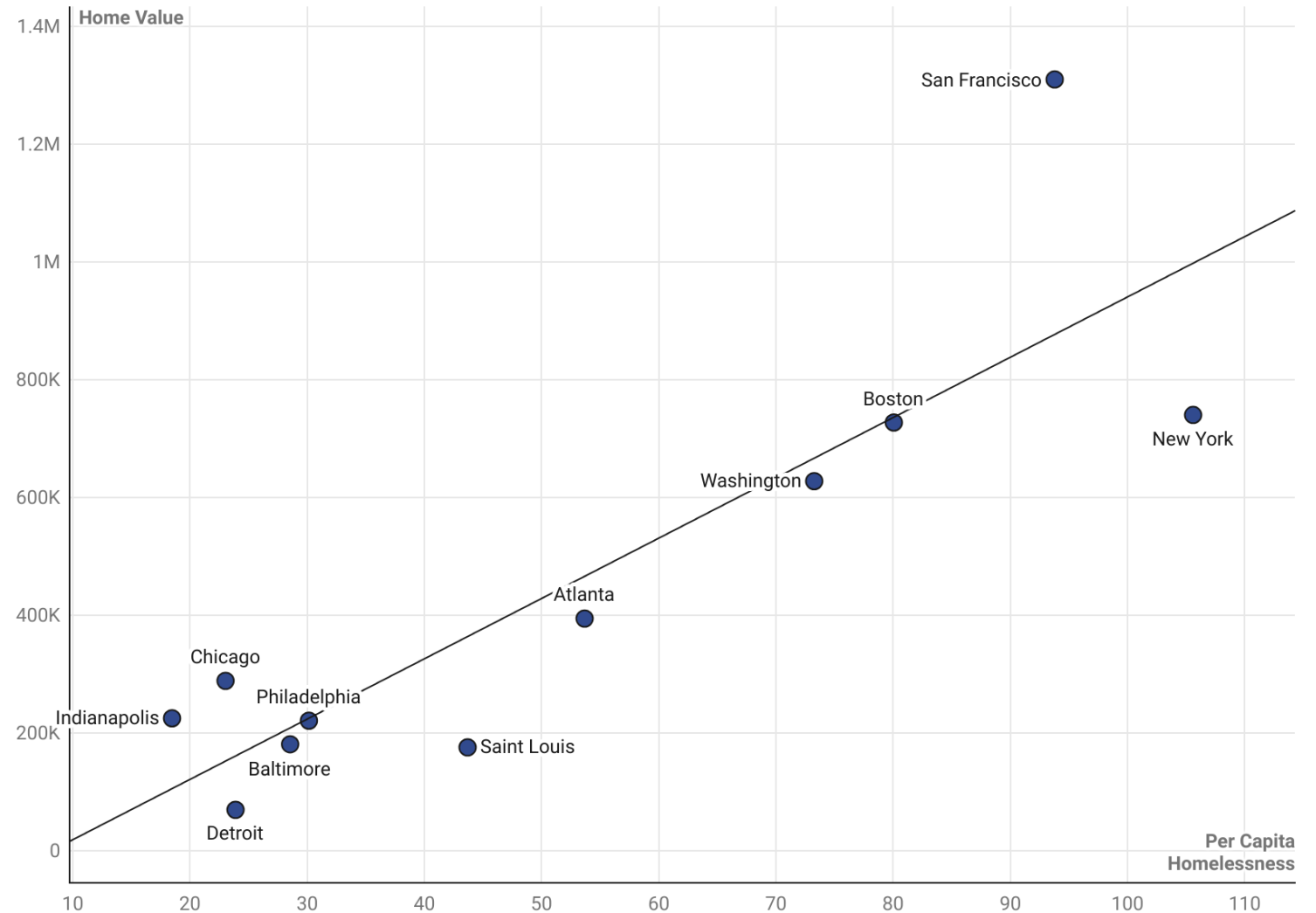


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Rent is the monthly average of Zillow Observed Rent Index, across Jan - Dec 2023. Per Capita homelessness rates are calculated using 2022 1-Yr ACS population totals.

