

What also distinguishes the 100 hardest-hit cities is that almost all of them have African American and Latino populations that are significantly higher than their representation in the nation as a whole or in their metropolitan areas. As **FIGURE 2** shows, in 14 of the 100 hardest-hit cities, African Americans and Latinos comprise more than 75 percent of population. In another 38 cities, these two groups comprise between 50 percent and 75 percent of the city populations. In another 19 cities, they make up between 40 percent and 50 percent of city populations. In other words, in 71 of the 100 hardest-hit cities, African Americans and Latinos account for at least 40 percent of the residents. This is not surprising because—as noted earlier—banks and mortgage brokers targeted African American and Latino neighborhoods, homebuyers, and mortgage consumers with predatory and subprime mortgages.

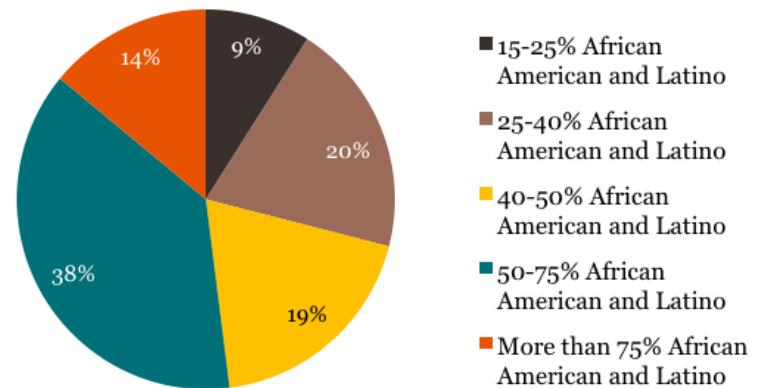
Even in those hard-hit cities with the highest median household incomes, African Americans and Latinos comprise a significant proportion of the city population. In Chesapeake, VA, with a median household income of \$70,244, African Americans and Latinos account for 36 percent of residents. In Fairfield, CA (\$66,363), these two groups comprise 44 percent of the population. In Henderson, NV, a suburb of Las Vegas with a median household income of \$66,141, they constitute 21 percent of residents. In Antioch, CA (\$65,494), 53 percent of residents are African American and Latino. In Fontana, CA (\$64,195), 78 percent of residents fit that description. African Americans and Latinos account for 84 percent of the population of Miramar, Florida, whose median household income of \$63,898 is substantially higher than the national figure.

### HARDEST-HIT ZIP CODES

Within every city, however, some neighborhoods are worse than others and many have been particularly hard-hit by the housing crash and not lifted up by the broader recent trend of rising home prices. These communities were the most devastated victims of Wall Street's predatory and

**Figure 2**

### Percentage of African Americans and Latinos in the 100 Hardest-Hit Cities



subprime lending practices. They are now among the worst hot spots in terms of the proportion of families who are underwater and unlikely to survive without assistance.

To identify the hardest-hit neighborhoods, we examined the 500 ZIP codes with the highest percentage of homes with negative equity. There are 29,762 general ZIP codes in the entire country. ZIP codes vary in size from a handful of residents to more than 100,000 residents. The average population size is roughly 7,500. To remove ZIP codes that are in primarily commercial areas, we eliminated the ZIP codes with fewer than 5,000 residents. That left 395 residential ZIP codes with the highest percentage of homes with negative equity. These 395 ZIP codes are home to more than 10.4 million people.

In the 395 hardest-hit ZIP codes, between 43 percent and 76 percent of