Home Values and Per Capita Homelessness

Central cities of largest metros with Continuums of Care. 2023.

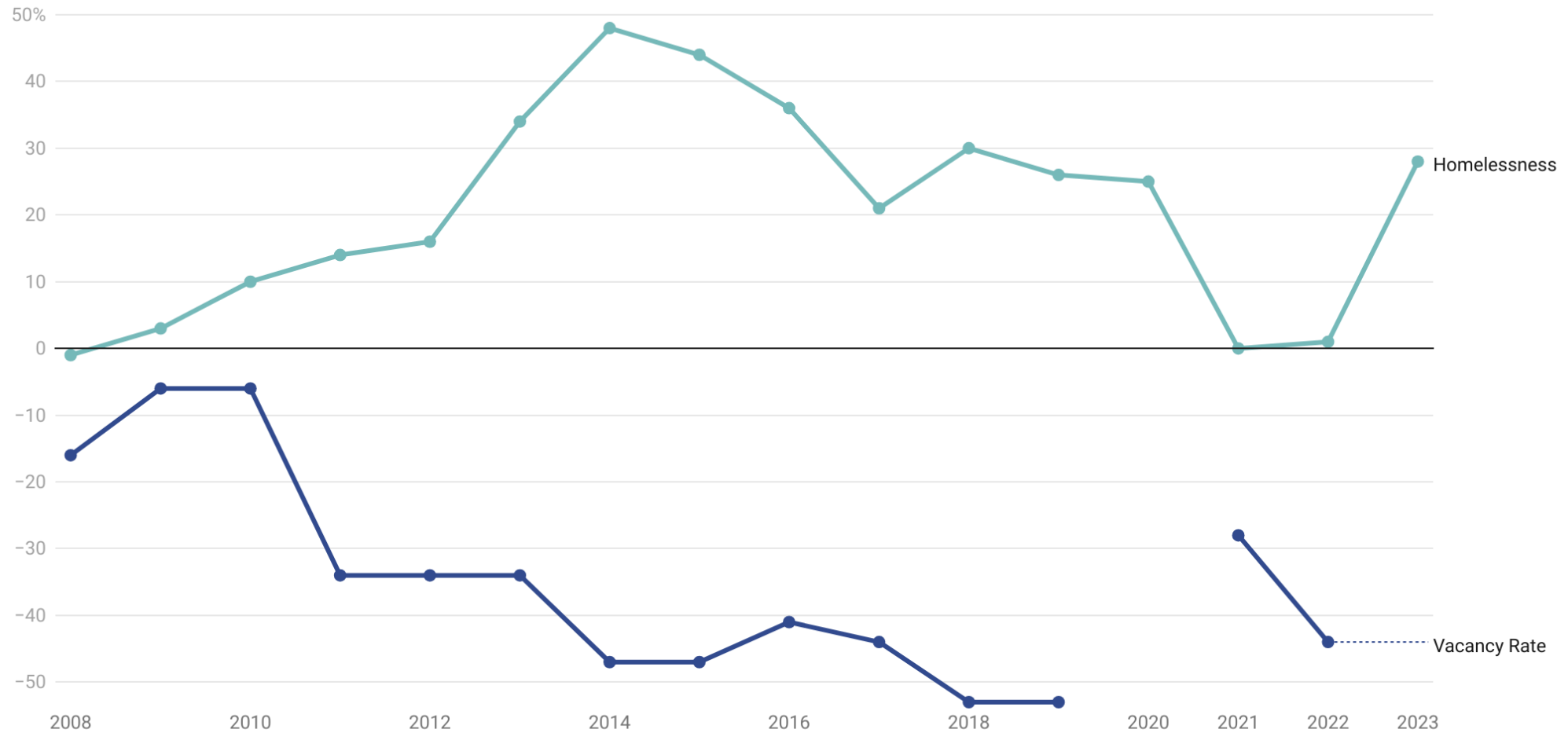


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Home value is monthly values of the Zillow Home Value Index, averaged across Jan - Dec 2023. Per capita homelessness rates are calculated using 2022 1-Yr ACS population totals.

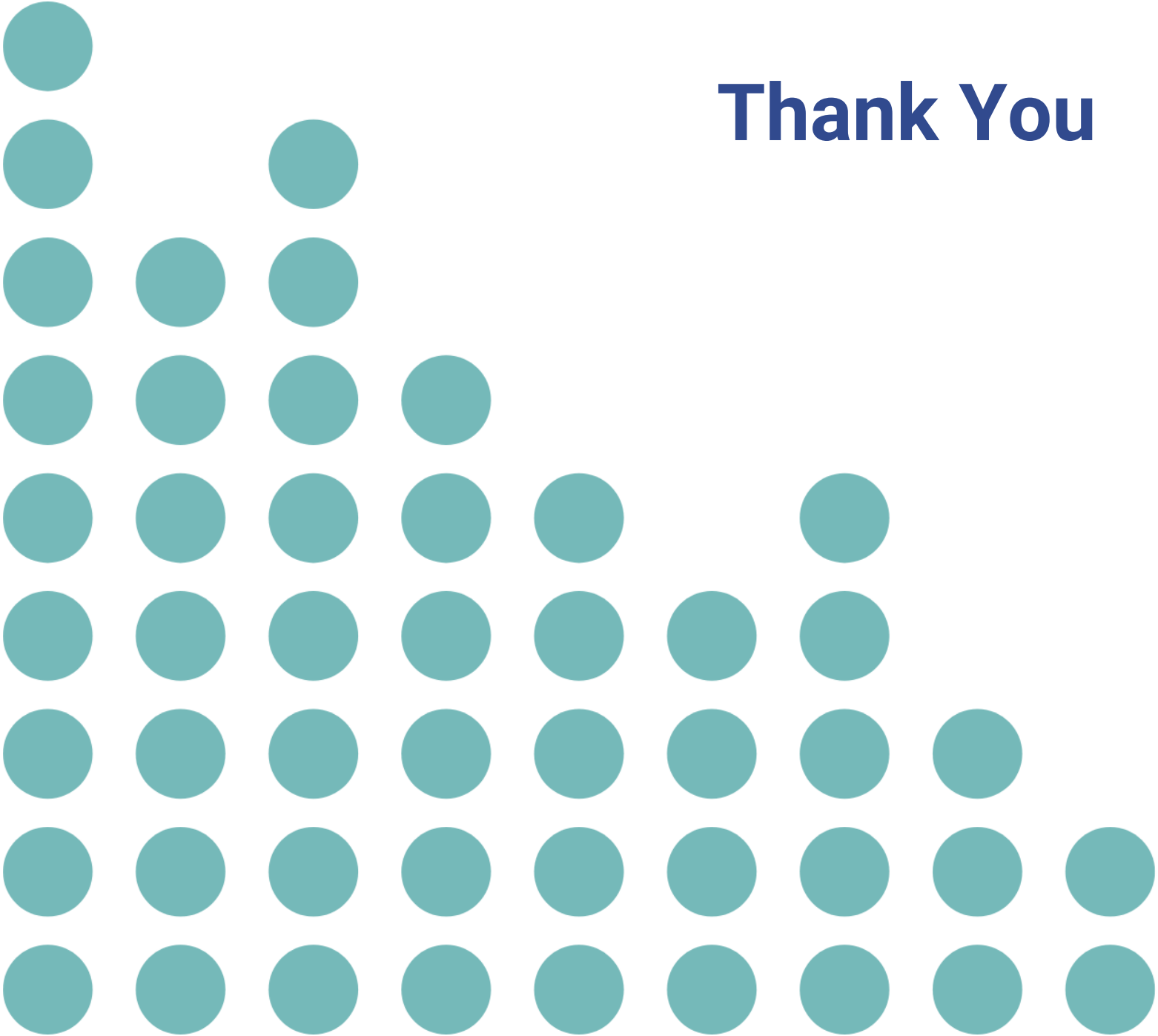
Change in Homelessness and Rental Vacancy Rates Over Time

From 2007. Greater Boston.



Created with Datawrapper

Thank You



Access the full report:

